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- **Source:**
USDOS - US Department of State
- **Title:**
2014 Report on International Religious Freedom - Indonesia
- **Publication date:**
14 October 2015
- **ecoi.net summary:** Annual report on religious freedom (covering 2014) [ID 313251]
- **Countries:**
Indonesia
- [Original link](#)

Recommended citation:

USDOS - US Department of State: 2014 Report on International Religious Freedom - Indonesia, 14 October 2015 (available at [ecoi.net](#))

http://www.ecoi.net/local_link/313251/437600_en.html (accessed 04 April 2016)



2014 Report on International Religious Freedom - Indonesia

Executive Summary

The constitution guarantees freedom of religion and millions of Indonesians of diverse faiths freely practiced their beliefs; however, certain laws and policies restricted religious freedom. According to civil society reports, incidents of government abuse of religious freedom declined compared to the previous year, although instances of abuse and government inaction occurred, especially against members of minority religious groups. There were arrests and convictions on religiously-related grounds. The government did not consistently use its authority to enforce the constitutional and legal protections of minority religious groups. There were instances where local governments and police gave in to the demands of intolerant groups to close houses of worship or otherwise restrict the rights of minority religious groups, and there were reports of local officials abetting intolerant groups. The government at both national and local levels at times failed to prevent or appropriately address violence, abuse, and discrimination against individuals based on their religious belief. The government did not always prosecute intolerant groups for criminal acts and illegal hate speech. Certain local governments imposed aspects of sharia on non-Muslims.

Most of society was tolerant of minority religious groups and, according to civil society reports, instances of societal abuse of religious freedom declined compared to the previous year. Intolerant religious groups, however, committed violent acts, illegally closed houses of worship, and widely disseminated materials promoting intolerance. There were reports of societal abuses and discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice, especially for practitioners of Ahmadiyya and Shiism.

The U.S. government advocated for religious freedom with government and civil society leaders. Through outreach efforts, including events, media interviews, digital and public speaking engagements, youth exchanges, and educational programs, the embassy and consulates carried the message of respect for diversity and religious tolerance to tens of millions of people throughout the country.

Section I. Religious Demography

The U.S. government estimates the total population at 253.6 million (July 2014 estimate). According to the 2010 census, approximately 87 percent of the population is registered as Muslim, 7 percent Protestant, 3 percent Roman Catholic, and 1.5 percent Hindu. Members of other religious groups (Buddhism, traditional indigenous religions, Confucianism, and other Christian denominations) and those who did not respond to the census question comprise approximately 1.3 percent of the population.

The country's Muslim population is overwhelmingly Sunni. Of the more than 207 million Muslims, an estimated one to three million are Shia. Many smaller Muslim groups exist, including approximately 200,000-400,000 members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

An estimated 20 million people, primarily in Java, Kalimantan, and Papua, practice various traditional belief systems, often referred to collectively as *Aliran Kepercayaan*. There are approximately 400 different *Aliran Kepercayaan* communities throughout the archipelago. Many combine their beliefs with one of the government-recognized religions.

The country has a small Sikh population, estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000, residing primarily in Medan and Jakarta. There are very small Jewish communities in Jakarta, Manado, and Surabaya. The Bahai community reports thousands of members, but no reliable figures are available. Falun Dafa (or Falun Gong), which considers itself a spiritual organization rather than a religion, claims several thousand followers, but specific numbers are unavailable. The number of atheists is also unknown, but the group Indonesian Atheists states it has more than 500 members.

The province of Bali is predominantly Hindu, and the provinces of Papua, West Papua, East Nusa Tenggara, and North Sulawesi are predominantly Christian.

Section II. Status of Government Respect for Religious Freedom

Legal Framework

The constitution states “the nation is based upon belief in one supreme God,” but guarantees “all persons the right to worship according to their own religion or belief.” The constitution allows for the creation of laws restricting individual rights, including religious freedom, if the exercise of such rights impinges on the rights of others, oversteps common moral standards and religious values, or jeopardizes security or public order. The first tenet of the country’s national ideology, *Pancasila*, similarly declares belief in one God. Government employees must swear allegiance to the nation and to the *Pancasila* ideology.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs (MRA), according to law, extends official status to six religious groups: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. Members of unrecognized groups, however, have the right to establish a place of worship, register marriages and births, and obtain national identity cards (KTPs). Laws allow followers of beliefs outside the six recognized religions to leave the religion section blank on their KTPs.

