

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. The area today has rich resources and growing cities but faces challenges.
2. Malaysia and its neighbors have strong economies but differ in many ways.
3. Indonesia is big and diverse with a growing economy, and East Timor is small and poor.
4. The Philippines has less ethnic diversity, and its economy is improving.

The Big Idea

The countries of Island Southeast Asia range from wealthy and urban to poor and rural.

Key Terms and Places

kampong, p. 635

Jakarta, p. 635

Kuala Lumpur, p. 635

free ports, p. 636

sultan, p. 637

Java, p. 637

Manila, p. 638

TAKING NOTES

As you read, use a chart like this one to take notes on each country in Island Southeast Asia. Add a row for each country.

Country

Description

Island Southeast Asia Today

If YOU lived there...

You live in Canada but are visiting your cousins in Singapore. You start to cross the street in the middle of a block, but your cousin quickly stops you. "You have to pay a big fine if you do that!" he says. Singapore has many strict laws and strong punishments, he explains. These laws are meant to make the city safe.

What do you think about Singapore's laws?

BUILDING BACKGROUND Singapore and the other countries of Island Southeast Asia present many contrasts. You can quickly go from skyscrapers to rice paddies to tropical rain forests. Many ethnic groups may live in one country, which can lead to unrest.

The Area Today

Island Southeast Asia lies at a crossroads between major oceans and continents. The area's six countries are Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei (brooh-NY), Indonesia, East Timor, and the Philippines.

The future for these countries could be bright. They have the potential for wealth and good standards of living, such as rich resources and a large, skilled labor force. In addition, most of the countries have growing economies and belong to ASEAN. This organization promotes cooperation in Southeast Asia.

Island Southeast Asia faces challenges, however. First, violent ethnic conflicts have hurt progress in some countries. Second, many people live in poverty, while a few leaders and businesspeople control much of the money. Third, the area has many environmental problems, such as pollution.

Rural and Urban Life

Many people in Island Southeast Asia live in rural areas, where they farm or fish. As on the mainland, rice is the main crop. Others include coffee, spices, sugarcane, tea, and tropical fruit.

Rubber is a major crop as well, and Indonesia and Malaysia are the world's largest producers of natural rubber. Seafood is the area's main source of protein.

As on the mainland, many people in Island Southeast Asia are leaving rural villages to move to cities for work. The largest cities, the major capitals, are modern and crowded. Common problems in these cities include smog and heavy traffic. Some cities also have large slums.

In Malaysia, Indonesia, and other parts of the area, many people live in *kampongs*. A **kampung** is a village or city district with traditional houses built on stilts. The stilts protect the houses from flooding, which is common in the area. The term *kampung* also refers to the slums around the area's cities such as **Jakarta**, Indonesia's capital.

READING CHECK Summarizing Why could the future be bright for Island Southeast Asia?

Malaysia and Its Neighbors

Malaysia and its much smaller neighbors, Singapore and Brunei, were all once British colonies. Today all three countries are independent and differ in many ways.

Malaysia

Malaysia consists of two parts. One is on the southern end of the Malay Peninsula. The other is on northern Borneo. Most of the country's people live on the peninsula. **Kuala Lumpur** (KWAH-luh LOOHM-poohr), Malaysia's capital, is there as well. The capital is a cultural and economic center.

Malaysia is ethnically diverse. The Malays are the main ethnic group, but many Chinese and other groups live in Malaysia as well. As a result, the country has many languages and religions. Bahasa Malay is the main language, and Islam and Buddhism are the main religions.

Rubber Tree Plantations



Southeast Asia's tropical climate is well suited to rubber trees. At left, a man taps, or cuts, a rubber tree at a Malaysia plantation. A milky liquid drains from the cut into a cup, as shown above. The liquid dries to form a rubbery material.

ANALYZING VISUALS What do you think it is like to work on a rubber tree plantation?



Singapore

Primary Source

INTERVIEW

Lee Kuan Yew on Singapore

Lee Kuan Yew was Singapore's prime minister from 1959 to 1990. He remade the tiny country into an economic power. In a 1994 interview, Lee discussed Singapore's strict laws.

"The expansion of the right of the individual to behave or misbehave as he pleases has come at the expense of orderly society. In the East the main object is to have a well-ordered society so that everybody can have maximum enjoyment of his freedoms. This freedom can exist only in an ordered state."

—from "A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew"

ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

Do you agree with Lee that freedom for all can exist only in a society with strict order? Why or why not?

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

concrete
specific, real

Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy. The king's duties are largely ceremonial, and local rulers take turns being king. A prime minister and elected legislature hold the real power.

