

# Kartini Day in Indonesia

*Date in the current year: April 21, 2016*



**Kartini Day** ("Hari Ibu Kartini") is an Indonesian holiday that commemorates Raden Ajeng Kartini, one of the country's national heroes, and a pioneer in the emancipation of Indonesian women. Throughout Indonesia women wear their national dress to symbolize their unity, and the nation enjoys parades, lectures, and various school activities.

Kartini was born on April 21, 1879, into an aristocratic Javanese family with a strong intellectual tradition. At the time, Java was ruled by the Dutch colonial administration. Her father allowed her to attend school, where she learned to speak Dutch and became an ardent reader. After withdrawing from school at the age of 12 to enter seclusion in accordance with the traditions of Javanese nobility, she corresponded with numerous friends abroad, read magazines and books, and ultimately rebelled against the strong tradition of gender discrimination and the restricted lives of Indonesian women.

Through her letters, Kartini began a fight for the right of women to be educated and against the unwritten but all-pervading Javanese law, *Adat*. She came to view the feminist movement as a part of wider socio-political movement. She wrote passionately for the improvement of education, public health, economic welfare, and traditional arts in her country.

She did not want marry but in 1903, consented to be the fourth wife of the Regent of Rembang, Raden Adipati Joyodiningrat, a man twenty-five years her senior. With her husband's support, she obtained permission to open the first ever all-girls school for the daughters of Javanese officials, creating her own syllabus and system of instruction. By 1904, the school had one hundred and twenty students.

Kartini died in 1904 at the age of 25, after the birth of her first child. Her letters were published in Holland in 1911 under the title, *Door duisternis tot licht* ("Through Darkness into Light"), and created support for the Kartini Foundation, dedicated to funding the education of girls and women.

Kartini Day was established in 1964 by Sukarno, the first President of Indonesia, and is held on the anniversary of her birth.



<http://www.hurights.or.jp/archives/focus/section2/2009/06/raden-ajeng-kartini-indonesias-feminist-educator.html>

<https://anydayguide.com/calendar/1921>

<http://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Kartini+Day>