The government permits the practice of *Aliran Kepercayaan*, as cultural manifestations rather than as religions. *Aliran Kepercayaan* groups may register with the Ministry of Education and Culture at the district or provincial level.

Religious organizations are not required to obtain a legal charter if they are established under a notary act and obtain approval from the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. Other religious organizations must obtain a legal charter as a civil society organization from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Both ministries consult with the MRA before granting legal status to religious organizations. Under the law, civil society organizations are required to uphold the national ideology of *Pancasila* and are prohibited from committing blasphemous acts or spreading hatred of other religions. Violations of the law could result in a loss of legal status, dissolution of the organization, and arrest of members under the blasphemy law or other applicable laws.

The government bans both proselytizing by the Ahmadiyya community and vigilantism against the group. Violation of the proselytizing ban carries a maximum five-year prison sentence on charges of blasphemy. The ban does not prohibit Ahmadi Muslims from worshipping or continuing to practice within their community. A number of provincial and local laws further restrict practice by Ahmadi Muslims. Some local regulations require Ahmadis to sign a form renouncing their faith in order to get married or go on the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj).

The law prohibits deliberate public statements or activities that express enmity with, abuse, or stain a religion adhered to in Indonesia, or have the intent of preventing an individual from adhering to a recognized religion. The law also forbids the dissemination of information designed to spread hatred or dissension among individuals and/or certain community groups on the basis of ethnicity, religion, or race. Individuals can be prosecuted for blasphemous, atheistic, or heretical statements under either of these provisions or under the laws against defamation, and can face a maximum jail sentence of five years. The internet law forbids the electronic dissemination of the same types of information, with violations carrying a maximum six-year sentence.

The government maintains the power to impose limitations on religious freedom based upon security considerations. Contravening such limitations could be prosecuted as blasphemy, which carries a maximum sentence of five years’ imprisonment.

The government requires officially recognized religious groups to comply with directives from the MRA and other ministerial directives, on issues such as construction of houses of worship, foreign aid to domestic religious institutions, and propagation of religion.

According to a joint ministerial decree, religious groups wanting to build a house of worship are required to obtain the signatures of at least 90 members of the group and 60 persons of other religious groups in the community stating that they support the construction. The decree also requires approval from the local interfaith council, the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB). The government-established FKUBs exist at the city or district level and are comprised of religious leaders from the six recognized religious groups. They are responsible for mediating interreligious conflicts.

Conversion of minors to another religion through “tricks” and/or “lies” is a crime punishable by up to five years in prison.

Religious speeches are permissible if delivered to members of the same religious group and are not intended to convert persons of other religious groups.

Publication of religious materials or the use of religious symbols is permitted; however, the government bans dissemination of these materials to persons who do not adhere to the religion of the group disseminating the materials.

Religious groups and social organizations must obtain permits to hold religious concerts or other public events.

Aceh remains the only province authorized by national legislation to implement sharia. The law formally allows for the implementation and regulation of sharia, and extends the jurisdiction of religious courts to economic transactions and criminal cases. Provincial sharia criminalizes close contact between unmarried, unrelated members of the opposite sex and bans alcohol consumption and gambling. Provincial sharia procedural law makes non-Muslims subject to sharia law if they, together with a Muslim, commit an infraction, even if it is not criminalized under non-sharia law. In September the Aceh provincial legislature passed an update to the sharia criminal code that criminalizes homosexuality, adultery, gambling, consumption of alcohol, and proximity to members of the opposite sex outside of marriage for Muslims and non-Muslims. The new criminal code had yet to be signed into effect by the governor, and critics continue to call on the central government to reject the law if it is signed.

The maximum penalty for violations of sharia can include caning. Persons subject to caning in Aceh are fully clothed, sometimes with several layers of clothes. There are also regulations limiting the amount of force that may be applied during a caning. There are no offenses under current provincial sharia laws that carry the death penalty or punishments such as amputation.

Although not specifically classified as sharia, many local governments outside of Aceh have sharia-based regulations. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) estimate that 50 to 60 local governments (out of more than 6,800) throughout the country have adopted sharia-inspired regulations. According to the National Commission on Violence against Women, there were 334 religiously-based local regulations on the behavior of women, usually related to modesty and compulsory veiling. Such regulations are unevenly enforced. Non-Muslims are generally exempted

from regulations that relate to religious observation, such as those requiring women to wear headscarves. Some sharia-based regulations, however, do not exempt non-Muslims. For example, local regulations requiring a woman outside of her home after a certain hour to be accompanied by her husband or a *muhrim* (male relative whom the woman cannot marry) apply to all residents, regardless of their religious affiliation. Some local regulations mandate Muslim elected officials, students, civil servants, and individuals seeking marriage licenses to be able to read the Quran in Arabic and prohibit Muslims from consuming alcohol and gambling. Other regulations, which apply to both Muslims and non-Muslims, prohibit the sale of food and beverages during the day throughout the month of Ramadan and, for Muslims only, make mandatory the payment of *zakat*, or alms.

