Timeline of Selected Indonesian Historical Events

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Please see Maps 1, 2 and 3 for locations of places mentioned below.

10,000 BCE Islands of the Indonesian archipelago form when lower land is covered by water from melting ice, leaving only higher ground above water. Oceans and rivers link, rather than divide, peoples. Colliding tectonic plates create a constant threat of earthquakes and volcanic activity.

400 CE Inscriptions in Indian scripts record Hindu rulers in East Kalimantan and West Java.

632 After the death of Prophet Muhammad, Islam spreads through the Middle East, North Africa, Spain, India and China.

c. 670 Maritime kingdom of Sriwijaya in southern Sumatra becomes the regional centre for Buddhism and extensive trading networks extend to mainland Southeast Asia and Java.

760–830 Buddhist monument Borobudur constructed in Central Java.

900s Hindu temple complex of Prambanan constructed in Central Java.

Majapahit, Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in East Java, expands its influence into surrounding regions. Present-day Hindu Bali maintains Balinese–Hindu culture and preserves some of the literature of pre-Islamic Java.

Muslim gravestones in North Sumatra mark the presence of Muslim communities.

Land and sea contests between local rulers on both sides of the Melaka straits for control of the east–west trade passing through the straits.

The sultanate of Aceh in North Sumatra supports Muslim scholars and Islamicate culture. Four Muslim female rulers preside over a golden age of commerce in the mid to late seventeenth century.

Demak, the first Muslim court in Java, and the coastal Javanese sultanates that follow, develop distinctive syntheses of local, Muslim and regional arts. Courts in Central Java do likewise despite extended periods of warfare against each other and the Dutch. 2

British and Dutch formal and informal commercial networks join the contest for access to lucrative regional trade. The Dutch try to enforce a monopoly of the spice trade. In 1600, the English East India Company is formed followed in 1602 by the Dutch United East India Company (VOC).

In the royal courts of Java, distinctive Javanese styles of Islam and Sufism develop; the arts, crafts, dance-drama, shadow theatre, literature and music flourish.

The VOC lacks the capital to maintain its position in the archipelago. The Dutch government is forced to take over the administration of the Netherlands East Indies (NEI).

Napoleonic Wars in Europe force the Netherlands to request a British inter-regnum in NEI. Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles does the job. The return of the Dutch in 1816 is not welcomed by all.

Present-day international boundaries between Malaysia and Indonesia established by the Treaty of London negotiated between Britain and the Netherlands.

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2 We thank Dr James Bennett for his advice on this complex period of Indonesian history.
TIMELINE OF SELECTED INDONESIAN HISTORICAL EVENTS

1825–30  Pangeran (Prince) Diponegoro (1785–1855) leads a mass uprising against the Dutch fuelled by general anger about taxes and corruption (perpetrated by Europeans, Chinese and the hereditary Javanese aristocracy). After five years of brutal fighting and the deaths of over 200,000 Javanese, 8,000 European and 7,000 local soldiers, Diponegoro opens negotiations with the Dutch who arrest him. He is exiled to Sulawesi where he dies in 1855.

1830 – late 1870s  Dutch impose cultuurstelsel (cultivation system) of compulsory delivery to the government of export crops. The resulting revenues make the Dutch and the local Indonesian officials extremely prosperous. In 1860, under the pen-name ‘Multatuli’ (I bear much), former colonial official Eduard Douwes Dekker publishes the novel Max Havelaar, which remains the best-known exposé of the Dutch colonial system and the corruption and cruelty of the local indigenous aristocracy. Just over a century later, in 1976, Dutch film director F. Radermakers, who had prior approval from the Indonesian Ministry of Information, releases his film Max Havelaar. In 1977, the Indonesian Censorship Board bans it, claiming that the film creates the impression that colonialism was good and that it was the local Javanese aristocrats who exploited their fellows. Radermakers refuses to make changes to his film and says ‘Multatuli’s protests [against injustice] are still very topical’.³

1851  Raden Saleh (1811–1880), a Javanese aristocrat, returns to Java after 25 years studying and painting in Europe. He was the ‘first Indonesian who spoke a number of European languages [and the] first Indonesian who had lived for an extended time in Europe’.⁴ Indonesians date the beginning of modern Indonesian art to his works.

