

JOKO'S VISIT TO BOOST TIES

It's his first trip
since his reelection

PUTRAJAYA

INDONESIAN President Joko Widodo, who flew in on Thursday for a two-day visit to Malaysia aimed at strengthening bilateral relations, met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at Perdana Putra here yesterday.

The leaders discussed Indonesian migrant workers, cross-border cooperation and discrimination against oil palm products from the two countries.

Earlier, Joko received an official welcome at Perdana Square. Popularly known as Jokowi, he was accompanied by his wife, Iriana Joko Widodo.

Joko and Iriana arrived at the square at 10.30am and were welcomed by Dr Mahathir and his wife, Tun Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali.

After the national anthems of the two countries were played, Joko inspected a guard of honour mounted by 106 officers and men from the 1st Battalion Royal Malay Regiment led by Major Mohd Shaiful Amir Omar.

Indonesia is Malaysia's closest and most important neighbour, ninth largest trading partner and the third largest trading partner among Asean countries, after Singapore and Thailand.

Last year, total bilateral trade volume was RM72.02 billion, up by 7.4 per cent from RM71.51 billion in 2017.

The Foreign Ministry said this was Joko's first trip abroad

since his re-election as Indonesian president on April 17.

Dr Mahathir and Joko attended Friday prayers at Masjid Putra here after their meeting.

They arrived at the mosque at 1.30pm in a red Proton Persona driven by Dr Mahathir.

Present was Defence Minister Mohamad Sabu, who is also minister-in-attendance.

After prayers led by imam Muktasyaf Ibrahim, the leaders exchanged greetings with worshippers who waited in line to shake their hands.

Dr Mahathir then drove Joko to a luncheon he hosted at Seri Perdana, his official residence.

Dr Mahathir's Proton Persona, bearing the registration number plate B 2367 A, was followed by other vehicles carrying members of the Indonesian delegation.

This is the second time Joko has been in a Proton car driven by Dr Mahathir.

In February 2015, Dr Mahathir took Joko on a test drive in a Proton car at the Sepang race circuit.

Meanwhile, Dr Siti Hasmah hosted Iriana at a morning tea reception at Seri Perdana here.

Iriana signed the visitors book at the complex before the reception.

Datin Norlin Shamsul Bahri, wife of Foreign Minister Datuk Saifuddin Abdullah, and Normah Alwi, wife of Mohamad, as well as several members of the Indonesian president's delegation, attended the reception.

Joko and Iriana left at 3.20pm yesterday for Singapore from Kuala Lumpur International Airport. **Bernama**