Civil rights activists asserted sharia-based regulations violate the constitution and called on the government to exercise its constitutional jurisdiction to revoke or review these regulations.

The marriage law does not expressly forbid interfaith marriage, but it does contain an article stipulating that a marriage must be performed according to the rituals of a religion that is shared by both the bride and groom. In September a group from the University of Indonesia School of Law filed a challenge with the Constitutional Court claiming that this article violates citizens' constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion.

The law allows a Muslim man to have up to four wives, provided he is able to support each equally. For a man to take a second, third, or fourth wife, he must obtain court permission and the consent of the first wife; however, these conditions are not always required in practice. The Constitutional Court has upheld the first wife's right to deny a husband's demand to take additional wives, ruling that restrictions on polygamy in the marriage law violate neither the constitution nor tenets of Islam and are necessary to protect the rights of women.

The marriage law makes polygamy illegal for civil servants, except in limited circumstances. Government regulations require Muslim male civil servants to receive permission from a government official and their first wives prior to marrying a second, third, or fourth wife, and prohibit female civil servants from becoming second, third, or fourth wives.

A law on pornography bans pornographic acts and images, defined broadly as "man-made sexual materials in the form of drawings, sketches, illustrations, photographs, text, voice, sound, moving pictures, animation, cartoons, poetry, conversations, and gestures." The law effectively outlaws public performances and other religious and cultural expression that could "incite sexual desire." The law is sometimes interpreted to proscribe the traditional clothing worn in many areas of the country.

The law requires religious instruction to be a part of national curriculum standards. Students have the right to request religious instruction in any one of the six official religions. Atheists and those from non-recognized religions are not allowed to opt out of religious education requirements.

Legal guidelines require domestic religious organizations to obtain approval from the MRA to receive funding from overseas donors and ban proselytizing to members of recognized religious groups under most circumstances.

Foreign religious workers must obtain religious worker visas, and foreign religious organizations must obtain permission from the MRA to provide any type of assistance (in-kind, personnel, or financial) to local religious groups.

Government Practices

The central government did not consistently enforce court rulings, override unconstitutional local regulations, or otherwise uphold the constitutional and legal protections afforded to minority religious groups.

As in previous years, local government officials sometimes responded to the demands of intolerant and/or violent groups (including groups based on religion), and occasionally worked with such groups, to restrict the rights of minority groups to worship peacefully. Government officials and police sometimes failed to prevent intolerant groups from forcibly closing houses of worship and committing other acts of violence and intimidation. Police also did not always actively investigate and prosecute crimes by members of intolerant groups, or punished certain individuals but declined to hold the groups themselves responsible.

The Setara Institute, an NGO based in the country that conducts advocacy and research on religious and political freedom, reported 34 cases of government abuses of religious freedom between January and June, down from 70 over the same period in 2013. The Setara Institute said that discriminative action was the most common category of abuse by state actors during that period, while the government's failure to act when necessary was the second most common category of abuse by state actors.

On May 12, Abraham Sujoko was sentenced to two years in prison by a West Nusa Tenggara provincial court for posting a video on a social media site that was deemed insulting to Islam. In the video Sujoko called the Kaaba in Mecca a "stone idol." Sojoko was arrested in December 2013 after his neighbors reported him to the local police.

In October police in Palu, South Sulawesi, arrested a 21-year-old student for a posting on social media saying he was bothered by the Eid al-Adha holiday *takbir* (recitation praising the greatness of God). Police said he would be charged with "defamation of religion" under the internet law.

On March 30, the Islamic Jihad Front (FJI) vandalized the Kemah Injil Indonesia Church in Widoro, Gunungkidul, in Yogyakarta Province. On April 6, FJI returned and sealed the church on the grounds that it lacked the proper permits. On May 2, FJI members attacked Gunungkidul Interfaith Forum Chair Aminuddin Azis, a critic of the church closure, in his car. Azis said he fled into a nearby police station, but police did not arrest any of the attackers, even as they threatened to behead him.