1873–1904  The Dutch engage in guerrilla wars with Acehnese forces, including those under female leader Cut Nyak Din (1850–1908). A modus vivendi is achieved but Aceh retains its independent spirit up to the present.⁵

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⁵ For a sensitive, revealing and moving analysis of Aceh’s internal and external struggles, see Edward Aspinall, Islam and Nation: Separatist Rebellion in Aceh (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009).
Either by force (e.g. Lombok 1894, Bone in Sulawesi 1904, Bali in 1908) or by deposition and treaty (e.g. the sultanate of Lingga-Riau in 1912), the Dutch assume control over most of the territory now constituting modern Indonesia.

Several enlightened Dutch colonials, following in the steps of ‘Multatuli’, persuade the Dutch government that it should take responsibility for the negative effects of the cultivation system and other forms of exploitation of the peoples of the NEI by improving their welfare. In 1901, an enquiry into the people’s welfare marks the beginning of the Dutch ‘Ethical Policy’ aimed at improving the basic education and material conditions of ‘the masses’.

In Cairo, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839–1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) teach that selected progressive ideas from European thinking (e.g. on education, science, technology, medicine) can be adopted by Muslims who want to participate in the modern world and still remain true to Islam. These ideas spread in Muslim Southeast Asia and, especially, in Indonesia, through publications and religious schools.

Raden Ajeng Kartini, aged 25, dies soon after having her first child. Born into a progressive aristocratic Javanese family, her father encouraged his daughters to attend the local Dutch school, which, as aristocrats, they were entitled to do and could afford. From 1899 until her death, Kartini corresponded in Dutch with the wives of Dutch officials. Her letters provide insights into the visions she and her sisters had for the education of girls. Kartini’s concern for the condition of Javanese women and girls is commemorated in her status as a national hero in modern Indonesia. Recently attention has been given to Kartini’s interest in and talent for art.

Budi Utomo (The Beautiful Endeavour), a Javanese association for Dutch-educated members of the lesser aristocracy (priyayi), is established. It was largely apolitical with members united by cultural, educational and welfare interests. In 1909 it had its highest membership of 10,000 and was eventually dissolved in 1935, but it was the forerunner of a number of ‘proto-nationalist’ organisations formed by Dutch-educated and/or progressive Muslims that culminated in the pan-Indonesia youth congress of 1928.

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6 See further Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia, 199–205.
Ahmad Dahlan establishes the modernist Muslim social organisation ‘Muhammadiyah’ in Yogyakarta. Currently Indonesia’s second largest Muslim organisation with branches in every province and extremely active women’s groups, it runs hospitals, kindergartens, schools and universities.

Nahdlatul Ulama (Revival of the Religious Scholars) is formed by Muslim religious teachers (kyai) in East Java who did not support the ‘modernist’ approach to Islam promoted by members of Muhammadiyah. Known as NU, this movement currently claims around 40 million members, has very enterprising women’s wings, runs traditional religious boarding schools and colleges known as pesantren, and cares for orphans, the very poor and the graves of individuals revered as ‘saints’. Although originally founded in opposition to Muhammadiyah, shared interests in human rights, engaging fully with the contemporary world and its issues from an Islamic perspective, and concern about the growth of extremist interpretations of Islam, have recently brought the two organisations closer together to cooperate for the common good.

In October, many ethnically based associations of young people, known as ‘Young Bataks’, ‘Young Javanese’ and so on, hold a pan-Indonesia congress in Batavia (Jakarta). By 28 October, they have agreed to place nationalism ahead of their ethnic loyalties and they swear a Youth Pledge (Sumpah Pemuda) that continues to be made each year on 28 October: ‘One land, Indonesia; one nation, Indonesia, one language, Indonesian’. This commitment to a national unity of place, nation and language differentiates Indonesia from other postcolonial nations, such as India, which remain deeply divided by religions, ethnicities and languages.

The collapse of the US stock market that initiated the Great Depression seriously affects the prices of Indonesia’s exports with cascade effects on patterns of employment and availability of work. Muslim welfare organisations support many of the needy.

8 The following highly readable and informative study of selected saints is recommended: George Quinn, The Bandit Saints of Java (Leicestershire: Monsoon Books Ltd, 2019).
9 See Ricklets, A History of Modern Indonesia, 234–35.
1930s–40 A period of competing nationalist movements whose leaders, including Sukarno (1901–1970), were being exiled or imprisoned by the Dutch who granted no concessions to nationalist demands for a parliament for Indonesians.

Beyond Indonesia, major changes were occurring: Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933; in 1937, the Sino-Japanese War broke out; in May 1940, Hitler invaded the Netherlands, whose government reassembled in exile in London and declared martial law in Indonesia.

