

[Sign In](#) | [Register Now](#)

# The Washington Post

TODAY'S NEWSPAPER  
[Subscribe](#) | [PostPoints](#)

Advertisement

Get away  
fast

Earn up to  
3 free nights

No Blackout  
Dates



APPLY NOW

Terms and  
Conditions apply

AMERICAN  
EXPRESS

[NEWS](#) | [POLITICS](#) | [OPINIONS](#) | [BUSINESS](#) | [LOCAL](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [ARTS & LIVING](#) | [GOING OUT GUIDE](#) | [JOBS](#) | [CARS](#) | [REAL ESTATE](#) | [RENTALS](#) | [CLASSIFIEDS](#)

SEARCH:



washingtonpost.com

Web

Results by **Google**

| [Search Archives](#)

[Main Page](#) | [Video](#) | [Multimedia](#) | [About](#) | [Panel](#) | [RSS Feed](#)



## Guest Voices

Other Views On Faith and Its Impact on the News.

### DIVINE IMPULSES: JOSHUA DUBOIS



**America's Faith-Based Adviser**  
President's religion adviser tells Sally Quinn why he's reluctant to talk about his own faith.

**ILENE ROSENBLUM: Up: Returning to the Holy Land**  
**DOUG PHILLIPS: John Calvin, Founding Father**

Advertisement

### As reported by **Barbara Walters**



• Barbara talks about the "Miracle Pill" known as **Resveratrol** [Read](#)

• **Getting older and still in amazing shape!** [Read](#)

• **Red Wine: helping fight fat and the aging process.** [Read](#)

FEATURED ON:



[FOR THE FULL STORY >>](#)

[news3news.com](#)

### Ads by Google

#### [How To Defend Yourself](#)

Discover What The Martial Artists And The Army Don't Want You To Know  
[www.CloseCombatTraining.com](#)

#### [Heart Attack Survival](#)

Hugh Downs reports on little-known symptom too many tragically ignore  
[www.bottomlinesecrets.com](#)

#### [Counter Terrorism Degrees](#)

Work in Homeland Security and Counter Terrorism. Degrees Online!  
[www.kaplandegrees-online.com](#)

### RECENT POSTS

- [Angels and Demons and Skeptics](#)
- [The Calvin Quincentenary and American Liberty](#)
- [Islam's Next Democratic Test](#)
- [Could YouTube Have Stopped Hitler?](#)
- [Up](#)

Posts By Category

Posts By Date

[Full Archive](#)

### MORE ON FAITH

- [On Faith: Main Page](#)
- [Catholic America](#)
- [Faith and Healing](#)
- [Faithbook](#)
- [For God's Sake](#)
- [Georgetown/On Faith](#)
- [God in Government](#)
- [Guest Voices](#)
- [Praying Fields](#)
- [Religion From the Heart](#)
- [The Faith Divide](#)

[Under God](#)

[Women On Faith](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO THIS BLOG](#)

RSS Feed



## Islam's Next Democratic Test

By Brian Hanley

*Search for Common Ground in Indonesia*

Jakarta, Indonesia -- On 8 July, Indonesia will hold its second direct presidential election since embracing democracy in 1998. As the world's fourth most populous country with more than 240 million people, Indonesia is the third largest democracy in the world, and home to the world's largest community of Muslims. The stakes are high.

Religious extremism in particular has become a significant concern to Indonesians, and by extension to the world, as exemplified by the recent conviction of a terrorist cell in Palembang, South Sumatra. A group of ten men stand convicted of killing a local Christian educator and for conspiracy to carry out large-scale attacks on other civilian targets in Indonesia. This case illustrates the relative ease by which small groups of young men can be recruited and motivated to participate in political violence, but also the commitment of Indonesia's government to tackle terrorism.

Java, the world's most densely populated island with more than 130 million inhabitants, is an area of particular concern. The extremist organization Jemaah Islamiyah, often referred to as "Indonesia's Al-Qaeda" due to their training style and role in the Bali bombings of 2002 and 2005, has set up a thriving publishing industry aimed at recruiting new followers to advance its radical agenda of establishing a world caliphate uniting all Muslim nations. Millions of young people across Indonesia are the targets.

From Aceh, where Islamic principles have been integrated into local law, causing disagreements among the region's diverse population; to Central Sulawesi, where Christian and Muslim communities have become increasingly polarized since violence wreaked havoc on the region several years ago; to Papua, where Christians and animists square off with Muslims in a battle for a "Christian island in a Muslim nation", religious tensions have the potential to seriously set back development efforts in Indonesia.

Prisons, universities, and pesantrens (Islamic boarding schools) are particularly vulnerable to radicalization. Extremist recruiters trigger young people's disdain for the government and the West and build on that resentment to promote their values, packaged as the only authentic Islamic discourse.

Although the problems seem daunting, many groups are already working on solutions.

Numerous Indonesian civil society organizations are working to promote religious tolerance, pluralism and understanding through education, media, and public awareness activities in the most vulnerable areas in Indonesia. This includes curricular programming in pesantrens and universities to educate students, scholars, journalists, and religious leaders about the compatibility of Islam with human rights and religious pluralism.

The government is also working in some of the thorniest places to combat radicalism. For instance, the Indonesian Corrections Department has initiated innovative projects aimed at countering and preventing radicalization in prisons, through a combination of theological and conflict management training for administrators, guards and inmates.

With anecdotal evidence of tens of thousands of youth engaging in "self-radicalization" on the internet - hits on radical websites are skyrocketing in Indonesia - it is critically important for Indonesia's next president to prevent extremism from taking root by supporting innovative media and grass-roots dialogue initiatives aimed at national reconciliation and violence reduction.

[RSS Feed](#)

[Subscribe to The Post](#)

© 2009 The Washington Post Company

#### Ads by Google

##### [A World Without Islam?](#)

What would the world look like if Islam did not exist?

[www.foreignpolicy.com](http://www.foreignpolicy.com)

##### [Religious Terrorism](#)

Identify its scriptural foundation. Destroy its spiritual motivation.

[www.sanityquestpublishing.com](http://www.sanityquestpublishing.com)

##### [Middle East In Prophecy](#)

What is the future of the Middle East & Israel? Find out now free.

[www.gnmagazine.org/middleeast/?S=2](http://www.gnmagazine.org/middleeast/?S=2)

SEARCH:  Try Our New Search



[washingtonpost.com](#)



Web :

Results by



[Search Archives](#)

[NEWS](#) | [POLITICS](#) | [OPINIONS](#) | [BUSINESS](#) | [LOCAL](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [ARTS & LIVING](#) | [GOING OUT GUIDE](#) | [JOBS](#) | [CARS](#) | [REAL ESTATE](#) | [RENTALS](#) | [CLASSIFIEDS](#)

[washingtonpost.com: Help](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertisers](#) | [Site Index](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Make Us Your Home Page](#) | [mywashingtonpost.com](#) | [Work for Us](#) | [Mobile](#) | [RSS](#)

[The Washington Post: Subscribe](#) | [Subscriber Services](#) | [Advertisers](#) | [e-Replica](#) | [Online Photo Store](#) | [The Washington Post Store](#) | [National Weekly](#)

[The Washington Post Company](#): Information and Other Post Co. Websites

© Copyright 1996-2009 The Washington Post Company | [User Agreement and Privacy Policy](#) | [Rights and Permissions](#)