On June 1, a group from FJI attacked the Indonesian Pentecostal Church (GPDI) in Pangukan near Yogyakarta. Police received advanced warning of a possible attack and told the congregants to cut their service short and evacuate the church. Witnesses reported that a deployment of about 200 uniformed police, however, failed to intervene when a mob of approximately 40 attackers smashed the church's windows and doors.

On July 21, police reportedly joined members of hard-line group Laskar Pembela Islam (LPI) in threatening three restaurants operating during daylight hours during Ramadan in Pamekasan, Madura, in East Java Province.

The government sometimes used blasphemy or internet laws to investigate and prosecute individuals for speech deemed insulting to religion. Leaders and members of some groups, however, frequently disseminated hate speech and called for violence against minority groups with impunity.

In April a coalition of groups held the Anti-Shia National Alliance Conference in Bandung, West Java Province. Despite protest from Shia groups and NGOs that the event would incite hatred, and calls for a “purge” and jihad against Shia from speakers at the event, government officials and police allowed the conference to proceed. Representatives from the West Java Governor’s administration and the semi-governmental Indonesian Council of Ulema (MUI) supported and attended the event.

According to the MRA, there were 289,951 mosques, 69,703 Christian churches, 24,801 Hindu temples, 3,342 Buddhist Monasteries, and 651 Confucian temples in Indonesia, the majority of which operated freely without government interference. NGOs stated, however, that, because of the onerous requirements of a 2006 joint ministerial decree on the construction of houses of worship, as many as 85 percent of all houses of worship, most of them mosques, operated without a permit.

Many Christian churches operated without permits in office buildings, malls, and shop houses. Under pressure from intolerant groups, local governments closed some churches, citing violations of the requirements of the decree. In many cases, churches that were established well before the decree came into effect were still obligated to meet the requirements or face closure. Churches also reported that intolerant groups forced them to pay protection money to continue operation if they did not have a permit.

Seven churches in Cianjur, West Java, were sealed by district heads between December 2013 and January 2014. Government officials sealed the churches for permit violations under threat from some Islamic groups, even though some of the churches had been operating without issue since as early as 1977. Officials claimed the churches were actually homes, not houses of worship, and so could only legally be used by one family.

On March 20, the Bandung Administrative Court in West Java ruled in favor of the Islamic Peoples Forum (FUI) to revoke a building permit issued (after a seven-year wait) to the Stanislaus Catholic Congregation to build a church in Bekasi. The groundbreaking ceremony had been attended by the Bekasi mayor, but construction was halted after the court ruled that the church had not sufficiently publicized the construction.

The government closed Ahmadi mosques under the pretext of the 2008 ban on proselytizing by Ahmadis. In Ciamis, the FPI held a protest demanding the closing of a local Ahmadi mosque. The Ciamis district head reportedly announced that he “personally rejected Ahmadiyya” and that there was a “legal process that needed to be taken.” The next day the Ahmadi Nur Khilafat Mosque was sealed by police and representatives of the Regional Leadership Consultative council. Under pressure from civil society groups, the mosque was eventually reopened in a public ceremony in July.

On May 11, the district government resealed the Al-Misbah Ahmadi Mosque in Bekasi, West Java, which had been originally “sealed and locked” in 2013 based on a regulation from the West Java governor’s office banning the spread of Ahmadiyya. These actions came despite a December 2013 court ruling that stated the mosque could not be “sealed,” but made no ruling on whether it could be “locked.” Ahmadi activists removed the seal again in June and began using the mosque under protest from hard-line groups. Police provided some protection to the congregation during Friday prayers.

On May 16, the group Gerakan Reformasi Islam (GARIS) sealed the Cianjur office of Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia (JAI) with wood planks. The office had been used by Ahmadis for Friday prayer since GARIS had burned down the Ahmadi mosque in 2011. NGOs reported that police were present as GARIS sealed the office but the police failed to intervene. JAI directly asked the local police chief to unseal the office, but no action was taken. On August 25, JAI members unsealed the office themselves.

Local governments in coordination with the MRA held “development” (*pembinaan*) sessions designed to convert minority religious groups to Sunni Islam. For instance, in Ciamis, media and NGOs reported that officials offered to delay the closure of the Nur Khilafat Mosque if the local Ahmadi congregation would agree to receive “development” lectures from Sunni clerics once a month after Friday prayers. NGOs also reported government “development” programs designed to convert Shia and practitioners of traditional religions. In several West Java regencies, local governments replaced previous efforts to force or encourage conversion of Ahmadis with a requirement that Ahmadis sign forms renouncing their beliefs in order to register their marriages or participate in the Hajj. In Tasikmalaya, this policy, established by municipal regulation, was openly advertised on signage produced by the local MRA.