1941 Japan attacks Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, lands military forces in mainland Southeast Asia and starts the Pacific War.

1942 Japan’s army occupies Sumatra and Java and its navy occupies the islands of the eastern archipelago.

1942–44 Indonesians observe an Eastern power supplant a European one and intern non-Indonesians. They also see the Japanese subject Indonesians to forced labour and send thousands of Indonesians to mainland Southeast Asia to work on Japanese projects. Japanese control of food and natural resources for their war effort compounds the deprivations Indonesians suffered during the Depression. The Malay language (Bahasa Indonesia) is strengthened as Indonesia’s language of unity when the Japanese use it for administration and mass communication and Indonesia’s nationalist leaders take the opportunity to further their own aims. In an attempt to win the support of these leaders, Japan promises independence to Indonesia but does not name a date.

1945 In August, the US drops atomic bombs on Japan, which surrenders. Two days later, on 17 August, Sukarno proclaims Indonesia’s independence on what later becomes its national day. Revolutionary excitement, especially among young Indonesians, is expressed in art, literature, journals and newspapers. This generation of activist artists and writers is known as ‘Angkatan 45’ (the generation of ‘45). The general situation across Indonesia is poverty stricken, chaotic and dangerous with the Japanese military still in control of some regions, British forces trying to accept Japanese surrenders, the Dutch wanting to reoccupy ‘their’ colony and Indonesian nationalists fighting for their newly proclaimed independence.¹⁰

¹⁰ The complexities and violence of this period of revolutionary struggle are described in Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, 261–86. They include a communist uprising in Madiun in 1948 when at least 8,000 people were killed, and an attempt to establish an Islamic state during the Darul Islam rebellion, which ended only when its leader, Kartosoewirjo, was executed in 1962.
1946 – December 1949 Despite at least two formal agreements with the Dutch to end hostilities in the struggle for control of Indonesia, protracted armed struggles continue. Only on 27 December 1949, after intervention from the United Nations, do the Netherlands agree to transfer sovereignty to Indonesia. The Netherlands retains sovereignty over West Irian (now Papua) whose status will be determined separately.

1948 ASRI (Indonesian Academy of Fine Arts) established in Yogyakarta. Its name later changed to ISI (Indonesian Institute of Fine Arts).

18 February 1950 Surat Kepercayaan Gelanggang (Gelanggang statement of beliefs) setting out a vision for Indonesia’s new, independent and inspiring national culture is signed and published in October 1950.

17 August 1950 Lekra (Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat/People’s Institute of Culture) established.11

1950 Art Department established at Institute of Technology Bandung. It is later called the Faculty of Visual Art and Design.

1955 In April in Bandung, Sukarno hosts the first Asia–Africa Conference attended by the heads of 29 newly independent nations. In September, Indonesia holds its first general elections.

1957–59 The linked rebellions of the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI) in Sulawesi and West Sumatra are fought against the central government.

1959 In June–July Sukarno dissolves the Constituent Assembly that had been unable to agree whether Pancasila or Islam should be Indonesia’s national ideology. By Presidential Decree, he returns to the 1945 Constitution and establishes his ‘Guided Democracy’ regime giving himself full executive powers. He presents a political manifesto that is known by its acronym MANIPOL-USDEK.

1961–63 Sukarno uses military force against the Dutch in Irian. The UN withdraws authority for Irian from the Dutch and entrusts it to Indonesia, creating long-term issues for all involved.

1960–65 During this period, Indonesia sends official state-sponsored cultural missions and arts visits to the following countries and events (in order of visits): Honolulu, Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore; USSR, PRC; North Korea, North Vietnam; Pakistan; New York World Fair, the Netherlands, France; Cambodia and Japan; PRC, North Korea, Japan.¹²

1963 Lekra sponsors a cultural delegation to PRC, North Vietnam and North Korea.¹³

In April, Sukarno announces hostilities towards Malaysia in a policy known as Konfrontasi.

On 17 August, Manifesto Kebudayaan (Manikebu/cultural manifesto) of universal humanism published by intellectuals opposed to the ideologies of Lekra.

1964 On 8 May, Manifesto Kebudayaan (Manikebu) is banned and its supporters reviled.

1965 In May in Jakarta, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) stages lavish public celebrations of its forty-fifth anniversary. There is increasing disquiet within and outside Indonesia about Sukarno's tilt to the left, authoritarian behaviour and poverty-stricken nation.

On 1 October, General Suharto (1921–2008), with military backing, takes control of Jakarta after an alleged coup attempt.

