

Dateline **INDONESIA**

Editor's Note: These reports were compiled from Internet reports and E-mail messages sent by Isis networks in Indonesia. We originally intended to feature an original account from Indonesia in our Country Report section in the light of the recent developments in that country. However, because of the current socio-political and economic turmoil, our contributors were not able to send in their stories.

The Suharto-led Pribumi (Malay) regime dictated that *no* Chinese in Indonesia could have a Chinese name. All Chinese in Indonesia must have an Indonesian name, or they will not be granted Indonesian citizenship.

This law applies only to ethnic Indonesian Chinese. A person with Italian ancestry applying for an Indonesian citizenship is allowed to keep his Italian name. A person born in Indonesia by Mexican parents is allowed to carry a Mexican name on his Indonesian citizenship form. A Russian is allowed to keep his Russian citizenship as well. Only the Chinese are prohibited from having a Chinese name. The law specifically discriminates against the ethnic Chinese.

Indonesian Chinese are not allowed to learn the Chinese language. In Indonesia, a couple from Nigeria can teach their children the Nigerian language. Anyone interested in learning French can enrol in French courses offered in several Indonesian colleges and universities. But if a Chinese is caught learning the Chinese language in Indonesia, she or he may be thrown into jail for breaking the anti-Chinese law.

A person caught teaching the Chinese language in Indonesia may face the death penalty if she or he is charged with. In Indonesia, only the Chinese language is forbidden.

Indonesian Chinese are not allowed to celebrate the Chinese New Year. In Indonesia, Muslim holy days such as the Ramadan are celebrated. In Indonesia, Christian holy days like Christmas and Easter are celebrated. But in Indonesia, the Indonesian Chinese are prohibited from celebrating the Chinese New Year.

In Indonesia, the Chinese are not allowed to work for the government. But persons from Brazilian or German heritage are not barred from working in the Indonesian government. But an ethnic Chinese who was born on Indonesia is not allowed to work in any Indonesian government department.

In Indonesia, ethnic Chinese are not permitted to have a permanent land title. The same restriction does not apply to Caucasians from the United States, however.

In Indonesia, ethnic Chinese are prohibited from obtaining governmental scholarships. No such restriction is enforced on people of any other ethnic background.

The Indonesian ethnic Chinese minority is the only group of people in Indonesia who are officially persecuted by the Suharto-led regime.

Source: huaren.org