

OFFICIAL NAME: Sultanate of Brunei
CAPITAL: Bandar Seri Begawan
SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Absolute Monarchy
AREA: 5,765 Sq Km (2,226 Sq Mi)
ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 318,000



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY: Brunei is located on the northwest coast of the island of Borneo in South East Asia. It is bound by the South China Sea to the north and the Malaysian state of Sarawak to the west and south. The country is divided into two separate enclaves by Sarawak with the main part to the west containing the Brunei-Muara, Tutong and Belait districts while the east contains the Temburong district. The terrain in the western enclave consists of hilly lowlands and the eastern enclave contains a wide coastal plain that rises to the mountain regions of Sarawak. Equatorial rain forests which are very dense in some places cover 75% of the land area and mangrove swamps as well as sandy beaches lie along the coastal plains. Major Cities (pop. est.); Bandar Seri Begawan 46,000, Kuala Belait 21,200, Seria 21,000, Tutong 13,000 (1991). Land Use; forested 86%, pastures 1%, agricultural-cultivated 1%, other 12% (1993).

CLIMATE: Brunei has a tropical climate with constant high humidity of approximately 80% all year round. Between November and December rainfall is at its heaviest during the NE Monsoon season called the Landas while most of the rainfall occurs in southern thunderstorms. Uniform temperature ranges are between 27 to 32 degrees Celsius (81 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit) with the average annual precipitation varying from 2,400 mm (95 inches) in the lowlands areas to 4,000 mm (158 inches) in the interior.

PEOPLE: Brunei can be described as a Malay nation with Malays accounting for 69% of the population while the Chinese constitute around 18%. Other minorities include Indians and indigenous groups such as Ibans, Dusans and other minor tribal groups. Europeans make up a small part of the population, although most of these are temporary workers of the British, American, Dutch and Australian origin.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 46 persons per sq km (119 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 63.6% urban, 36.4% rural (1982). Sex Distribution; 51.7% male, 48.3% female (1989). Life Expectancy at Birth; 72.6 years male, 76.4 years female (1989). Age Breakdown; 37% under 15, 33% 15 to 29, 18% 30 to 44, 7% 45 to 59, 3% 60 to 74, 2% 75 and over (1986). Birth Rate; 27.6 per 1,000 (1989). Death Rate; 3.3 per 1,000 (1989). Increase Rate; 24.3 per 1,000 (1989). Infant Mortality Rate; 9.0 per 1,000 live births (1989).

RELIGIONS: The official religion is Islam with around 67% of the population Muslim. The remainder are religious minorities, of which 12% are Buddhists, 9% are Christians and 12% follow local native tribal beliefs.

LANGUAGES: The official language is Malay, although English is widely spoken for commerce purposes. Dialects of the indigenous non-Malay people are also spoken in the interior.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained: no formal schooling 32.1%, primary 28.3%, secondary 30.1%, higher 9.4% (1981). Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 121,281 or 85.1% (1986).

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: After the Japanese occupation from 1941 to 1945 the British civil administration was restored. In 1959 the Sultanate's first written constitution was adopted and in 1962 political unrest led the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien to abolish political parties and suspend the 1959 constitution while his rule of decree continued into the 1980's. In 1963 Brunei decided against joining Malaysia in a federation and in 1967 the Sultan abdicated in favor of his son Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. In 1971 Great Britain granted full internal self government to Brunei. The British government continued to be responsible for Brunei's foreign relations and defense until the country gained complete independence on Jan. 1, 1984. In 1985 two political parties were formed with the agreement of the authorities, however, in 1988 one of the parties was suspended and no elections have been held since the declaration of a State of Emergency. During 1990 the last dissidents from the British crushed revolt in 1962 were released from detention. In 1991 a ban on the sale of alcohol came into effect and in Feb. 1991 the Muslim sect, al-Arqam was banned while Christian activities were also monitored more closely. In April 1991, there were several visits from foreign dignitaries from Japan, China and Singapore to establish further economic, diplomatic or defense ties. In Aug. 1991, the Foreign Minister Prince Mohamad Bolkiah announced that Brunei would accept several visits from US warships but would not permit the construction of US base facilities while in Sept. 1991, Singapore's Defense Minister announced that his country would provide training facilities for Brunei's armed forces. In late 1991, the Sultanate established diplomatic ties with China while in Feb. 1992, the Sultanate established diplomatic relations with Vietnam. In July 1992, a Brunei delegation arrived in Hanoi to discuss trade agreements on shipping and telecommunications. In Sept. 1992, Brunei joined the Non-Aligned Movement. On Oct. 5, 1992 Brunei celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Sultan's accession to the throne, the biggest event since the country's independence in 1984. In 1993 Brunei established further diplomatic ties with Asian countries such as Laos in July and Myanmar in September while the country also sent 12 policemen to join peacekeeping forces in Cambodia, the first such time that Brunei had ventured into international peacekeeping. Also during 1993, Japan and Brunei renewed their expiring 20-year agreement to supply Japan with their entire liquefied natural gas output

and Brunei and Malaysia agreed to establish a joint border committee to discuss boundary disputes involving the Limbang salient, Sarawak, and offshore economic zones.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Dollar (BD) divided into 100 Cents (Sen).

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$4,001,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; nil. Imports; BD \$2,280,700,000 (1992). Exports; BD \$3,630,200,000 (1992). Tourism Receipts; USD \$35,000,000 (1990). Balance of Trade; BD \$1,946,000,000 (1992). Economically Active Population; 111,955 or 43.0% of total population (1991). Unemployed; 4.7% (1991).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partners are Japan, Thailand, Singapore, South Korea and other ASEAN countries.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Bananas, Cassava, Coffee, Fish, Oil and Natural Gas, Rice, Timber.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Production and Refining of Oil and Natural Gas.

MAIN EXPORTS: Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refined Petroleum Products.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 19 km (12 mi) privately owned (1990). Roads; length 2,199 km (1,366 mi) (1988). Vehicles; cars 99,997 (1989), trucks and buses 17,512 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 42 (1990), deadweight tonnage 348,783 (1990). Air Transport; passenger-km 448,000,000 (303,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 9,857,000 (6,751,000 short ton-mi) (1990).

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 1 with a total circulation of 30,000 (1993). Radio; receivers 60,000 (1994). Television; receivers 70,000 (1994). Telephones; units 55,200 (1993).

MILITARY: 4,900 (1995) total active duty personnel with 79.6% army, 14.39% navy and 6.1% air force while military expenditure accounts for 8.4% (1990) of the Gross National Product (GNP).