On 9 October, parliament impeaches Sukarno.¹⁴

1966 Sukarno, under house arrest, signs over presidential power to General Suharto, who becomes Indonesia's second president (1966–98).

October 1965 – February 1966 At least half a million Indonesians murdered in mass executions because of real or suspected association with the Communist Party and leftist organisations.

¹² This information gathered from Lindsay and Liem, Heirs to World Culture, 497–99.
¹³ Ibid., 498.
¹⁴ For more details of these events, see David Jenkins, Young Soeharto: The Making of a Soldier, 1921–1945 (Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2021), xxiii–xxiv, doi.org/10.1355/9789814881012. The book is the first in a trilogy that will describe ‘the rise to power of one of Asia’s most brutal, most durable, most avaricious and most successful dictators’ (p. xxviii).
October 1965 – 1969

Indonesia-wide operations to identify and detain individuals with real or suspected connection with leftist organisations, including prominent intellectuals, artists and writers. Exiled, imprisoned, held without trial until the late 1970s or later, their families were permanently stigmatised and discriminated against. All references to these events are forbidden and censored. The killings, atrocities and imprisonments are only able to be discussed openly after Suharto’s resignation in 1998.

1966–67

President Suharto bans the PKI and Lekra. He restores relations with Malaysia, the UN and the World Bank.

1968–69

Suharto declares his government the ‘New Order’ with development as its theme. He becomes known as ‘Bapak Pembangunan’ (Father of Development) and plans the nation’s future for the next 25 years through five, five-year plans known as ‘Repelita’ (Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun/Five-Year Development Plan). All aspects of government are tightly controlled and regulated to create a modern, technology-driven nation. The military has a new ‘dual function’ as protector of security (including policing) as well as supporting civil administration.

1973–74

An unexpected boom in world oil prices lifts the New Order economy. But appropriation of land for industrial estates, exploitation of cheap labour and massive concessions to Chinese conglomerates provoke reactions.

1974

Anti-government riots in Jakarta in January, given the acronym MALARI (Malapetaka Limabelas Januari/Disaster of 15 January) signal organised resistance to the authoritarian nature of the New Order’s policies and their implementation. They also reveal the New Order’s determination to crush opposition to their policies.

1975

Portugal withdraws from Timor, which declares its independence. Indonesia invades in December. In May 1976, Indonesia declares East Timor to be its twenty-eighth province and East Timorese resistance begins.

1980

Prominent Indonesians sign ‘The Petition of Fifty’, criticising the policies of the Suharto regime. Their careers are ended and they are socially ostracised.

1984

At Tanjung Priok (Jakarta’s port area), armed forces massacre scores of Muslims protesting against New Order policies.
The negative effects of industrialisation (pollution of waterways), deforestation (catastrophic mud-slips that bury villages in the wet season), mono-cultures (particularly oil palm plantations), pesticides that destroy the natural balances of eco-systems, forest fires that ignite subterranean peat beds and practices such as over-fishing cause serious concern to many Indonesian professional and non-professional groups. Although long-term solutions are not firmly in place, monitoring and remediation have begun despite pushback from groups with vested interests.

On the plus side, Indonesia now has a substantial middle class (although distribution of wealth is an ongoing economic and social issue); basic health services have been extended to villages and there are more midwives trained to support mothers and babies; primary education is compulsory and increasing numbers continue to secondary and tertiary education; satellite communications and access to the internet are widespread; and transport, especially by air, is relatively affordable, although safety standards have been criticised by international bodies.

1991 A peaceful demonstration in Dili, capital of East Timor, is fired on by the Indonesian military. The protesters try to shelter behind graves in the Santa Cruz cemetery, where over 90 are gunned down. Courageous camera people capture the horror, which is broadcast internationally.

9 May 1993 Marsinah, a worker at a watch factory in East Java, leads a strike for a minimum wage and improved conditions. The military are called in and Marsinah disappears. Her mutilated body is found in nearby fields with signs of rape and torture. During this year, the government bans several major newspapers including the weekly magazine Tempo.

1996 Wiji Thukul, poet, arts worker and activist, disappears. His body has never been found and he is believed to have been killed during a purge by Indonesian military that left 14 people missing, presumed murdered. He had been head of the People's Art Network, a body affiliated with the opposition party's People's Democratic Party (PRD). He worked with children from the poorest areas in Central Java and his poetry was openly critical of Suharto's regime.
In July, the Asian Economic Crisis hits Indonesia hard and the value of the national currency (rupiah) collapses. Despite this, Suharto’s adult children maintain their corrupt business activities and increase their massive wealth, causing widespread criticism and contempt. The acronym coined to describe the activities of the Suharto family and their cronies ‘KKN’ (korupsi, kolusi dan nepotisme) is widely and openly used.

