Indonesian Independence Day

This national holiday is celebrated in Bali with various festivities including parades, community events and cultural and art exhibitions. Indonesia proclaimed her Independence on August 17th 1945, this year Indonesia celebrates its 74th year of the Proclamation of Independence. Every year this historic event is celebrated with numerous exciting events throughout the nation that are aimed at enhancing Unity in Diversity.

The Presidential Palace is decorated with red and white colours in recognition of the Indonesian flag and the community comes together for clean-up of the streets and residences. Each year there is a flag-raising ceremony which is televised live on TV nationally and is attended by the President, Vice President and military personnel.

The pinnacle celebration commemorating Independence Day is held on the morning of the 17th August at the Presidential Palace in Jakarta, facing the National Monument. The highlight will be the moment when the Declaration of Independence is read out, that was first proclaimed by Soekarno-Hatta at precisely 10am. This is followed by the flag ceremony carried by the Paskibraka, a special flag bearing and flag raising group, recruited from among the brightest eligible students in high school throughout the country. They spent months in training and quarantine, to be able to perform flawlessly during the official ceremony in front of the President and honoured guests. A similar ceremony is held at sunset to lower the Indonesian red-and-white flag.

In the regions, similar ceremonies are held, In addition, rock climbing communities make it a challenge to raise the Indonesian flag on the highest peaks of the numerous Indonesian volcanoes and mountains, while diving c ommunities will dive deep underwater into pitch the huge red-and white-flags in the Indonesian seas.

Traditions also include eating Indonesian crackers (known as 'krupuk') and cooking competitions. One of the most popular activities is the Panjat Pinang. This is where a palm tree trunk is erected and covered in grease. Prizes are hung from the top and people are challenged to climb to the top. If you make it to the top, you win the prize.

Visitors to Bali during this celebration can join in on the festivities by trying the local foods and watching the parades, cultural dances, air show and marching bands. This day is very important to the Indonesian people and people visiting during this time should treat these celebrations with the utmost respect.

Indonesian community on the Isle of Wight celebrated 74th Years of Independence Day on Sunday August 25th at St Andrews Community Hall, Cowes. The Ceremony was attended by The Vice Ambassador of Republic Indonesia for United Kingdom, Mr Adam Tugio whom came specially from London. The celebration was also attended by Councillor Lora Peacey-Wilcox, Mayor of Cowes as Represented the Local community. Members of the Equals IW were also amongst the honorary guests.

The celebration started with very formal Ceremony and included the Indonesian National anthem ending in prayer. The celebration feature a number of amazing traditional performances of Indonesian traditional dances, singing and some games all in true Indonesian's style.

One such game was enjoyed by all attending involving Kerupuk, the game goes like this: rows of Kerupuk were hung upon a thread of plastic rope/string usually slightly higher than the participant's heights. Participants raced to be the first to finish eating the dangling Kerupuk. There is a twist, everyone's hands are tied behind their back!

Kerupuk, or crackers are Indonesia's favourite snacks. It has so many varieties of shapes, colour, and ingredients. It is lightweight and crunchy and usually comes as an addition for daily meals. The classic kerupuk is white, 20 cm in diameter, spiralled perforated texture with 2 cm of thickness and made of savoury flavoured starch.

Everyone enjoyed the music and delicious Indonesian food from traditional recipes. A good time was had together at the wonderful celebration.