Malaysia's economy is one of the stronger in the area. Well-educated workers and rich resources help drive this economy. The country produces and exports natural rubber, palm oil, electronics, oil, and timber.

Singapore

A populous country, Singapore is squeezed onto a tiny island at the tip of the Malay Peninsula. The island lies on a major shipping route. This location has helped make Singapore a rich country.

Today Singapore is one of the world's busiest **free ports**, ports that place few if any taxes on goods. It is also an industrial center, and many foreign banks and high-tech firms have located offices there.

Singapore sparkles as the gem of Southeast Asia. The country is modern, wealthy, orderly, and clean. Crime rates are low.

How has Singapore achieved such success? The government has worked hard to clean up slums and improve housing. In addition, laws are extremely strict. To provide **concrete** examples, fines for littering are stiff, and people caught with illegal drugs can be executed. Moreover, the government strictly controls politics and the media. Certain movies are banned, as are satellite dishes. Recently, however, Singapore has loosened up some restrictions.

Brunei

The tiny country of Brunei is on the island of Borneo, which it shares with Malaysia and Indonesia. A **sultan**, the supreme ruler of a Muslim country, governs Brunei.

The country has grown wealthy from large oil and gas deposits. Because of this wealth, Brunei's citizens do not pay income tax and receive free health care and other benefits. Brunei's oil will run out around 2020, however. As a result, the government is developing other areas of the economy.

READING CHECK **Contrasting** How do Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei differ?

Indonesia and East Timor

Indonesia is the largest of the island countries. East Timor, once part of Indonesia, is one of the area's smallest countries.

Indonesia

Indonesia has several claims to fame. It is the world's largest archipelago, with some 13,500 islands. It has the fourth-largest population of any country as well as the largest Muslim population. Indonesia is extremely diverse as well, as you have read. It has more than 300 ethnic groups who speak more than 250 languages.

Indonesia's main island is **Java**. The capital, Jakarta, is there, as are more than half of Indonesia's people. For this reason, Java is extremely crowded. To reduce the crowding, the government has been moving people to less-populated islands. Many people on those islands dislike that policy.

Indonesia's rich resources have helped its economy to grow. The main resources include rubber, oil and gas, and timber. The country also has good farmland for rice and other crops. Factories turn out clothing and electronics. Islands such as Bali draw thousands of tourists each year.

At the same time, problems have hurt Indonesia's economy. Many of the people are poor, and unemployment is high. In some areas, ethnic and religious conflicts have led to fighting and terrorism.

East Timor

East Timor is located on the small island of Timor. In 1999 East Timor declared independence from Indonesia. The island then plunged into violence. East Timor only gained its independence after the United Nations sent in troops to restore peace. Years of fighting have left East Timor one of the region's poorest countries. Most people farm, and coffee is the main export.

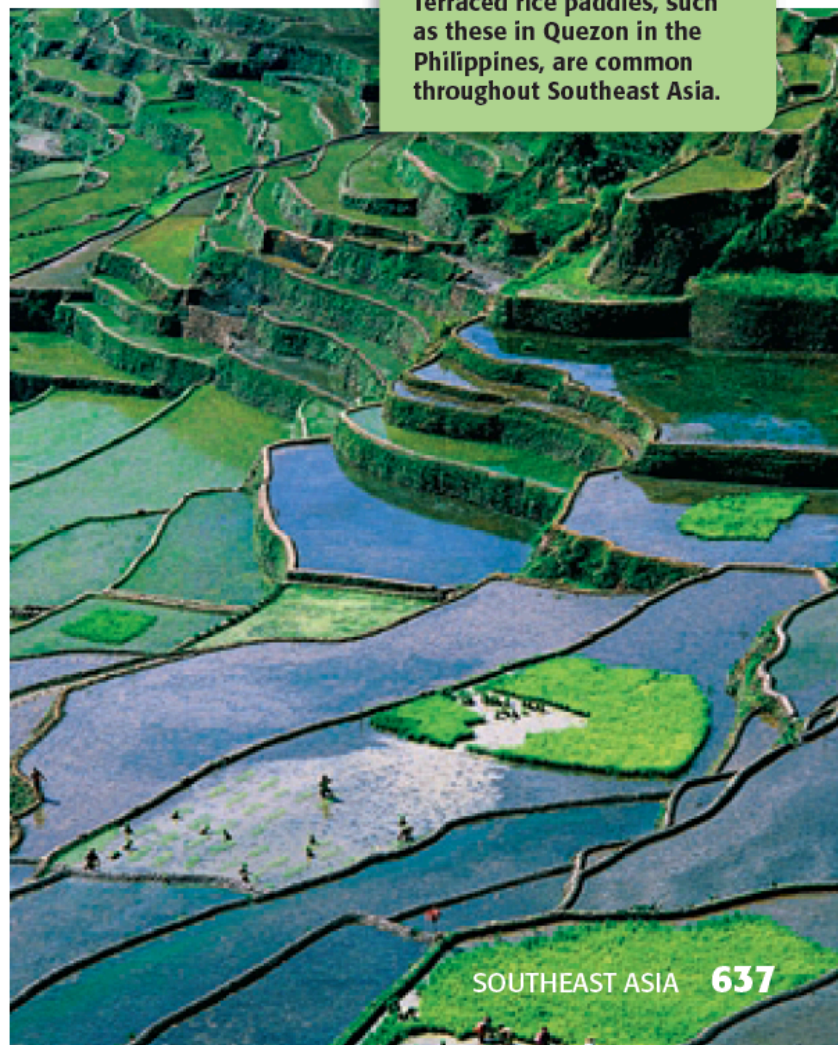
READING CHECK **Generalizing** How has violence affected Indonesia and East Timor?