The government declined to use its executive authority to solve past religious disputes and enforce constitutional and legal protections for religious minorities. Instead, the government tried to resolve disputes through mediation, often attempting to negotiate directly with violent, intolerant organizations or leaving resolution of disputes to local authorities. For instance, as in previous years the government did not take any concrete action to enforce the Supreme Court decisions permitting the Indonesian Christian (GKI) Yasmin Church in Bogor, West Java, and the Batak Christian (HKBP) Filadelfia Church in Bekasi, West Java, to reopen. Despite several dialogues, official visits, and reconciliation attempts, 162 Shia internally displaced persons (IDPs) who were forced from their homes after violent attacks in 2012 remained housed outside of Surabaya, East Java, after residents from their home city of Sampang refused to agree to their peaceful return.

The animist Marapu people of Sumba in East Nusa Tenggara Province reported difficulty obtaining national ID cards because they were not followers of one of the six recognized religions. Some members of unrecognized religious groups found it easier to register as members of a religion other than their own and were issued KTPs that inaccurately reflected their religion. For example, some animists received KTPs that listed their religion as Islam. Many Sikhs registered as Hindu on their KTPs and marriage certificates. Similarly, some Jews registered as Christians or Muslims. Some citizens without a KTP had difficulty finding work. Several NGOs and religious advocacy groups continued to urge the government to delete the religion field from the KTPs, but made no progress.

Minority Islamic groups also faced resistance when they tried to apply for KTPs as Muslims. Ahmadi IDPs in Mataram, Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara Province, were finally allowed to receive

KTPs listing their religion as Islam, which afforded them some increased access to government services. NGOs reported, however, that, while identity cards were printed for Ahmadi residents of Manislor village, Kuningan, West Java, the District Religious Affairs Office refused to distribute the cards citing fear of a backlash from local intolerant groups.

Foreign religious workers found it relatively easy to obtain visas. Despite restrictions on proselytizing, foreign religious groups reported little government interference with preaching or religious conversions. Police provided protection to some churches in major cities during Sunday services.

Section III. Status of Societal Respect for Religious Freedom

The media, civil society, and the general population were increasingly vocal and active in protecting and promoting tolerance and pluralism. NGOs reported large numbers of Christian-to-Islam and Islam-to-Christian conversions, particularly in urban centers and the province of West Java. Organized intolerant religious groups, however, continued to restrict the rights of minority groups through attacks and intimidation. Religious groups, including the semi-governmental MUI, disseminated materials and gave speeches that promoted intolerance of minority religious groups. Indonesia's increasingly vibrant civil society, including NGOs and other religious groups, countered the influence of these messages by publishing materials advocating tolerance, holding interfaith conferences and events, and speaking out publicly for pluralism and the protection of minority groups.

The Setara Institute reported 47 cases between January and June in which non-state actors abused or discriminated against religious minority groups, down from 90 over the same period in 2013. According to the report, the provinces most affected by religious communal violence were West Java, Central Java, and East Java. Conflict between different Islamic groups was more common than conflict between groups of different religions.

In early 2014, anti-Shia religious groups and student organizations held a series of discussion groups across the country about an anti-Shia pocketbook titled *Recognizing and Being Alert to Shia Deviance in Indonesia*, published by the Central Board of the MUI. At one such event in Makassar, South Sulawesi Province in February, the head of the Islam Research and Studies Institution (LPPI) declared the formation of an anti-Shia movement called Gemma Sunni. Another event hosted by the Alumni of Pondok Pesantren Al Urwathul Wustra in Tasikmalaya, West Java, ended in an anti-Shia demonstration. On March 9, after an event promoting another anti-Shia book (*The Zionists and the Shia Unite to Destroy Islam*) the head of the Bekasi, West Java District MUI called on the 500 attendees to form an anti-Shia movement.

The Anti-Shia National Alliance (ANAS) held a conference at the Al-Fajr Mosque in Bandung, West Java, on April 20. About 1,000 members of numerous organizations attended the event along with some government and MUI representatives. The attendees signed a declaration calling Shiism "heretical" and "deviant" and urged the government to immediately ban all Shia organizations and institutions in Indonesia. Speakers also publicly called for a "purge" of the Shia.

