

APPENDIX 1: PROFILE OF ASEAN MEMBER STATES

BRUNEI

Brunei is a small country in Southeast Asia. It lies on the north coast of the island of Borneo. The people of Brunei enjoy a high standard of living, mainly because of the country's valuable offshore petroleum deposits. Brunei covers 5,765 square kilometres and has a population of 299,000. Bandar Seri Begawan is its capital and largest city.

Government

Brunei's government is headed by a sultan. The sultan is chosen for life by a council of succession. Sir Muda Hassanal Bolkiah, who has been the sultan since 1967, also serve as the country's prime minister, minister of finance, and minister of home affairs. Several members of his family hold high positions in the government. Various advisory and legislative councils assist the sultan in operating the government. The sultan appoints council members. Brunei has one political party, the National Democratic Party.

Brunei is divided into four administrative districts for the purposes of local government. Each has a district council. The sultan appoints the members of the district councils.

Brunei's highest court is the supreme court. It consists of a chief justice and several commissioners, who are appointed by the sultan.

INDONESIA

Indonesia consists of more than 13,600 islands. The islands lie along the equator, and extend more than 5,000 kilometres. Indonesia ranks fifth in population among all countries. About three-fifth of all the Indonesian live on java, which covers about 7 percent of Indonesia's total area. The capital and largest city is Jakarta.

Government

A president heads the government of Indonesia. In theory, the president and a People's consultative Assembly are suppose to establish the government's policies. A House of People's Representatives is the nation's parliament. However, in practice neither the assembly nor the house has real power. The president, with the advice of top army leaders and civilian advisers, makes all the important decisions.

The president is elected to a five-year term by the People's Consultative Assembly. The People's Consultative Assembly has 1,000 members. It includes the 500 members of the House of People's Representatives. It also includes 500 representatives of regional, occupational, and other groups. All assembly members serve five-year terms. The assembly must meet at least once every five years.

MALAYSIA

Malaysia consists of two regions about 650 kilometres apart, which are separated by the South China Sea. Malaysia has a population of about 19 million. About three-fifth of the people live in rural areas. More than 80 percent of the populations live in Peninsular Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur is Malaysia's capital and largest city.

Government

Malaysia has a democratic and federal system of government. A central parliament and 13 state legislative assemblies share political power. The central parliament consists of two houses, the *Dewan Negara*(upper house) and the *Dewan Rakyat*(lower house). The *Dewan Undangan Negeri*(state legislative assemblies) have only one house. Members of parliament and the assemblies are elected by popular vote. The political party which wins the greatest number of seats in an election becomes the party of government.

Malaysia is also a constitutional monarchy. The head of the central government is the *Yang Dipertuan Agong* (King). Nine of the states have a sultan as their head, and each of the four other states has a *Yang Dipertuan Negeri*(governor), appointed by the King.

PHILIPPINES

The Philippines consist of about 7,100 islands. The island lie in the tropic, about 100 kilometre from the coast of mainland Asia. They have a total area of 300,000 square kilometres. Luzon and Mindanao make up two-third of the total area. The Philippines has a population of about 63 million people. Manila is the capital and largest city.

Government

Philippines is a republic. Government is headed by a President. The President is elected for every 6 years. Philippines type of government is very similar to the United States government. The people of Philippines has to elect the president and congress. The congress acts as a check and balance to the president's decision.

SINGAPORE

Singapore is a small island country in Southeast Asia. The island covers an area of 573 square kilometres. Singapore is Southeast Asia's main port, and the busiest port in the world in terms of shipping tonnage. It is one of the most prosperous countries in Asia. Its people enjoy high standard of health, education, housing, transportation and telecommunications.

Government

Singapore is a republic. An 81-member, one-house Parliament makes the country's laws. A prime minister and a cabinet carry out the operations of government. A president serves as head of state, but has little actual power. The president is elected by the people for a term of four years. The government is run by the prime minister and the cabinet ministers. Elections are held every five years to choose the members of Parliament.

The president appoints as prime minister the member of parliament who commands the confidence of the majority of other members. The prime minister chooses the member of the cabinet, but they are actually appointed by the president.

Singapore's largest political party is the People's Action Party(PAP). It held almost all seats in the Parliament.

THAILAND

Thailand is the only nation in Southeast Asia that has never been ruled by a Western power. Thailand has approximately 56 million people. About three-fourth of the Thai people live in rural areas. Thailand is a wet, tropical land with many rivers, forest, and mountains. Bangkok is the capital and the largest city.

Government

In 1991, military leaders overthrew Thailand's civilian government, abolished the constitution, and dissolved parliament. A five-member military body called the National Peacekeeping Council took control. It appointed a temporary civilian prime minister and cabinet, and a National Legislative Assembly, composed of both military and civilian members, to run the government. These officials were to serve until a new constitution was written and elections held.

Before the military takeover, Thailand was a constitutional monarchy. The monarch had an advisory role as head of state, but the prime minister headed the government. The nation's legislature, called the National Assembly, nominated the prime minister, who was then formally appointed by the monarch. The prime minister selected a cabinet, called the Council of Ministers., which had up to 44 members. The National Assembly consisted of a 301-member House of Representatives and a 225-member Senate. The representatives were elected by the people to four-year terms. The senators were selected by the prime minister with the approval of the monarch and could be replaced at any time.

VIETNAM

Vietnam is the only socialist country in ASEAN. It is the youngest member of the association. Vietnam has about 70 million people. Ho Chi Minh City which has a population of about 3.5 million people is the largest city in Vietnam. Hanoi is the capital of Vietnam.

Government

The government of Vietnam is controlled by the Communist party. The part is headed by a Politburo which makes all the government's policies. Vietnam has a 496-member National Assembly. The Assembly meets twice a year to endorse laws and policies made by the Communist Party. A Council of State-made up of members of National Assembly-deals with such matters as national defence and the execution of laws. The council members make up a collective presidency. Members of a Council of Ministers head various department of the government.