

Malaysia

Geography

Location: Southeastern Asia, peninsula and northern one-third of the island of Borneo bordering the Java Sea and the South China Sea, south of Vietnam

Area:

total area: 329,750 sq km

land area: 328,550 sq km

Land boundaries: total 2,669 km, Brunei 381 km, Indonesia 1,782 km, Thailand 506 km

Coastline: 4,675 km (Peninsular Malaysia 2,068 km, East Malaysia 2,607 km)

Maritime claims:

continental shelf: 200-m depth or to depth of exploitation; specified boundary in the South China Sea

exclusive fishing zone: 200 nm
exclusive economic zone: 200 nm
territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: tropical; annual southwest (April to October) and northeast (October to February) monsoons

Terrain: coastal plains rising to hills and mountains

Natural resources: tin, petroleum, timber, copper, iron ore, natural gas, bauxite

Land use:

arable land: 3%
permanent crops: 10%
meadows and pastures: 0%
forest and woodland: 63%
other: 24%

Irrigated land: 3,420 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: air pollution from industrial and vehicular emissions;
water pollution from raw sewage; deforestation
natural hazards: flooding

Note: strategic location along Strait of Malacca and southern South China Sea

People

Population: 19,723,587 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 37% (female 3,559,434; male 3,690,310)

15-64 years: 59% (female 5,871,131; male 5,844,568)

65 years and over: 4% (female 423,539; male 334,605) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 2.24% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 27.95 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 5.56 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: 0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 24.7 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 69.48 years

male: 66.55 years

female: 72.56 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 3.47 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Malaysian(s)

adjective: Malaysian

Ethnic divisions: Malay and other indigenous 59%, Chinese 32%,
Indian 9%

Religions:

Peninsular Malaysia: Muslim (Malays), Buddhist (Chinese), Hindu
(Indians)

Sabah: Muslim 38%, Christian 17%, other 45%

Sarawak: tribal religion 35%, Buddhist and Confucianist 24%,
Muslim 20%, Christian 16%, other 5%

Languages:

Peninsular Malaysia: Malay (official), English, Chinese dialects, Tamil

Sabah: English, Malay, numerous tribal dialects, Chinese (Mandarin and Hakka dialects predominate)

Sarawak: English, Malay, Mandarin, numerous tribal languages ***

No data for this item ***

Literacy:

total population: 78%

male: 86%

female: 70%

Government

Names:

conventional short form: Malaysia

former: Malayan Union

Capital: Kuala Lumpur

Independence: 31 August 1957 (from UK)

National holiday: National Day, 31 August (1957)

Constitution: 31 August 1957, amended 16 September 1963

Suffrage: 21 years of age; universal

Flag: fourteen equal horizontal stripes of red (top) alternating with white (bottom); there is a blue rectangle in the upper hoist-side corner bearing a yellow crescent and a yellow fourteen-pointed star; the crescent and the star are traditional symbols of Islam; the design was based on the flag of the US

Economy

Industries:

Peninsular Malaysia: rubber and oil palm processing and manufacturing, light manufacturing industry, electronics, tin mining and smelting, logging and processing timber

Sabah: logging, petroleum production

Sarawak: agriculture processing, petroleum production and refining, logging

Agriculture: accounts for 16% of GDP (1993 est.)

Peninsular Malaysia: natural rubber, palm oil, rice

Sabah: mainly subsistence, but also rubber, timber, coconut, rice

Sarawak: rubber, timber, pepper; deficit of rice in all areas

Illicit drugs: transit point for Golden Triangle heroin going to the US, Western Europe, and the Third World despite severe penalties for drug trafficking; increasing indigenous abuse of methamphetamine

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 1,801 km

Highways:

total: 29,028 km

Inland waterways:

Peninsular Malaysia: 3,209 km

Sabah: 1,569 km

Sarawak: 2,518 km

Pipelines: crude oil 1,307 km; natural gas 379 km

Ports: Kota Kinabalu, Kuantan, Kuching, Kudat, Lahad Datu, Labuan, Lumut, Miri, Pasir Gudang, Penang, Port Dickson, Port Kelang, Sandakan, Sibul, Tanjong Berhala, Tanjong Kidurong, Tawau

Airports:
total: 115

Defence Forces

Branches: Malaysian Army, Royal Malaysian Navy, Royal Malaysian Air Force, Royal Malaysian Police Force, Marine Police, Sarawak Border Scouts