FOCUS ON READING

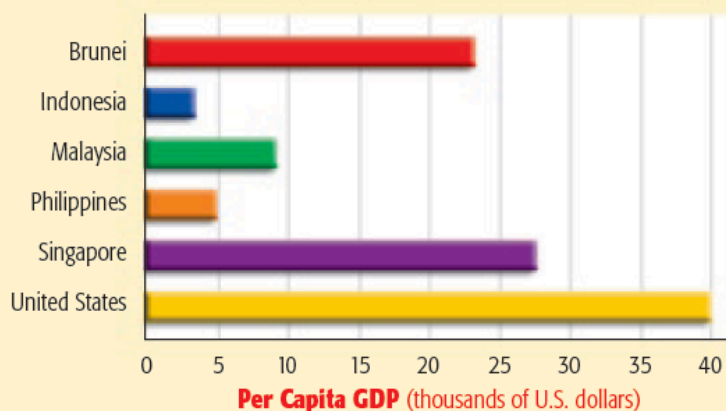
How does the highlighted text help you understand the meaning of *sultan*?

Rice Farming

Terraced rice paddies, such as these in Quezon in the Philippines, are common throughout Southeast Asia.



Per Capita GDP in Island Southeast Asia and the United States



Interpreting Graphs Which island country has the lowest GDP?

go.hrw.com KEYWORD: SK7 CH24

The Philippines has many resources to fuel economic growth. Natural resources include copper and other metals, oil, and tropical wood. Farmers grow coconuts, sugarcane, rice, and corn. Factories produce and export clothing and electronics.

Although the economy of the Philippines has improved in recent years, a wide gap still exists between the rich and the poor. A few Filipinos are wealthy. Most, however, are poor farmers who do not own the land they work.

The Philippines has experienced religious conflict as well. Although the country is mainly Roman Catholic, some areas are largely Muslim and want independence.

READING CHECK Contrasting How does the Philippines differ from much of the area?

The Philippines

The Philippines includes more than 7,000 islands. The largest and most populated is Luzon, which includes the capital, **Manila**. The Philippines has less ethnic diversity than the other island countries. Almost all Filipinos are ethnic Malays.

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW You have read that Island Southeast Asia has many contrasts. While some countries are wealthy, others are poor. While some countries are modern and urban, others are more traditional and rural. In the next chapter you will read about the Pacific World.

Section 4 Assessment

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and Places

- a. Identify** What problems does the area face?

b. Compare How does urban life compare between the island and mainland countries?
- a. Define** What is a **sultan**?

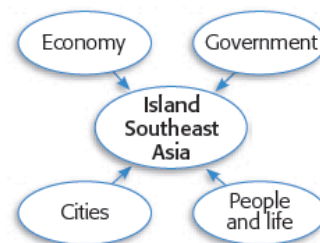
b. Explain How have Singapore and Brunei become rich countries?
- a. Recall** What island is **Jakarta** located on?

b. Sequence What series of events led to East Timor's independence?
- a. Identify** What are the capital city and the main island in the Philippines?

b. Analyze Why is the Philippines' economic improvement not benefitting many of its people?

Critical Thinking

- Categorizing** Draw a chart like the one shown. Use your notes to provide information for each category in the chart.



FOCUS ON SPEAKING

- Writing Questions about Island Southeast Asia Today** Write one question about each country covered in this section. Your questions might highlight differences among the countries or focus on similarities across the area.