Pronunciation:
bahl-uh-NEEZ

Population:
3,973,000

Location:
Indonesia

Ethnicity:
Malay (Bali)

Language:
Bali

Religion:
Hinduism

Professing Christian:
1.26% (0.16% Evangelical)

How to Pray

It is believed that stepping out of tradition upsets karma for already-deceased ancestors and for those yet to come. **Pray** that God will reveal Himself to Balinese Hindus.

Pray for International Workers in Bali hoping to connect with families through soccer and English clubs. Being able to speak English opens up a lot of job opportunities, which is a goal for our workers, because now too many poor kids venture to the city and end up making money from prostitution and other harmful practices.

Pray for Balinese Hindus to find freedom in Jesus; in their current practices, they do things to keep the good gods happy and to appease the bad gods. Pray for freedom from fear.

THE Jaffray PROJECT

cmacan.org/jaffray

Editor's Note

This profile is not comprehensive. Information has been provided from a combination of researched and first hand sources (i.e. research, field/personal accounts from workers etc.) Names have been changed to protect the identities of international workers and other materials have been sourced and noted where appropriate.

Balinese Hindus

Way of Life

The Balinese people represent two percent of the Indonesian population, and they differ from the rest of Indonesia in language, dress, songs, stories, food, and calendar. The most significant difference is their religious beliefs. Balinese families live in walled compounds where a group of brothers and their respective families live. Within the compound, separate buildings for cooking, storing rice, keeping pigs, and sleeping are grouped around a central courtyard. Community and family are core values among the Balinese. Each family is part of a banjar, a group of 5,200 families who share common beliefs, areas, and goals. A banjar head is supported by the male heads of each of the families, and together, they arrange marriages, care for needy people, and maintain their community. The Balinese people speak an Austronesian language that has an hierarchy of politeness in it, reflecting the four castes of Balinese society. Approximately 70% of the Balinese earn a living from agriculture; rice, corn, cassava, and beans are grown, and it is common in densely populated areas to work someone else's land in return for a share of the crop. Industries in Bali include tourism as well as arts and crafts.

Sources:

everyculture.com

joshuaproject.net

National Geographic News

Nigel Simmonds, Bali: Morning of the World, Periplus Editions (Hong Kong), pp. 41-43

Beliefs/Culture

Balinese Hinduism combines the Indian model of Hinduism with elements of indigenous beliefs. The theological foundation comes from Indian philosophy, while indigenous beliefs form the backbone of the rituals. Spirits and ancestors are treated with respect, housed in a shrine, and given offerings made of agricultural products. They believe that during its tenure in a body, the soul is in torment, and is thus always seeking to free itself from incarnation so that it can attain enlightenment or moksa. Therefore, when a person dies, if their soul has not achieved moksa, it will continue with the cycle of life through incarnations.

Cremation is performed after death to ensure that the deceased become deified ancestors, and it may take months or even years to accumulate the funds necessary to pay for the ceremony. Until the funds are accrued, a temporary storage or burial spot is found for the body. In the ceremony, the body is carried to the cremation field in a portable high, multi-tiered tower. A priest often sits halfway up the tower to soak bystanders with holy water. At the cremation ground, the body is transferred to a funeral sarcophagus, and then the funeral tower, sarcophagus, and body are set on fire. It is believed that after cremation, one's soul goes to a heaven that is just like Bali.

The Work So Far

The International Workers in Bali are building relationships in five circles of influence they find themselves in: the nearby prison, the village with new water pumps, FC Bali (a soccer team), a group from the evacuation centre, and their neighborhood including English clubs. During a recent Easter service at the prison, they played soccer, taught English, painted eggs, ate together and the Good News of Easter was clearly shared. Two men chose to follow Jesus! Two others asked for some intentional Bible study! A Muslim inmate painted a portrait of Jesus for Easter.