In March, Suharto is re-elected by parliament for a seventh term as president, with B. J. Habibie as his vice-president. The economic crisis is out of control and mass protests increase.

On 12 May, four Trisakti University student protesters are killed by armed forces, igniting the worst urban riots and rapes in Indonesian history between 13 and 15 May. Suharto comes under increasing pressure to resign.

On 21 May, Suharto resigns and is replaced by Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie (1936–2019) as Indonesia’s third president. He initiates many reforms, including a democratic general election in 1999. He also enables East Timor to vote on whether it will remain part of Indonesia or become autonomous. His government introduces greater freedoms for trade unions and the press, which had laboured under New Order censorship for several decades.

Suharto’s zero-tolerance policy of public criticism and protest suppressed civil society organisations, but, in the post-Suharto period known as Reformasi (reform or reformation), they re-surface and flourish, notably human rights and environmental groups.15

The transition from New Order authoritarianism to democracy through the process of reform has involved the strengthening of ‘guardian’ institutions such as the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) and the introduction of new institutions such as the Corruption Eradication Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman. An ongoing process of judicial reform is also in process.16


16 For an assessment of these reforms and examples of their implementation, see Tim Lindsey and Helen Pausacker, eds, Religion, Law and Intolerance in Indonesia (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), doi.org/10.4324/9781315657356.
1999

In January, President Habibie, to the anger of Indonesia's military that had lost lives fighting in Timor, announces that East Timor will have an act of free choice. On 4 September, when a 78.5 per cent victory for the pro-independence option was announced, a widespread, well-planned campaign of murder, destruction and violence was carried out by militias backed by the Indonesian military. A few days' later, Indonesia was forced to allow an Australian-led peacekeeping force into East Timor.\(^1^7\)

Habibie also appoints a committee to advise on the drafting of regional autonomy legislation. The legislation includes popularly elected local parliaments and devolution of a fixed share of locally generated revenues.

The second democratic election since 1955 consolidates the Reformasi period and sees the decline of Suharto's Golkar party.

1999–2001

K. H. Abdurrahman Wahid (1940–2009) elected Indonesia's fourth president but impeached in 2001 and replaced by his vice-president, Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of the first president, Sukarno.

2001


The implementation of Habibie's decentralisation laws begins in 2001. The central government maintains authority for external defence, foreign policy, fiscal policy, judicial matters and religious affairs.

In a major shift, governors, mayors and district administrators are elected locally, not appointed from Jakarta.

The effects of decentralisation are still being assessed. The increase in local revenues was insufficient to meet the needs of education and health, resulting in increased local taxes that burden the less well-off. Cultural identity politics increased in some areas to the detriment of minority groups. On the other hand, the ‘invention’ of tradition has enriched some forms of artistic practice.\(^1^8\) (See Map 3 for current boundaries of Indonesia’s provinces.)

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\(^1^7\) See accounts of this period in Chris Manning and Peter van Diermen, eds, *Indonesia in Transition: Social Aspects of Reformasi and Crisis* (Singapore: ISEAS Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2000), passim and especially Part II, 87–142.

