

# The Embassy in Jakarta — an overview

Revised March 2011

## **The mission in Jakarta**

The Ambassador, who is the personal representative of the President, heads the United States diplomatic mission to Indonesia. The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) assists the Ambassador in directing and coordinating all mission activities for the following U.S. government. In addition to the embassy in Jakarta, there is a Consulate General in Surabaya, a Consulate General in Medan, and a Consular Agent in Bali.

## ***The Department of State (DOS)***

The Foreign Service of the United States is America's diplomatic service and is responsible for advancing U.S. interests and fostering international relationships through the exchange of representatives. The Foreign Service supports the President and Secretary of State in planning, making, and pursuing America's foreign policy goals, objectives and interests. It involves the functions of representation; administration of U.S. overseas missions; caring for Americans abroad; public diplomacy; and reporting, communicating, and negotiating on political, economic, consular, administrative, public diplomacy, and commercial affairs.

## ***U.S. Agency International Development (USAID)***

The mission director and deputy director head the USAID office in Jakarta. Its current activities focus on post-tsunami reconstruction, broad-based sustained economic growth through joint programs in the areas of economic policy, health, family planning, environment and democracy strengthening. USAID assistance includes providing technical advisors to a number of Government of Indonesia departments along with funds for programs and research. Also, financial grants are provided to private sector entities working in areas that complement agreed-upon strategic objectives. USAID support increasingly emphasizes strengthened policies and institutions, so that Indonesia -- in keeping with its increased economic strength -- gradually may move away from traditional donor assistance.

## ***Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)***

The Foreign Agricultural Service monitors agricultural developments in Indonesia. FAS is devoted to developing and expanding the market for U.S. agricultural products and reports on agricultural conditions in Indonesia to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Agriculture Affairs and Agricultural Trade Specialists in various commodity areas can provide basic information and advice regarding tariffs, non-tariff barriers, regulations, and other aspects of the Indonesian market.

## ***U.S. Department of Commerce (USDOC)***

USDOC, also known as the Foreign Commercial Service (FCS), is housed in Wisma Metropolitan II, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor on Jalan Jenderal Sudirman Kav. 29-31. Its mission is to promote exports of goods and services from the U.S. and to advocate U.S. business interests abroad. FCS personnel assist export-oriented firms in taking advantage of trade opportunities by providing individualized counseling and advice, overseas market insight information, contact services, advocacy support, and other promotional activities. Some of the services available at the Commercial Center include an appointment service, agent distributor search, market research reports, a conference room, a multipurpose room, and a product display area.

## ***The Library of Congress (LOC)***

The Jakarta Library of Congress office, located at Jalan H.O.S. Cokroaminoto, No. 65, has regional responsibilities for Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, East Timor and the Philippines. Its principal function is to acquire Indonesian and Southeast Asian publications for the Library of Congress and American research libraries. It gathers important books, journals and non-print publications written in English and Southeast Asian languages for distribution to the Library of Congress, and 30+ libraries. There is a microform preservation program. A field director heads LOC operations.

***The Defense Attaché Office (DAO)***

The Defense Attaché Office, headed by the Defense Attaché, includes personnel from the United States Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. DAO personnel maintain military-to-military contact with their counterparts in Indonesia and report back to Washington, D.C. DAO personnel also advise the Ambassador on military matters, and host and attend representational gatherings with other Attachés and foreign and host country civilian and military officials. The DAO in Jakarta also has a C-12 aircraft used for traveling within Indonesia.

***The Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC)***

The Office of Defense Cooperation provides advice to the Ambassador and Country Team on military security assistance activities. The ODC is responsible for U.S. Military training and education programs, sales of defense articles, grant assistance programs, and many of PACOM's Theater Security Cooperation Program activities. ODC works with the Government of Indonesia in implementing Security Assistance programs in support of U.S. policies; and provides guidance, support and assistance to U.S. defense companies.

***Department of Justice (DOJ)***

The Department of Justice, International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) works with the Indonesian National Police to assist in their transition from a military to a civilian law enforcement agency. ICITAP and police officials jointly plan, design, develop and implement assistance initiatives focused on police reform, improved training capacities, and enhancement of core investigative skills to combat both domestic crime and the threat of terrorism. Police officials from the U.S. are selected by ICITAP to provide technical assistance and classroom training to the Indonesian National Police, designed to improve police accountability, transparency and accessibility to the people they serve.

***Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT)***

The Department of Justice, Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT), provides training, legal advice, and other technical assistance to Indonesian prosecutors with the Attorney General's Office and other Indonesian prosecuting agencies. A Resident Legal Advisor, an experienced prosecutor from the U.S. Department of Justice, represents OPDAT in Jakarta.

## Embassy Services

### The Community Liaison Office (CLO)

The CLO serves as a resource center for a wide variety of information both before you arrive and after you get settled in at post. CLO assists newcomers with the transition to life at post by sharing information before their arrival, assisting with school registration of children, and organizing orientation programs for newly arrived personnel. This is especially helpful to newcomers awaiting the arrival of their home computers.



Soon after you've settled in, you'll want to check out the CLO Library, which includes a bounty of travel books and brochures on destinations throughout Indonesia and Southeast Asia, as well as general travel guides. The library also includes reference materials on a variety of topics, including family member employment, education, sports, and children's security.

The Community Liaison Officers, also referred to as CLOs, are the mission's advocate for families and community issues and concerns. The process of moving to a new place can be overwhelming, especially for family members who don't have the daily structure of work to maintain some degree of stability. CLOs are available to offer confidential advice and support. They can also help you get in touch with others with similar interests and to get involved in the community — the surest step toward feeling comfortable in a new place.

