

Bali jails tourist for not respecting Day of Silence

27th August 2026



A tourist from Switzerland has been given a one-year jail sentence in Bali, Indonesia. His crime was insulting (saying bad things about) an important Hindu festival called Nyepi. In English, this is called Day of Silence. It is a sacred

time for Hindus in Bali. On this day, the island becomes quiet. People stay at home. They try to be silent, and they fast and meditate. The 26-year-old Swiss tourist broke the rules by going outside. He filmed himself walking to an empty beach. As he walked, he used a lot of swear words and bad language. He said the silence and lack of people were "crazy". He was arrested after the video he uploaded on social media made Balinese people angry.

The Day of Silence has been celebrated for centuries. Today, people in Bali keep quiet from 6 am one day to 6 am the following day. During this period, people do not work, travel, or take part in leisure activities. Bali's airport shuts down and people have less access to the internet. Most people must stay at home. However, some people, such as traditional Balinese security officers, can go outside. They walk the streets to make sure people are indoors. The judge said the tourist made Balinese people angry and hurt their religious feelings. The tourist said he did not understand how important Nyepi was, and that he did not mean to insult the Balinese people. He expressed deep regret for what he did.

Sources: bbc.com / swissinfo.ch / apnews.com

Writing

We should all learn about festivals from other cultures. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

tourist / jail / crime / festival / sacred / silence / rules / bad language / crazy / angry / celebration / leisure activities / airport / security officers / judge / insult / deep regret

True / False

- 1) A Swiss tourist has spent one year in jail in Bali. T / F
- 2) The tourist was jailed for insulting an important Hindu festival. T / F
- 3) The tourist used bad language in a video he uploaded on social media. T / F
- 4) The tourist said the silence was "crazy". T / F
- 5) The day of silence starts at 6 am and ends at 6 pm. T / F
- 6) The airport in Bali closes for the Day of Silence. T / F
- 7) Everyone in Bali must stay at home on the Day of Silence. T / F
- 8) The tourist said he was extremely sorry for his actions. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. tourist | a. holy |
| 2. insulting | b. certain |
| 3. sacred | c. being rude to |
| 4. crazy | d. furious |
| 5. angry | e. closes |
| 6. centuries | f. beliefs |
| 7. shuts down | g. sightseer |
| 8. sure | h. inside |
| 9. indoors | i. hundreds of years |
| 10. feelings | j. stupid |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How difficult would it be for you to be silent for a day?
- c) Should we all be silent for a day to think about life?
- d) What do you think of having no internet access for 24 hours?
- e) What was the last thing you regretted?
- f) Has anyone ever insulted you?
- g) Should we all learn about the world's religious festivals?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the tourist?

Phrase Match

1. a one-year jail
 2. It is a sacred
 3. they fast and
 4. broke the rules
 5. he used a lot of swear
 6. The Day of Silence has been
 7. people have less
 8. They walk the streets to make
 9. he did not mean to insult
 10. He expressed deep regret
- a. celebrated for centuries
 - b. by going outside
 - c. for what he did
 - d. access to the internet
 - e. sentence
 - f. words and bad language
 - g. the Balinese people
 - h. time for Hindus in Bali
 - i. sure people are indoors
 - j. meditate

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you know about Bali?
- b) What do you think of the tourist's jail sentence?
- c) What religious festivals do you like?
- d) What do you think of silence?
- e) Have you ever tried to fast or meditate?
- f) What do you think of the tourist's actions?
- g) What festivals from other religions do you like?
- h) What advice do you have for the tourist?

Spelling

1. a one-year jail ctseeenn
2. It is a ecrdsa time for Hindus
3. they fast and dteaeimt
4. a lot of ewsar words
5. bad ugaalegn
6. He was ratdesre
7. cerbeltaed for centuries
8. During this dpoeri
9. take part in euelrsi activities
10. tltiadinar Balinese security officers
11. hurt their suioglire feelings
12. He expressed deep ertger for what he did

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions.
(Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	What was the tourist's punishment?
2.	Who celebrates the Day of Silence?
3.	What did the tourist break?
4.	What kind of language did the tourist use in a video?
5.	What did the tourist say was "crazy"?
6.	For how long has the Day of Silence been celebrated?
7.	What closes during the Day of Silence?
8.	Who makes sure people are off the streets?
9.	Who did the tourist not mean to insult?
10.	What did the tourist express?

Speaking – Silence

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest benefits at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Stress reduction
- Better sleep
- Better concentration
- Mindfulness
- Improving listening
- Peacefulness
- Spiritual benefits
- Self-reflection