\(^1^8\) For some of the pros and cons of decentralisation and the phenomenon known as *pemekaran* (flowering or blossoming of existing administrative units by subdivision), see Nordholt and van Klinken, ‘Introduction’, 15–23.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>In mid-2000, members of a radical Islamic movement known in Indonesia as JI (Jemaah Islamiyah), founded by two former members of Darul Islam and intent on establishing an Islamic state, begins a campaign of bomb attacks on churches in Indonesian cities. Nineteen Indonesians are killed.</td>
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<td>2002, 2005</td>
<td>On 12 October 2002, suicide-bombers from JI attack two nightclubs in Bali, killing 212 people. A second bombing in Bali on 1 October 2005 kills 21 people. Indonesia’s mainstream Muslim organisations condemn the violence of JI and other radical Islamic radical groups, such as Laskar Jihad (Holy War Fighters) and Front Pembela Islam (Islamic Defenders Front).</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Martial law is declared in Aceh to ‘eradicate’ GAM (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka/Free Aceh Movement), a secessionist movement operating in Aceh since 1976.</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>After extensive public education about the meaning and process of democratic elections, a series of successfully held elections result in a new legislature and a new president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (known as SBY) (b. 1949), who held office for the maximum two terms between 2004 and 2014. On 26 December, the Sumatra-Andaman undersea earthquake measuring 9 on the Richter scale, 30 km below sea level, occurs 160 km off the west coast of Aceh, causing a horrendous three-wave tsunami. Over 167,000 individuals in Aceh are estimated to have perished, with over 500,000 being displaced and all the population of northern Aceh suffering severe trauma. Aceh receives massive national and international disaster relief and rebuilding assistance.</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>An international peace process between GAM representatives and the Indonesian government makes progress and a memorandum of understanding is signed in August in Helsinki as the basis for self-government for Aceh within the Republic of Indonesia.</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>On 27 May, an undersea earthquake, magnitude 6.3 on the Richter scale, occurs 25 km south of Yogyakarta, Central Java. One of the deadliest earthquakes in Java in historic times, it causes over 5,700 deaths, injures over 200,000 and displaces over 600,000 people. More than 154,000 homes are destroyed. As in Aceh, disaster relief teams come from across Indonesia as well as from overseas.</td>
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In July, the Indonesian Parliament passes the *Law for the Government of Aceh* (replacing the special autonomy law), and Aceh holds its first elections in December. Since the beginning of the secessionist movement in 1976, between 12,000 and 20,000 Acehnese have been killed.  

From the mid-2000s, reports of attacks on Ahmadis and Shi’a Muslims increase. In 2011, three Ahmadis are killed while police look on. Research by Indonesia’s Ministry of Religion indicates that training local leaders to act as peacemakers and to resolve religious disputes before they escalate is the most effective way to avoid inter-religious violence.

Joko Widodo (known as Jokowi) (b. 1961) is elected as Indonesia’s seventh president and re-elected in 2019. His first presidential term focuses on initiating large infrastructure projects, such as ports, roads, bridges and railways. He also gradually reduces fuel subsidies and strengthens the economy.

The governor of Jakarta, Chinese-Christian Ahok (full name Basuki Tjahaja Purnama) is accused of insulting the Quran under a 1965 Blasphemy Law. He is tried, convicted and sentenced to two years in gaol.

On 6 August, on the island of Lombok, a 6.9 Richter scale earthquake, followed by mudslides, kills more than 450 people and causes widespread damage and homelessness.

On 28 September 2019, in Central Sulawesi, a 7.5 earthquake and tsunami, followed by soil liquefaction and mud flows, kills at least 4,340 people, with over 10,000 injured and more than 70,000 houses destroyed.

Indonesia’s improved economic situation under presidents SBY and Jokowi has strengthened the middle class in numbers and complexity. There are increasing numbers of cosmopolitan, tertiary educated, urban-middle-class Indonesians who are devout, conservative Muslims. Their attitudes to the role of Islam in politics and on the public expression of Islam in their daily lives are not yet fully understood but are of critical interest to researchers and others who are analysing the apparent growth of literalist, conservative Islam in Indonesia.

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20 For this case and recent research on intolerance and discrimination against minorities, see Greg Fealy and Ronit Ricci, eds, *Contentious Belonging: The Place of Minorities in Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, 2019), doi.org/10.1355/9789814843478.
The influence of Muslim preachers in urban and rural mosques remains strong as shown by their role in generating criticism and condemnation of Jakarta’s Governor Ahok, resulting in his trial for blasphemy.

The COVID-19 virus(es) that spread rapidly in Indonesia highlights the divide between the super-rich, who are able to access private hospital treatment; the rich, who are allocated beds in hospitals that are apparently full; ordinary Indonesians, who are brought to public clinics for treatment and, if lucky, find spaces in tents outside the hospitals; and the poor, who die where they have lived.\textsuperscript{21}

The pandemic showcases the strength and dedication of Indonesia’s civil society, which organised groups to run emergency ambulance services, improvised personal protective equipment and masks, located oxygen and administered it, and cared for individuals and their families in community-based centres. Whether earthquakes, tsunamis, landslips, floods or pandemics, Indonesia’s civil society organisations provide the basis for the survival of its people, particularly the very poor.

\textsuperscript{21} World Health Organization statistics for COVID-19 in Indonesia from 3 January 2020 to 19 November 2021 are 4,252,705 confirmed cases and 143,714 deaths, although the actual numbers are believed to be much higher. See World Health Organization, COVID-19 figures for Indonesia, accessed 20 November 2021, covid19.who.int/region/searo/country/id.