CLO is involved in helping find employment for family members who wish to work. The CLOs are advisors to the Eligible Family Member Employment Committee, which ensures that hiring within the embassy is done in a fair manner. Family members interested in finding work in Jakarta should send a copy of their resume to the CLO to forward to the Human Resources Office. In addition to opportunities within the embassy, CLO is occasionally contacted by outside organizations seeking part-time or temporary help. The CLO also helps publicize the mission's Seasonal Hire Program for high school and college students.

The CLO organizes a variety of community events, including orientation programs, social events, seminars, and other events. You can find out the latest events going on in the community by looking at the calendar in *The Cicak*, the post's weekly newsletter. When you are not sure where to turn, the CLO is a good place to start. You can reach the Community Liaison Officers by e-mail at [clojakarta@state.gov](mailto:clojakarta@state.gov).

### The Medical Unit

The Embassy has a medical unit located in the Embassy compound. It is staffed by a Regional Medical Officer (RMO), a full time local hire physician, a Foreign Service Nurse Practitioner, a Foreign Service Medical Technologist, six part time registered nurses, a Medical Office Manager, a Secretary, an Administrative Assistant and a Local Hire Lab Technician. A small commercial pharmacy operates in the Medical Unit.

The Medical Unit is open during regular Embassy hours and conducts medical orientations, gives immunizations and provides general primary health care. Some referrals are made to local facilities and specialists, but most cases requiring hospitalization are evacuated ("medevaced") to Singapore. A medical officer, accessed through Post One, remains available by telephone if medical problems arise after hours.

Soon after arriving at post, you should schedule an appointment for a medical orientation briefing, which are usually held on Wednesday afternoons. Please be sure to bring your family's medical and immunization records with you. At this orientation, you will receive the Health and Medical Information Book which contains valuable information about medical issues in Indonesia.

## The Customer Service Center

Have a question about getting overtime? A problem with your computer? A maintenance issue at your home? The Customer Service Center (CSC), new in 2008, is a one-stop shop for getting help from a range of Management Section offices: Motor Pool, Shipping and Customs, General Services, Housing, Information Services, Telecommunications, and the CLO. On your behalf, the CSC will find out what section is responsible; contact individuals who can resolve the matter; track the progress of your request; and provide any necessary follow-up support. The CSC is located across the walkway from CLO and the Java the Hut Snack Bar, and you can also reach a CSC associate by calling 3435-9111 (x9111 internally), submitting a work order (<http://jakarta.state.gov/csc>), or sending an email to [JakartaCustSvc@state.gov](mailto:JakartaCustSvc@state.gov).

## AECRA

The American Embassy Commissary and Recreation Association (AECRA) oversees the American Club, the Embassy snack bar, and the commissary. The commissary is located on the embassy compound and is a cooperative. Members pay a joining fee, which is nonrefundable. The commissary (similar to a large Seven-Eleven store in size) stocks a range of groceries and soft drinks as well as duty-free beer, wine and liquor. Products are imported primarily from the U.S. The commissary offers a special order service through which items can be ordered by the case for a small surcharge along with the store's regular shipments. The commissary also provides a dry cleaning service and a pack-and-wrap service. The Java the Hut snack bar is open for breakfast and lunch and provides a limited catering service. The American Club, located in Kebayoran Baru in South Jakarta, is a popular gathering place and is used extensively for swimming, tennis and its well-equipped workout room. The club offers regular classes and activities for both children and adults. The Club's Pavilion restaurant is open daily and has a full catering service. To get more information on the Club, please visit [www.amclubjakarta.org](http://www.amclubjakarta.org)



## General Services

The General Services Office (GSO) is responsible for a range of services for embassy families with the broad goal of providing the maintenance, facilities, and other services necessary to live and work comfortably. Soon after arriving at post, you will attend a briefing covering the basics of this office's many services. This publication covers two areas - housing and transportation - which you are no doubt thinking about as you prepare for your tour in Jakarta. If you have questions about other GSO services, feel free to direct them to the CLO, who will pass them along to the appropriate GSO office.

### Housing

Housing in Jakarta is generally comfortable. Mission personnel are housed in a variety of homes, including apartments, townhouse complexes, and a few single-family homes. Assignments take into account a number of factors - principally family size, position grade, and time of arrival. Embassy personnel are housed in a handful of neighborhoods throughout Jakarta. Each offers its own advantages. The following descriptions give a thumbnail sketch of each main housing area. If you have questions about particular neighborhoods, contact the Housing Coordinator.

#### *Embassy housing neighborhoods*

- **Prapatan Apartments** are an Embassy-owned complex of 13 apartments near the embassy. The complex includes three buildings, one of which houses the post's Marine Security Guard detachment. Apartments in Prapatan have two or three bedrooms and are relatively large, compared to apartments in the Washington, DC area. The complex is only a few blocks from the Embassy compound. All apartments in Prapatan have recently been renovated.
- **Menteng** is the neighborhood just south of the Embassy in the downtown area. Many representational quarters, including the Ambassador's and DCM's residences, are located in Menteng, along with smaller homes and apartments. There are also a large number of Embassy-leased apartments in the Eksekutif Menteng complex. ([www.executivementeng.com](http://www.executivementeng.com)) Menteng residences are convenient to many shopping areas and to the embassy, but are farther from the schools and the American Club, which are located in South Jakarta. Commutes to the Embassy average 15 minutes.

- **Galuh** is a neighborhood a bit further south of the embassy in Kebayoran Baru. Many embassy families live in this neighborhood, either in the 14 embassy-owned townhouses on Jalan Galuh I or in houses on surrounding streets. This neighborhood is close to Pattimura Elementary, the school attended by most of the embassy's younger children. Located about halfway between the embassy and the AECRA Club, it is considered an ideal location by many. Commutes to the embassy from the Galuh area average 20 minutes in the morning and 30 to 45 minutes in the afternoon.



