

# Indonesia: Prison sentence for TikToker over pork video triggers conflicting reactions

Tuesday 17 October 2023, by [Rachmawati](#) (Date first published: 20 September 2023).

**The two year prison sentence handed down against a TikTok influencer who goes by the name Lina Mukherjee, after she was charged with blasphemy over the content of a video in which she ate pork after expressing the phrase “Bismillah” (in the Name of Allah), has triggered a variety of reactions in cyberspace.**

In addition to the prison term, the panel of judges at the Palembang District Court in South Sumatra also ordered the woman whose real name is Lina Lutfiawati to pay a fine of 250 million rupiah. The judges said Mukherjee was proven to have deliberately and without the right spread information aimed at causing a sense of hatred against certain individuals and community groups based on religion. “In passing judgment we impose a prison sentence on the defendant Lina Lutfiawati alias Lina Mukherjee of two years in prison and a fine of 250 million rupiah in lieu of three months internment in prison”, said presiding Judge Romi Sinatra. Earlier, rights activists said that the blasphemy case against Mukherjee was “excessive” and “should not have been prosecuted at all”. Reaction to sentence Netizens have reacted to the sentencing with different sentiments, with a majority supporting the judges’ ruling and considering that what was done by Mukherjee was religious blasphemy. As expressed by Muhammad Franky on the Twitter account @frankyaja1990 who wrote, “Don’t play with the holy verses in the hope of something to be used for the sake of content”. Another Twitter user, @ischa\_helnia, said that the case that has befallen Mukherjee should be a lesson not to commit blasphemy. “Insulting religion is an action that cannot be tolerated!”, they wrote in a Twitter posting and pinned the hashtags #BersatuMelawanPenistaanAgama (Unite against blasphemy) and #IndonesiaBebasIntoleransi (An Indonesia free of intolerance). Others however expressed an opposite opinion, criticising the judge’s verdict for being more severe than verdicts handed down against corrupters, as was expressed by Twitter user @sudjati. “Lina Mukherjee was sentenced to two years. Meanwhile corruptors who swore on the holy book were sentenced to less than two years”, they wrote. They also said that the Indonesian public is “easily diverted by petty but viral cases” rather than big cases that harm the general public. Earlier, the head of the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation’s (YLBHI) advocacy division, Zainal Arifin, said what has befallen Mukherjee is a form of “criminalisation” using “rubber (catch all) articles whose interpretation is often very subjective”. “This is often influenced by sociological factors, the existence of community pressures both offline and online, there are viral keywords that are used as a basis by law enforcement officials to criminalise a person on the basis of blasphemy. This is very susceptible [to abuse] because it depends on who interpreted it”, Arifin told BBC News Indonesia on Tuesday May 2. A young intellectual from the Islamic mass organisation Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Gus Fayyadl, also stated that they “disagree” with the Mukherjee case being “considered religious blasphemy”, because what was done by Mukherjee was to commit a sin against herself.

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