

## Country Background Notes

### **BRUNEI:**



**FLAG OF BRUNEI:** Yellow with two diagonal bands of white (top, almost double width) and black starting from the upper hoist side; the national emblem in red is superimposed at the center; the emblem includes a swallow-tailed flag on top of a winged column within an upturned crescent above a scroll and flanked by two upraised hands.

**BACKGROUND:** The Sultanate of Brunei's influence peaked between the 15th and 17th centuries when its control extended over coastal areas of northwest Borneo and the southern Philippines. Brunei subsequently entered a period of decline brought on by internal strife over royal succession, colonial expansion of European powers, and piracy. In 1888, Brunei became a British protectorate; independence was achieved in 1984. The same family has ruled Brunei for over six centuries.

**GEOGRAPHY:** Area: Total: 5,770 sq km, land: 5,270 sq km, water: 500 sq km  
Capital: Bandar Seri Begawan

Terrain: Flat coastal plain rises to mountains in east; hilly lowland in west.

Climate: tropical; hot, humid, rainy

**PEOPLE:** Nationality: *noun:* Bruneian(s) *adjective:* Bruneian

Population: 365,251

Religions: Muslim 45%, Christian 45%, indigenous beliefs 10%.

Literacy: 93.9%

Health: Infant mortality rate 13.05 deaths/1,000 live births. Life expectancy is 74.54 years.

Work force: agriculture, forestry, and fishing 10%, production of oil, natural gas, services, and construction 42%, government 48%.

Ethnic groups: Malay 67%, Chinese 15%, indigenous 6%, other 12%.

**GOVERNMENT:** Type: Constitutional sultanate.

Independence: 1 January 1984 (from UK).

Constitution: 29 September 1959 (some provisions suspended under a State of Emergency since December 1962, others since independence on 1 January 1984).

**ECONOMY:** Currency: Bruneian dollar (BND).

Per capita income: \$18,600.

Trade: Exports-- crude oil, natural gas, refined products.

**AGRICULTURE:** Rice, vegetables, fruits, chickens, water buffalo.

**LANGUAGE:** Malay (official), English, Chinese.