- **The vicinity of the American Embassy Commissary and Recreation Association.** The quiet streets near the AECRA club, located in the Kebayoran Baru neighborhood of South Jakarta, are home to many embassy families in private homes and townhouse complexes. There is also a very limited number of houses adjacent to the club, which house a mix of civilian and military personnel. Commutes from this area to the embassy average 45 minutes in the morning and one hour in the afternoon.
- **Kemang**, located a bit further south, is known as an “expat enclave” and has many good international restaurants and shopping centers. Commutes to the embassy average 45 minutes in the morning and one-and-a-half hours in the afternoon.

The Embassy's housing coordinator will send you a housing survey. If you have a preference as to what type or location of housing you prefer, you should make your preference known to the Supervisory GSO, and your agency's representative as far in advance of your tour as possible. While it is not possible to accommodate every request, we will try to match your preference as closely as possible with available housing, consistent with housing regulations.

Housing assignments are made by the Inter-Agency Housing Board, which consists of 7 voting members and 6 non-voting representatives of ten advisory offices who represent all agencies. The board administers the post housing policy in accordance with the worldwide, all-agency standards established in volume 15, section 200 of the Foreign Affairs Manual. The board reviews proposed new housing for compliance with space, rent, and location standards and also decides which housing should be dropped when it no longer meets mission needs. With most transfers occurring in the summer, the board meets monthly beginning in the late spring through summer to assign available housing to new arrivals and then as needed throughout the rest of the year. Every effort is made to assign employees to appropriate housing that will be available at the time of arrival. When suitable permanent quarters are not immediately available, temporary quarters are assigned by the embassy.

Employees are expected to remain in their permanently assigned quarters for the duration of the tour. No employee who has been assigned to adequate quarters has a right to be reassigned merely because of personal preferences. Requests for changes based on justifying circumstances (e.g. change in number of dependents, to meet the needs of the government) should be discussed with the representative Board member and, if merited, submitted to the Board for consideration. (The current list of Board members is included in the “Designation of Responsibilities” issued by the Management Office.)

Complete information on the post housing policy is described in the Mission Housing Manual, which is available on the Embassy's Intranet site. A copy will be given to each new employee at the GSO briefing scheduled shortly after arrival at post.

### ***Hospitality Kits***

When you arrive at post, your residence will be equipped with a hospitality kit - the basic necessities for getting by until your Household Effects shipment (HHE) arrives. (Hospitality kits are also made available to employees who have packed out and are waiting to depart post.) The kit includes a limited amount of kitchenware, dishes, cutlery, glassware and linens as well as an ironing board and an iron. You will receive a list of all items included in the kit. Check to make sure that the list is accurate because you may be held responsible for everything on it. To return the kit

once your HHE arrives, you will need to contact the Property Accounting and Warehouse (PAW) Unit of the embassy who will pick it up. Comments on the condition and appropriateness of the items included in the hospitality kits are always welcome.

## **HHE and UAB**

Household Effects (HHE) and Unaccompanied Air Baggage (UAB) allowances vary per agency. Please check with your respective agency regarding weight allowances. Post cannot begin the HHE and UAB clearance process until after an employee arrives Post. HHE and UAB are generally delivered approximately 4 weeks after an employee arrives post. Post's shipping office works closely with shippers, as shipments should not arrive post before an employee.

Please request the shipper to fax the HHE ocean bill of lading and the packing list to GSO/Transportation at 62-21-3435-9923. Please bring a copy of shipping documents to post.

## **POV**

Most employees may ship a POV to Indonesia. Please confirm with your respective agency. Luxury vehicles are prohibited by the GOI for importation. Employees generally receive their imported POV 6-8 months after their arrival to post. Clearing an imported POV in Indonesia is a bureaucratic and lengthy process. Imported vehicles must be exported or sold to another diplomat at the end of an employee's tour. Those with the rank of counselor or above may import a vehicle with a 3.5-4.0 liter engine. Those below the rank of counselor may import a vehicle with an engine no larger than 3.5 liters. Please email Henry Panjaitan the type of vehicle you intend to import and we will advise accordingly.

Please do not ship a POV until the shipping office gives the OK. GSO/TRS (transportation) cannot begin the clearance/importation process until after an employee arrives post and receives their Diplomatic ID, usually issued 4 weeks after arrival.

Regrettably, it takes 6-8 months after an employee arrives post for a POV to clear. Once a POV clears DEPLU (Indonesia's MFA), an employee may drive their POV with tags provided by the TRS office. It is usually an additional 4-6 months to complete the registration process before permanent tags are issued by the DMV.

We advise folks to purchase locally, as many are frustrated by the lengthy POV clearance process. Diplomats are authorized two duty free vehicles, one imported and one locally purchased and assembled. Administrative and Technical staff (A&T) are authorized one duty free vehicle, either imported or locally purchased and assembled. Please know locally purchased vehicles such as most Toyotas, Hondas, etc, have imported parts and are considered an imported vehicle. Therefore, if an employee purchases such a vehicle and imports one from outside Indonesia, duties and taxes would be due on one of the two vehicles.

If an employee opts to locally purchase an imported parts vehicle, the clearance process is 4-6 months before one may drive the vehicle.

Locally purchasing a locally assembled vehicle is easier and faster, but may also take as long as three months to clear before it may be driven. Once the purchase is complete, you may drive the vehicle immediately.

Many folks purchase a POV from another diplomat, which allows the new owner to drive the car shortly after arriving post.

