

Indonesia, Japan to strengthen ties

Advancing together through partnership, innovation, people for new, better future

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As Indonesia celebrates its 81st Independence Day, our two countries are also approaching another important milestone: the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2028. For nearly seven decades, the success of Indonesia-Japan relations has often been measured by growing trade, investment and development cooperation. Those achievements deserve recognition. However, the next chapter of our partnership will not be defined only by what our governments accomplish together, but by what our people create together.

The world is changing rapidly. Aging populations, technological advancement, artificial intelligence, energy transition, climate change and geopolitical uncertainty present challenges that no country can address alone. They require partnerships that combine complementary strengths, encourage innovation and invest in people.

Indonesia and Japan are well placed to meet these challenges together.

Despite our different histories and political systems, our countries share a commitment to democracy, the rule of law, respect for international law and the peaceful settlement of disputes. This common outlook is reflected in Indonesia's ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP). At a time of growing geopolitical rivalry, Indonesia and Japan continue to demonstrate that regional architecture is best strengthened through cooperation rather than confrontation, dialogue rather than division, and partnership rather than polarization.

Our economic partnership is also entering a new phase. Indonesia's dynamic market and abundant resources complement

Japan's technological excellence and industrial experience. The implementation of the amended Indonesia-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (IJEPA), cooperation under Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC), and new initiatives in critical minerals, semiconductors, artificial intelligence and clean energy show that our countries are moving beyond traditional economic ties. We are co-creators of future industries.

For generations, Indonesian families have long viewed Japanese companies as places where young people could learn discipline, integrity and professionalism. Likewise, Japanese businesses have long found in Indonesia a workforce that is resilient, adaptable and eager to grow. These shared experiences have created lasting confidence between our peoples.

The same spirit is reflected in cultural diplomacy. Every Indonesian festival held in Japan, batik exhibition, gamelan performance, student exchanges and Japanese visitors discovering Borobudur, Labuan Bajo or Raja Ampat all strengthen the friendship between our peoples. These everyday encounters foster understanding and trust that no diplomatic communiqué can ever fully capture.

Education offers another powerful expression of this partnership. Japanese universities are increasingly welcoming Indonesian students and researchers, while Indonesian campuses are expanding opportunities for Japanese scholars. Scholarship, joint research and vocational training schemes are preparing a new generation of leaders who understand both countries. They will not simply inherit the relationship, but they will shape its future.

Local governments and civil society also deserve recognition in this story. Sister-city partnerships, disaster-preparedness cooperation, and grassroots exchanges among artisans and small business owners all add texture to this relationship. These connections provide the strong foundation on which the next 70 years will be built.



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President Prabowo Subianto attends an official welcoming ceremony hosted by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi at Akasaka Palace in Tokyo.

As more Indonesians build careers in Japan, we should also broaden how we see their contribution. They are not simply filling labor shortages. They are engineers designing tomorrow's technologies, researchers advancing knowledge, caregivers bringing compassion into aging communities, entrepreneurs creating new opportunities, artists sharing Indonesia's cultural heritage, and neighbors strengthening local communities through everyday acts of friendship. In many ways, they have become Indonesia's most effective ambassadors.

This complementary relationship is well-illustrated by mochi-tsuki in Japan, which is a traditional rice cake pounding ceremony. It succeeds because two people perform different but equally important roles in perfect coordination. One provides strength, while the other provides timing and precision. Indonesia and Japan each bring different strengths that only achieve their full potential when working in harmony. Indonesia contributes youthful energy and creativity, while Japan brings technology, experience and expertise. Together, they create something neither could accomplish alone.

When Indonesian professionals feel respected, protected and welcomed, they are able to contribute more fully, not only as workers, but as innovators, community members and bridges between our two societies. Investing in people makes our partnership stronger, more resilient and more sustainable.

When I think about the future of Indonesia-Japan relations, I do not think first

about trade statistics or investment figures. I instead reflect on young Indonesians learning and working alongside their Japanese colleagues. Their quiet collaboration reflects the very essence of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. Governments establish frameworks. Businesses create opportunities. But it is people who transform cooperation into trust, and trust into lasting friendship.

The next chapter of Indonesia-Japan

relations will be written not only by governments. Nor only by businesses.

It will be written by millions of people who choose to learn from one another, innovate together and build communities together.

As we approach 70 years of diplomatic relations, let us continue advancing through partnership, innovation and people, for a more prosperous, resilient and inclusive future for Indonesia, Japan and the Indo-Pacific.



Indonesia.travel

Sunlight descends into the depths of Jomblang Cave, a popular tourist destination in Yogyakarta



Setneg.go.id

Gelora Bung Karno Stadium amidst Jakarta's urban skyline

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on the 81st Anniversary of
Their Independence

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