Shortly after the event, however, an openly Shia candidate was elected from Bandung's majority Sunni West Java district to a contested seat in the national House of Representatives.

In September and October the FPI and other intolerant groups held a series of protests urging the Jakarta City Council to cancel the inauguration of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) as governor. Purnama, a Christian, took over after Jakarta Governor Joko Widodo was elected president. After a demonstration turned violent in October and several police were injured, police detained FPI demonstrators, and later arrested two FPI leaders for organizing the protest. During the presidential campaign, Joko Widodo also faced accusations that he was secretly a Christian.

Societal discrimination against Ahmadi Muslims was widespread, especially in West Java. Ahmadis reported discrimination in education and administration of public services, and feeling under constant threat from militant groups.

In East Java, there were frequent doctrinal conflicts between the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the world's largest Muslim organization that accommodates traditional Javanese traditions, and the Majelis Tafsir Al-Quran (MTA), a reformist organization that rejects some of the traditional syncretic practices of Indonesian Islam. Each group accused the other of impinging their religious freedom.

Section IV. U.S. Government Policy

The U.S. embassy,, the Consulate General in Surabaya, and the Consulate in Medan regularly engaged with all levels of the government on specific religious freedom issues, such as: the persecution of the Ahmadiyya, Shia, and other religious minorities; concern over church closures and access for foreign religious organizations; arrests for blasphemy and defamation of religion; the undue influence of intolerant groups and the importance of the rule of law; the application of sharia to non-Muslims; religious registration requirements on KTPs; the importance of education and interfaith dialogue in promoting tolerance; and promotion of tolerance in international fora.

The embassy, consulate general, and consulate also spoke publicly about the importance of religious tolerance and protecting minorities from acts of violence. Embassy staff at all levels met frequently with religious leaders, representatives of social organizations, and human rights advocates to clarify U.S. policy in support of religious freedom, discuss religious tolerance, and promote respect for religion. Embassy officials also met with members of minority religious groups who were victims of violent attacks or other religious intolerance.

In February and May, respectively, the embassy facilitated high-level meetings between the Assistant Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, and Solidarity of Victims of Religious Freedom Violations (Sobat KBB), an organization of past victims of religious violence and discrimination that advocates for religious freedom. In June the embassy hosted a Sobat KBB briefing for diplomats from other embassies.

In July the embassy hosted the three-day Bhinneka Tunggal Ika-E Pluribus Unum Camp and blogging competition (named after the two countries' national mottoes, which have nearly identical meanings) for students and youth leaders representing all major religious groups and campus organizations, to promote religious tolerance and pluralism. The event closed with an iftar hosted by

the Ambassador for camp attendees, religious leaders, senior government officials, and representatives from NGOs focused on religious freedom issues.

Embassy and consulate staff appeared on a number of nationally televised programs to discuss themes related to religious tolerance and diversity. Alumni from U.S. government-funded student exchange programs often appeared with embassy and consulate officials to provide accounts of their experiences in the United States. Embassy and consulate officials spoke at Islamic boarding schools throughout Indonesia on topics related to religious pluralism. These outreach activities carried messages of social tolerance to tens of millions of viewers.

The embassy sponsored speaking tours and events by visiting U.S. experts, including a speaker on religious pluralism and Islam in the United States, who met with youth from religious organizations in Java, Sulawesi, and Sumatra; American and Indonesian Muslim women sharing their experiences; and a book discussion with an American imam and rabbi speaking together on interfaith dialogue.

During Ramadan, embassy and consulate staff held a number of events focused on religious tolerance. Throughout June and July, American officers and youth exchange alumni traveled to schools, universities, and religious youth organizations to talk about religious freedom issues and explain religious diversity in the U.S.

Embassy and consulate staff also conducted extensive print and digital outreach, including the Ambassador's Ramadan and Eid greeting videos, a social media question-and-answer session with an embassy official who is Muslim about religious freedom in the United States, and other religious pluralism initiatives that reached millions of Indonesians throughout the country. The Ambassador appeared on an episode of a popular television soap opera focused on themes including religious pluralism that reached over 23 million Indonesians nationwide. Embassy and consulate personnel also led discussions and gave presentations at venues throughout the country, conveying messages about diversity and religious tolerance to thousands of high school and university students.

The embassy, consulate general, and consulate also promoted religious pluralism and tolerance through study exchanges and other civil society programs including for rising leaders and scholars.

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