## **Transportation for New American Employees**

**Newly-arrived employees, authorized to use ICASS motor pool, may have gratis use of official vehicles and drivers during their first 30 days at post. Post will provide gratis home to office transportation via the Embassy shuttle to employees their first 30 days at post. Employees are authorized their first 30 days at post use of a motor pool**

## **vehicle and driver for settling in purposes too.**

Newly-arrived employees may request use of an Embassy car and driver for the following:

1. Vehicles may be used for purposes related to settling in, such as shopping for necessities, school registration, buying a POV, etc. Recreational use of vehicles is not authorized.
2. Vehicles may be used during the hours of 10:00 to 14:00, Monday through Friday. Vehicles may also be used on weekends without charge for mileage, however the requester will be charged for the driver's overtime at a cost of Rp. 200,000 per four hours and Rp. 50,000 per additional hour. The requester will also be charged Rp. 40,000 to cover the driver's non-work day transportation expense. Hours will accumulate from the time the vehicle departs the Embassy and until it returns. Please do not pay the drivers directly, FMC will send a bill.
3. Please submit requests at least two days in advance through the Embassy's website at <http://eap.p.state.sbu/sites/jakarta/default.aspx> (click on the Customer Service Center (CSC) link on the left side and use vehicle request in the drop down menu under TRS –Transportation and Shipping.) Personal use of Embassy vehicles under this program is subject to availability of vehicle and driver.
4. Eligibility for this benefit ends 30 days after arrival.

Motor Pool has available upon request one infant and one toddler car seat. Please let the dispatcher know at the time of vehicle booking if car seats are required.

Alternate transportation includes the Golden Bird Group (commonly referred to as Blue Bird or Silver Bird), an excellent local taxi service. However, not all drivers speak English, so be prepared to show drivers where you need to go if your destination is not one of the more familiar destinations in the local area. Taxis will wait upon request. Silver Bird drivers in particular are more reliable and familiar with where Americans are most likely to shop. The Blue Bird or Silver Bird dispatch numbers are 7917-1234 or 798-1234. Silver Bird offers a nicer, larger vehicle and one with seatbelts.

If you need assistance explaining your address to the Blue Bird dispatcher, please contact Motor Pool at 9269 and request assistance from Motor Pool Supervisors David Komaling or Dodi Wardana. Once Blue Bird dispatch has your cell number and address in their system, calling for a taxi is very easy.

## **Getting settled in Jakarta**

### **Shopping**

Most families use a combination of resources to supply their basic needs including local markets and grocery stores, duty free stores and the embassy commissary. Among all of these sources, nearly all common food and toiletry items (or acceptable substitutions) are available locally. On average, you can expect to spend approximately the same on food and toiletries as in the United States, although the price range is broad. If you rely on many imported brand-name goods, you can expect to spend more than you do in the States. If you shop in local markets and buy mainly locally-produced goods, your costs will be significantly lower. If you are particularly reliant on a certain brand of food or drugstore item, it's a good idea to stock up before you come. This is especially true of any medications used on a regular basis.

Mission families find that the internet is a great resource for buying food, groceries, and toiletries. Most popular web sites will ship to FPO boxes. Many embassy families have found that [www.netgrocer.com](http://www.netgrocer.com), [www.drugstore.com](http://www.drugstore.com), and other web sites are a convenient and cost-effective way to buy U. S. goods.

### **Hiring household staff**

Most employees have household help. The type and number of staff varies considerably according to family size, type of housing, and personal preference. You can decide whether to hire a housekeeper, maid, nanny, or some

combination of the three after arriving at post. Most employees who have personal vehicles find that hiring a driver is preferable to negotiating Jakarta traffic themselves. In addition, those living in individual houses (as opposed to apartments or townhouse complexes, which provide security services) usually hire guards, or *jagas*. The Regional Security Office (RSO) will provide temporary guard service for two weeks after your move into your permanent house.

CLO conducts an annual household staff wage survey that is available when you arrive at post. The survey will help you decide what types of staff to hire and to determine a fair wage for your staff.

### ***Importing Pets to Indonesia***



Indonesia has a 14-day minimum quarantine for pets (dogs and cats) upon their arrival in Indonesia. Please notify the Shipping Supervisor in the Transportation Office, if you plan to import a pet. S/he will keep you abreast of changes in regulations.

There are three methods for shipping your pet; accompanied baggage; carry-on luggage (limited to small pets and airline approval); or air cargo. Certain cities do not allow pets to transit or transiting requires additional paperwork. Airlines institute a pet embargo during extreme weather conditions to certain posts. Additionally, several airlines no longer accommodate pets. Please work closely with your travel agent to determine the best method of travel.

**Accompanied Baggage:** The Pet travels with you on the same flight to your destination. Upon arrival your pet will be placed in quarantine. Again, please work closely with the airline, as they will determine excess baggage charges, a personal expense not reimbursed by the U.S. Government.

**Carry-on Luggage:** Some airlines will permit a limited number of small pets to be brought onboard as hand-carried baggage. However, when transiting from certain cities such as Singapore and Tokyo, pets must travel in the baggage hold as accompanied baggage. If you travel during a pet embargo period, your pet cannot be transferred to the baggage compartment. *Please check with your airline.* Once you arrive in Jakarta, your pet will be placed in quarantine.

**Air Cargo:** Fees for this type of shipment vary according to your location, the number of pets, and the airline transporting the animals. You may find air freight companies through your local yellow pages, local veterinarian or Independent Pet and Animal Transportation Association ([www.Ipata.com](http://www.Ipata.com)). Some airlines limit pet transport to certain times of the year. Upon arrival in Jakarta, your pet will be placed in quarantine.

