

**Agong Begins State Visit To Indonesia, Forging Closer Malaysia-Indonesia Relations**  
**Bername**  
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**By Ahmad Fuad Yahya**

JAKARTA, Dec 3 (Bernama) -- Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah and Raja Permaisuri Agong Tuanku Hajah Haminah arrived here Monday for a state visit to Indonesia, strengthening the close and special relations between Malaysia and Indonesia.

This is Tuanku Abdul Halim's first state visit to the republic since he was installed as Malaysia's 14th Yang di-Pertuan Agong on April 11.

This is also the King's state visit to another country after Brunei Darussalam from May 9-15 and Japan from Oct 1-5.

Receiving the royal couple at the red carpet welcome at Halim Perdanakusuma Airport were Indonesia's Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa and his wife Sranya Natalegawa and the accompanying minister from the republic, Dr Salim Segaf Al Jufri, who is also its Social Minister, and his wife.

In the visiting Malaysian delegation is Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Datuk Seri Noh Omar who is the accompanying minister, and his wife Datin Seri Dr Aishah Salleh.

Also present to receive the King and Queen were Malaysian ambassador to Indonesia Datuk Syed Munshe Afdzaruddin Syed Hassan and his wife.

Tomorrow, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong will be given a scheduled state welcome steeped in military tradition at Istana Merdeka in Central Jakarta which houses the office of Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

The royal couple will then have an audience with the President and his wife Ani Yudhoyono before attending the state banquet at Istana Negara.

The King's visit here is all the more significant as it coincidentally precedes the annual consultation between the two countries in efforts to forge closer bilateral relations and cooperation in the political, economic and socio-cultural spheres.

In two weeks' time, President Yudhoyono is expected to be in Malaysia for the annual consultation with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak in Putrajaya on Dec 18.

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