
Iranian president likely to visit Pakistan this month

Published on April 8, 2024

Document Date: Fri, Aug 22 2025 12:35:07 am

Category: ,English,Latest -

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ISLAMABAD:

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi is expected to undertake an official visit to Pakistan in the third week of April as part of efforts by the two neighbours to remove mistrust after the two exchanged missiles in January. There is no official word yet from either side about the exact dates of the Iranian president's visit but sources said Raisi would be in Islamabad on April 22. This will be the first visit by any head of state to Pakistan since the new government took charge after the February 8 elections. The visit is part of ongoing efforts by the two countries to deepen their cooperation that in January was threatened by the missile exchanges. Iran launched missile strikes in Balochistan on January 16 in an unprecedented move to violate the sovereignty of Pakistan. Iran claimed it targeted the hideouts of terrorists. Pakistan denied the claim and retaliated with its own strikes

inside Iran, bringing the two neighbours on the verge of potential war. However, tensions de-
escalated quickly after high level contacts established between the two countries. Within days of the
missile exchanges, the Iranian president vowed to travel to Islamabad and both sides agreed to
restore diplomatic ties and set new terms of engagements to avoid future escalations.