The GOI takes some time to clear paperwork of diplomatic shipments including pets shipped as air cargo. Pets arriving as air cargo are considered diplomatic cargo and subject to similar UAB and HHE clearance procedures. Not to worry, pet import companies are able to clear pets. However, owners must often pay duties and taxes on their pet, a fee of 200-500 USD in addition to other fees.

Indonesia requires a pet import license, which can be obtained through a pet import company. Post suggests JakPetz or Groovy Pet. JakPetz's email ID is [mdian@cbn.net.id](mailto:mdian@cbn.net.id) and website address is [www.jakpetz.co.id](http://www.jakpetz.co.id) Groovy contact information is <http://www.groovy.co.id/pettransport.html> (E-mail is [groovy@rad.net.id](mailto:groovy@rad.net.id)). The Embassy does not endorse or recommend either company.

Pet import companies will require the following information:

- a copy of the employee's passport;
- pet's name, age, color, sex, and breed;
- shipping mode selected;
- Rabies Certificate no more than one month old;
- a copy of the Health Certificate (issued within 20 days of arrival);
- an airway bill number, flight number, estimated date and time of arrival in Jakarta, if you
- ship the pet as air cargo;
- transit permits for travel through Singapore, if booked on that route.

## Protecting your electronics and home appliances

Most U.S. specifications electrical equipment is designed to operate between 110V and 120V and at 60hz. Electrical voltage throughout Indonesia is approximately 220V/50hz. Exceptions to this rule are the houses in the FOA complex surrounding the American Club. These are wired for 110V/50hz appliances, so check your housing assignment before investing in transformers! If you are bringing 110V appliances or electronic equipment from the United States and are not living at FOA, it is advisable to bring voltage transformers with you. Locally made units are available but are not recommended, as they are non-insulated.



Most American spec electrical equipment will work fine in Indonesia with a transformer. However, it would be advisable to leave your 110V/60hz microwaves and clocks in the states. 60hz microwave electronics are extremely sensitive to burnout when operated at 50hz, and U.S. spec 60hz clocks will be off by four hours at the end of the day when run on 50hz current, not making them useful in Indonesia. 60hz blenders and other motor-driven appliances may also experience a shorter than normal lifespan when operated at 50hz, but this is generally not a major problem. If in doubt, it is possible to purchase most appliances on the local economy. If purchasing appliances for use in Indonesia, multi-system (TVs), multi-voltage (most computers and monitors), travel or dual voltage appliances and similarly designed electrical equipment are your best bet, though they are not always easy to find. They will work in Indonesia, back in the United States, and in most other posts around the world.

The AAFES website ([www.aafes.com](http://www.aafes.com)) is a good place to browse, as much of what it offers is for overseas use. Military personnel and dependents are automatically eligible to order from AAFES, either by telephone or through the web page. Other U. S. government personnel serving overseas are eligible to order through the FPO. Non-military personnel should register with AAFES by faxing a copy of their official orders to 1-800-446-0163. If your orders do not indicate the length of your tour, you will be approved for one year.

Regardless of whether your appliances are 110V or 220V, 50hz or 60hz, there are certain safety precautions you should take to protect expensive electronic equipment from damage.

- Wide fluctuations in the voltage are common in Indonesia and can significantly damage sensitive equipment. A voltage regulator/line conditioner will "even out" the current and protect computers, TVs, stereos and other high tech equipment from damage. These may be purchased locally for \$50 - \$90 (depending on capacity) or can be brought from United States. The better models will have 220V input and both 110V and 220V outputs and be able to handle a minimum of a 500w draw.
- A Universal Power Supply (UPS) would also be a good idea for your computer equipment. A UPS provides emergency power to computers in the event of an interruption in electricity - a common occurrence in many areas of Jakarta. These can also be purchased locally. If you choose to bring a UPS from the United States, you should be aware that the current output of most 220V to 110V step-down transformers is 110V. Many American spec UPSs require a slightly higher voltage output (approx. 120V) to operate properly, which is typical in the United States. It is possible that American UPS models will not receive a sufficient power supply to operate if powered through a transformer.
- Many mission families have lost modems - and even entire computers - in electrical storms. A surge protector for your modem line will protect against such problems. Local models have proven ineffective, so if possible, purchase this item in the United States. While this is not an endorsement, it is well known that ZOOM makes a sturdy modem with built in protection against most telephone line power spikes.

## Recreational activities

Jakarta is a large city and there are any number of activities and organizations in which you can get involved. If you have questions about a specific type of organization or activity, write to CLO at [CLOJakarta@state.gov](mailto:CLOJakarta@state.gov). After you arrive at post you will receive information about various clubs, organizations, service groups, etc. Clubs and activities aren't always easy to find, but there are an enormous array of opportunities available for those who are willing to explore. If you're dithering about whether to bring your mountain bike, or sousaphone, or tap shoes, CLO's advice is, do it! Chances are that there are opportunities to put them to use, if you're willing to ask around. These "off the beaten path"



activities are often the most rewarding. DVDs are available in local malls and stores. American movies are shown regularly in local theaters.

## Indonesia on the web

The following list of websites is provided to the community solely in hopes that they may be helpful during your stay in Indonesia. The Community Liaison Office and the U.S. Embassy are not affiliated with any of the listed sites. A site's inclusion in this list is in no way an endorsement of the views expressed or services offered on them. For more helpful sites, see the CLO brochure on useful sites for living in Indonesia.

Name: Jakarta Province  
 Address: <http://www.jakarta.go.id/v21/home/default.asp?lg=2>  
 Description: Official website of Jakarta Province

Name: Enjoy Jakarta  
 Address: <http://www.jakarta-tourism.go.id>  
 Description: Official site of Jakarta City Government Tourism Office

Name: Living in Indonesia  
 Address: [www.expats.or.id](http://www.expats.or.id)  
 Description: "Providing a wealth of practical information for expatriates planning to move to or already living in Indonesia."

