



Sharia Watch UK

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[Home](#) > What is happening in Indonesia?

What is happening in Indonesia?

 [1]

Source Item:

[What is happening in Indonesia?](#) [2]

Country:

Indonesia

News Date:

21/02/2002

Sharia Watch

Tags:

[Jihad](#) [3]

[Christianity](#) [4]

Summary:

At the time of independence from the Dutch in 1945, calls for Indonesia to become an Islamic state were successfully resisted. The authors of Indonesia's constitution opted instead for pluralism, affirming a diversity of religions including Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. The national motto is 'Unity in Diversity'.

However during the 1980's President Suharto, to prop up his ailing presidency, began to court Islamic radicals, who grew rapidly in influence. One of the effects of this political shift has been an escalation of attacks on Christian communities in Indonesia. The Barnabas Fund (UK) reported at the end of 2000 that half a million Christians have become internally displaced; more than 5,000 people have been killed; and as many as 7,000 have been forcibly converted to Islam. Local Muslim communities have also experienced great suffering in the violent confrontations.

Churches attacked or destroyed in Indonesia since Independence

Years	Churches attacked
1945-1965	2
1966-1975	46
1976-1985	89
1986-1995	104
1996- present	Over 500

Source: Indonesian Christian Communications Forum

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Links

[1] <https://shariawatch.org.uk/?q=content/what-happening-indonesia>

[2] http://www.dhimmitude.org/archive/durie_bali_21oct02.html

[3] <https://shariawatch.org.uk/?q=tags/jihad>

[4] <https://shariawatch.org.uk/?q=tags/christianity>