Name: What's New Jakarta  
 Address: [www.whatsnewjakarta.com](http://www.whatsnewjakarta.com)  
 Description: Websites of events in Jakarta, although details tend to be limited.

Name: Wikitravel  
 Address: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Jakarta>  
 Description: Like the volunteer contribution-based Wikipedia, Wikitravel provides an evolving guide to Jakarta, with sub-pages on different geographical sections of Jakarta.

Name: Antara News Agency  
 Address: [www.antara.co.id/en](http://www.antara.co.id/en)  
 Description: News agency with articles in English

Name: The Jakarta Post  
 Address: [www.jakartapost.com](http://www.jakartapost.com)  
 Description: English-language daily newspaper

Name: Tempo Interactive  
 Address: [www.tempointeractive.com](http://www.tempointeractive.com)  
 Description: Indonesian newsweekly with website in English.

# Introducing Indonesia

## The People

Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous nation, is home to over 230 million people belonging to more than 300 distinct cultural and linguistic groups. More than 100 million live on the island of Java, which is roughly the size of New York State.

In 1928, the nationalist movement made a crucial decision to advocate adoption of the relatively easy-to-learn Malay language, now known as Bahasa Indonesia, as the national tongue. Today, Bahasa Indonesia is spoken throughout the archipelago and helps to unify the nation.

## The Government

Indonesia is currently undergoing a difficult transition to democracy. Popular resentment toward the autocratic 32-year "New Order" rule of former President Soeharto, sparked by Indonesia's economic crisis, led to his resignation in May 1998 and forced his successor – B.J. Habibie – to hold early parliamentary elections in June 1999. Those elections were Indonesia's most free and fair since 1955, and led to the election of President Abdurrahman Wahid and Vice President Megawati Soekarnoputri in October 1999 in a transparent and democratic process. Wahid was removed from office, however, amid allegations of corruption and misrule in July 2001. Indonesia's first direct presidential elections, in September 2004, saw the defeat of Megawati by her former Coordinating Minister, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Jusuf Kalla was elected Vice President.

The Government of Indonesia offered strong verbal support for the War on Terrorism following the September 11 terrorist attacks. The government has said it is willing to work with countries in the region to combat militants. However, nationalist and Islamic sentiments pose political problems for any Indonesian government seeking to take vigorous action against terrorism. Indonesia faces many serious challenges in the near and long term. Among key government priorities are economic recovery, restoring the rule of law, and maintaining national unity. Indonesia embarked on an ambitious decentralization program in January 2001, but that has so far failed to end separatist movements in the restive provinces of Aceh in Northern Sumatra and Irian Jaya. Communal violence along Muslim-Christian lines in the Maluku island chain and in Central Sulawesi has taken a devastating human toll since hostilities first broke out in January 1999. Attaining accountability on past human rights abuses committed by the military -- especially atrocities in the former province of East Timor -- is a critical step that the government must take in order to sustain its credibility at home and abroad.

Important reforms have been underway since the fall of the Soeharto regime, including a restoration of citizens' political rights, a reduced military role in politics, constitutional amendments providing for a better balance of powers, decentralization and a free press. Over the longer term, however, the government and the Parliament will have to tackle substantial outstanding structural reforms in order to prevent a return to the political abuses and economic distortions of the past, including but not limited to: reforming the judiciary and Attorney General's office, professionalizing the military and police and eliminating their remaining political role, restructuring the devastated banking sector, and promoting work-outs of corporate debt.

## The State Ideology - Pancasila

The Indonesian Government bases its ruling philosophy on the "Pancasila" or "Five Principles" as laid down in the Preamble to the country's 1945 Constitution. They are:

1. Belief in one God.
2. Just and civilized humanity.
3. Unity of Indonesia.
4. Sovereignty of the people.
5. Social Justice.

## **Religion**

The first Pancasila principle, belief in one God, is fundamental to understanding Indonesians. Religion permeates life here. The government officially recognizes Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism and guarantees freedom of worship to the practitioners of these religions. Adherents of other religions are generally able to worship freely as well.

### ***Islam***

The majority of Indonesians follow the Islamic faith. Merchants from Gujarat, Northern India probably brought Islam to Sumatra in the thirteenth century. From there traders carried it to port cities on Java's north coast. By the fifteenth century, Islam was spreading throughout the archipelago. Mosques across Indonesia call Muslims to prayer five times a day. During the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, or "Ramadhan," Muslims fast ("puasa"). During this time of atonement and purification, most Muslims will not eat, drink or smoke during the daylight hours. At the end of Ramadhan, Muslims celebrate the two-day Lebaran festival. This is the most important holiday in Indonesia. Traditionally, workers receive a Lebaran bonus of one month's salary. Most Indonesians take their holiday at this time as well.

### ***Christianity***

About ten percent of the Indonesian population is Christian. Portuguese Jesuits and traders brought Catholicism to Indonesia in the 15th century and Dutch colonists brought Protestantism. In more recent times, several missionary groups have converted people in the outer islands. Parts of Northern Sumatra, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, the Moluccas and Flores have large Christian populations.

### ***Hinduism***

The early Javanese Kingdoms followed the Hindu religion and most Javanese still observe rituals that can be traced to the Hindu past. Today, however, only the Balinese practice Hinduism. The Hindu religion pervades the island, giving it its special character.

### ***Buddhism***

Buddhists, found mainly among the Chinese community, form a small minority in Indonesia. A thousand years ago, however, their forefathers built the world's largest Buddhist monument, Borobudur, in central Java. Buddhists gather at this elegant temple for prayers and meditation on important holy days. Buddhists also maintain monasteries, temples and schools that emphasize the teachings of Buddha.

### ***Mystics and Animists***

Although not officially recognized by the government, there are scores of traditional religions that recognize and propitiate a galaxy of spirits. In the outer islands, especially, many tribes worship their own set of animal and ancestor spirits. Throughout the archipelago, mysticism plays an important role in day-to-day life.

In Java, for example, you will experience a common ritual, the "selamatan" which is usually a feast to celebrate, sanctify or ameliorate something. Healers, mystics and ceremonial specialists are important people in Indonesia.

## **Cultural Notes**

Indonesians have a rich and diverse culture. Foreigners who make the effort to learn about the customs and traditions of the archipelago are richly rewarded. And, Indonesians will eagerly help you discover their country. This simple list of cultural dos and don'ts will help you get started on the right foot and avoid offending people you meet in your first weeks here.

### ***Smile***

The saying, "smile and the whole world smiles with you" certainly applies to Indonesia. Indonesians love to smile and they like to see a smile in return. A smile helps break the ice and it can smooth over an unpleasant encounter with a sales clerk or travel agent.

### ***Heads***

A man's soul lives in his head. Don't pat or rub the head of any Indonesian, young or old. Generally, try to avoid towering over the heads of senior people. It's considered disrespectful.

### ***Hands***

Indonesians, like most Muslims, eat with their right hand and wash with their left hand. They use their right hand to give or receive things like money, food, and packages. Do not beckon someone with an upturned palm or crooked index finger motioning towards you. Indonesians think this is rude. An Indonesian would extend his right hand palm down and wave his fingers downward to draw another Indonesian over to him. You will often see women walking hand in hand. Many Indonesians will take your hand to display friendship. There is nothing strange about this. Try not to shake off a hand that reaches for you. Indonesians might think you are rejecting them. Avoid aggressive gestures like pointing at someone, standing with your hands on your hips or crossing your arms over your chest while talking with Indonesians. The American habit of slapping someone on the back or heartily seizing someone by the shoulder to show camaraderie is not appreciated in Indonesia. If you want to get someone's attention, it is better to gently touch his or her elbow.

### ***Feet***

It is extremely rude to sit with your legs crossed in such a way that the soles of your feet are facing someone. Indonesian women in a formal situation sit with both feet on the floor at an angle.

### ***Respect for Elders***

Indonesians have great respect for hierarchies. A father, or "*Bapak*" and mother, or "*Ibu*," are more than just a father or mother. He and she are figures of authority. In exchange for respect and fidelity, Bapaks and Ibus are responsible for taking care of their "children" who may be real children or bureaucratic underlings or employees. You will rarely hear Indonesians publicly criticize their elders. They have a lot of respect for people of high rank.

### ***Dress Codes***

As a general rule, dress codes are more conservative and somewhat dressier than in the United States. For women, shorts, sleeveless blouses and short skirts are appropriate for casual occasions with other Americans, but are less appropriate when socializing with Indonesians. Sleeveless dresses and blouses can be worn, but you might want to bring a scarf or light sweater for purposes of both modesty and warmth – most indoor places are air-conditioned. Many official dinners and receptions indicate a dress code of "batik." Good quality men's batik shirts are available locally and are the equivalent of a business suit – but much cooler!

Outside of Jakarta, dress codes are more conservative, especially in areas not frequented by tourists and westerners. Be especially sensitive in your dress when visiting mosques and temples. Remove your shoes before entering a mosque and do not go into the praying area, which is only for believers. Do not take photographs of the altar. When photographing generally, try to be as unobtrusive as possible. Women and men may also be segregated in places of worship.

### **Holidays**

#### ***Isra Miraj Nabi Muhammad***

Falling on the 27th day of the seventh month of the Arabic calendar, this holiday commemorates the Ascension of Muhammad.

#### ***Hari Raya Nyepi (Balinese New Year)***

The Balinese celebrate their New Year in absolute quiet. They do not leave their house. They do not turn on their electricity. They do not do any strenuous activity. It takes place in early March and is generally not a good time to be in Bali unless you want total peace and are willing to cook your own meals. Everything grinds to a halt (including basic services).

### ***Ramadhan***

Muslims in Indonesia fast (“*puasa*”) for one month, which is determined according to a lunar calendar. Throughout this fasting month, Indonesian Muslims do not eat or drink during the daylight hours. They have their first meal before sunrise and break the fast (“*buka puasa*”) just after sundown with tea and a traditional sweet called “*kolak*,” which is usually made of dates, coconut milk and palm sugar all stewed together. Indonesians do go to work during Ramadhan, but activity levels are usually reduced. In Jakarta, Ramadhan is not observed too rigorously -- you will, for example, find restaurants open during the daylight hours. You may, however, hear drums announcing the times to get up to eat!

### ***Idul Fitri, Lebaran or Hari Raya***

Indonesians end Ramadhan with the Lebaran celebrations. Think of this holiday as the equivalent of Christmas or Chanukah. This two-day holiday traditionally begins with a mass prayer held in the open. In Jakarta, however, it is common on the last night of Ramadhan to celebrate in the streets with drums, dancing, and fireworks. Intercity transportation becomes a problem as people vacate Jakarta en masse to return to their home villages to celebrate with their families.

Indonesians use the occasion to get new clothes, forgive and forget old quarrels and exchange cards and gifts. People visit friends and relatives and feast. Everywhere you hear the phrase, “Maaf Lahir Batin,” which is an apology for any wrongdoing committed during the year. This is also a time when the more affluent give donations to the less fortunate. And, of course, employers give bonuses to their employees.

### ***Hari Raya Waisak***

Buddhists celebrate Hari Raya Waisak, the Buddha’s birthday, during the full moon in the month of May. This day also commemorates his enlightenment. Many Buddhists gather at Borobudur temple in central Java to observe and participate in special ceremonies.

### ***Idul Adha***

This day of sacrifice occurs on the tenth day of the eleventh month of the Arabic calendar. Those who are able go to Mecca to attend special ceremonies. Others may kill a goat or sheep and give the meat to the poor.

### ***Muharam***

The Muslim New Year, marking the end of the Muslim lunar calendar. While it is a national holiday, it is not widely celebrated here.

### ***Proklamasi Kemerdekaan***

Indonesians celebrate their Independence Day on August 17, which marks their independence from the Dutch. This is the biggest national holiday in Indonesia and is marked by elaborate parades, public entertainment and special programs.

### ***Maulid Nabi Muhammad***

The prophet Muhammad’s birthday falls on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the New Year of the Islamic calendar. Indonesians celebrate it by reciting the Koran all night long. People go to the mosque and pray. At the Sultan’s palace in Yogyakarta, there is a special ceremony for cleaning the kerises, amulets and gamelan musical instruments. Muslims, dressed in their best batik and bearing food offerings, join a procession from the *Kraton* (palace) to the mosque.

### ***Kartini Day***

On April 21<sup>st</sup>, Indonesians observe Kartini Day in memory of Kartini, the first Indonesian woman to advocate women's education and equality. Although it is not an official holiday, there are parades, speeches and special events staged to highlight the achievements of women in this country.

### ***Chinese New Year***

Sino-Indonesians celebrate the traditional New Year in a subdued manner. Public celebrations are limited to the Chinese sections of town. However, the Chinese temples are full and Chinese families have their customary feasts at home.

### **Special Occasions**

#### ***Welcoming Newborns***

Acknowledge the birth of a child to a friend by sending flowers and a card to the maternity ward. When the mother and baby are ready to receive visitors, you may call on them. Take a small wrapped gift. Cash is less appropriate.

#### ***Circumcision or Sunatan***

Indonesian boys are usually circumcised between the ages of 11 and 12. Expatriates may be invited to a gathering of family and friends for the celebration. A small gift of money in a plain white envelope may be given to the boy.

#### ***Weddings***

Wedding customs in Indonesia vary according to the ethnic background of the couple. Invitations for the exchange of vows and a reception usually come together with the understanding that your presence will bring a blessing to the newlyweds. Reception lines are very long for bigger weddings and you are expected to go through twice, first to congratulate the couple and second to take your leave before going home. This gives the couple the chance to thank guests for their gifts and the blessing of their presence. Appropriate gifts depend on the status of the couples.

*Villagers* -- Young, lower-middle-class couples appreciate things like dishes, sheets, pots and pans, and batik. Avoid giving food or towels.

*Middle Class* -- Dishes, glassware, electrical appliances and decorative items are always appreciated. Avoid giving sheets, towels and other private items.

*Upper Class* -- Television sets, gas cookers, crystal and silver are common gifts for the well to do. However, do not feel if you are invited to an upper class wedding that you need to spend a lot of money on a gift. It is not necessary to take gifts to the really large weddings, especially if you do not know the family well. If you do know them well, it is nice to give the couple something made abroad. Avoid giving local handicrafts. You present your gift at the reception line. An attendant will give you a card. This is considered a thank you note.

Men should wear a long-sleeved batik shirt for a village wedding and a western business suit for a city wedding. Women should wear a nice dress in subdued colors. If one of your domestic staff gets married, he/she will probably most appreciate a gift of money. Do not, however, give money to someone who is your social equal.

#### ***Funerals***

Muslims try to bury their dead within 24 hours. All the relatives of the deceased are expected to attend the funeral so there is a real effort made to inform relatives and friends about a death immediately. Yellow flags attached to the hoods of cars in a procession indicate that passengers are conducting a funeral. These cars have the right of way. People attending a funeral should stand at the gravesite until the grave has been covered and shaped. The family of the deceased must give a *Selamatan* (small feast) a week after the funeral and again 40 days after the funeral. This is an appropriate time to call and express sympathy. If a member of your staff or a member of your staff's family dies, a small gift of money to help defray these costs will be appreciated.

## Selected Bibliography



In addition to the following titles, several locally published books will be recommended to you soon after you arrive at post. These include several publications by the American Women's Association and book of maps of Jakarta – absolute essentials for getting to know the city. You will also be able to take advantage of CLO's library of travel guides to areas throughout Indonesia and the region.

### Travel guides:

Bacon, Derek and Terry Collins. *Culture Shock! Jakarta: A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette Culture Shock!* Marshall Cavendish Corp., 2007

A thorough, relevant, and highly entertaining introduction to life in Jakarta, aimed at newcomers planning to stay long-term.

Dalton, Bill. *Indonesia Handbook*, Moon Publications, 1995.

While old, especially good for travel to remote destinations and budget travel.

Smith, Holly. *Adventuring in Indonesia: Exploring the Natural Areas of the Pacific's Ring of Fire*, Sierra Club Books, 1997.

Great information on trekking, biking, and other outdoor pursuits with a special emphasis on environmentally friendly activities.

Vaisutis, Justine, Neal Bedford, Mark Elliott, and Nick Ray. *Lonely Planet Guide to Indonesia*, Lonely Planet Publications, 2007.

A wide-ranging, good all-around guide.

### History, Politics, and Fiction:

Baker, Richard et al. *Indonesia: The Challenge of Change*, St. Martins Press, 1999.

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