

**Monday 21st October**

## **South East Asia**

South East Asia is made up of six countries – Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines. More than 25,000 islands make up this region, where a population of over 420 million people live.



For centuries prior to the European colonial era, the region was dominated by Chinese traders, and today the Chinese are a sizeable minority across the region. The population is very ethnically diverse with Malay peoples making up the largest single group.

The region is rapidly modernising and becoming more urbanised. Skyscrapers and apartment buildings tower over the densely populated cities. Shopping centres are sometimes spectacular and often very large. The region thrives on trade and has a very sophisticated commercial economy.

people living there, many have no knowledge of Jesus Christ. There are 220 million Muslims, over 88% of them in Indonesia. There are also millions of Christians in South East Asia, but Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei have Muslim majorities.

Watch a new PrayerCast video about the region of Indo-Malaysia: <https://prayercast.com/indo-malaysia.html>

- Pray for the large regional Christian population to be inspired to reach Muslims.
- God is drawing South East Asian Muslims to Himself through dreams and visions. Pray for Muslim background believers who can effectively reach their own people.
- Pray for the government and leaders in this region, to lead with integrity and to have people around them providing godly counsel.

Sources: PrayerCast <https://prayercast.com/indo-malaysia.html> and 1010 prayer and fasting  
<https://1010prayerandfasting.com/2019/01/>

## **Tuesday 22nd October**

### **Challenges in the region**

With growing economies and rapidly expanding populations across the region, a common struggle for many is finding the means to live, to raise children and forge a future for their families.

In addition, peoples who have long traditions of living together harmoniously across religious divides are facing increasing hostilities. This is especially true in the Muslim-majority countries of Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. Minorities are increasingly feeling the pressure of religious intolerance, usually pressures by Muslims on Christians and other religious minorities. There has been an increase in cases of blasphemy being reported.

The dominant form of Islam is Sunni, but this has two expressions in the region; those who follow Folk Islam and others who follow more orthodox Islam. In recent decades, orthodox Muslims have been seeking to bring those following Folk Islam into line with their beliefs. This is leading to increasing tensions between these two expressions of Islam in many Muslim communities in Indo-Malaysia.

There are nevertheless exciting movements to faith in Jesus Christ, as field workers bless Muslim communities, through business, development projects and prayer. The challenge is in reaching the many unengaged Muslim people groups, some of whom live on poor and remote islands that are difficult to access.

- Pray for freedom of religion in this region and for local governments to protect the rights of all citizens, including minorities.
- Ask God to guide leaders' decisions regarding freedom of religion and even to change their hearts to love and care for their citizens of different religions.
- Pray for more teams of workers to advance the gospel in this region. God is looking to send those who are close to Him in order to reach those who are far away. Could you be one of those people?

If you want to find out more about reaching Muslims overseas, you may be interested in our Neighbours and Nations conference this Saturday in Oxford. For more details, visit:

<https://www.frontiers.org.uk/latest/events/>

## **Wednesday 23rd October**

**Indonesia      Pop: 264 million      Muslim: 80%**

Indonesia is made up of over 17,000 islands, of which 6,000 are believed to be inhabited. There are five main islands; Java, Sumatra, Borneo (shared with Malaysia), Sulawesi and Papua (shared with Papua New Guinea). It is a lush, tropical country with palm trees, white sandy beaches and clear, turquoise water. However, in the midst of this beauty, there is much poverty. Indonesia is also prone to earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and other natural disasters.

Indonesia's motto is 'Unity in Diversity.' However, recently there have been clashes with police in Papua, as people have protested for greater involvement in government and for their voice to be heard. At least 10 people died and dozens were arrested.

The nation's population of approximately 264 million people is made up of 780 people groups, making it the largest and most populous country in South East Asia and the fourth most populous country in the world. It has the world's largest Muslim population, but also a sizeable Christian minority who make up 15% of the population.



Although the national language is Bahasa Indonesian, there are 707 different languages spoken there. Earlier this year, Mission Network News reported that Wycliffe Associates were launching 100 new language Bible translation projects this year for the most populous people group on Borneo. More than 3 million Dayak people in Borneo, representing 287 languages, are without any scriptures.

Indonesia has many big churches and large Christian denominations. In recent decades, increasing numbers of local believers have begun reaching out to their Muslim neighbours. There are many small groups of believers across the country and numerous reports of church planting movements emerging. Since radical Islamist groups want to make Indonesia into a more strictly Muslim country, this is leading to governmental and societal pressure on families and others who choose to follow Christ. This year Indonesia moved from number 38 to 30 on Open Doors' World Watch List.

- Praise God there is an open door in places where Christians have been elected into government positions and are supporting Bible translation. Let's ask God's blessing and protection on those in government positions and for the door for funding to remain open.
- Pray for the Church in Indonesia to remain firm in the truth and love of Christ and to be encouraged.
- Pray also for freedom of religion in Indonesia and for the local governments to protect the rights of all citizens, including minorities.

Sources: <https://www.mnnonline.org/news/> and Global Prayer Digest  
<http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/issue/basic-facts-about-indonesia/>

**Thursday 24th October**

#### **Baptised in a hostile environment**

*"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."* John 1:5

The following account is from a Frontiers worker:

"The church is growing in Indonesia. But as the gospel spreads, believers are facing greater hostility. Last year, dozens were killed and injured in coordinated suicide attacks on three churches in the country's second-largest city of Surabaya. It is the same in the Muslim neighbourhood where my teammates and I live. New believers face intense persecution at the hands of neighbours who've been influenced by radical teaching. But we also know that more and more Muslims want to hear about Jesus and the gift of salvation.

God is moving powerfully in the Muslim neighborhood where my teammates and I live. Men and women have been healed, and many have become followers of Jesus. These new believers gather regularly, and they've begun calling themselves the Family of Jesus Christ.



Recently, an elderly member of the community opened his home for a special gathering with his fellow believers. They expected about 30 people to come but almost twice as many people came. Two women gave powerful testimonies of how Jesus has transformed their lives. Those who weren't yet believers heard the gospel and were invited to respond. There was also a time to pray for anyone who had a particular need.

Then, within days of this special event, a radical group started threatening to kill followers of Jesus. In spite of the threats, 10 more people decided to be baptised. A few days later, several of them travelled across the country to visit relatives and bring them the Good News.

God has promised that He'll complete the work of expanding His Kingdom among every people group. As His followers, we're meant to take part and be first-hand witnesses to the growth of the Kingdom, even in the most difficult places in the Muslim world."

- Praise God for drawing more Muslims into His kingdom.
- Ask the Lord to protect new believers and to spread the gospel into other neighbourhoods.
- Pray for more workers to help catalyse movements to Christ in this part of the Muslim world.

## **Friday 25th October**

### **Minang – an unreached people group**

Of Frontiers' 100 priority unreached people groups, there are several in Indonesia. One of these is the Minang.

Numbering over 6.6 million, they live primarily in West Sumatra, where they are the largest people group. They speak the Minang language, which has many dialects. They are the fourth largest ethnic group in Indonesia and have a great deal of influence. Many of them have moved to other regions of Indonesia to earn a better living. They are famous nationwide for their cuisine. They have

restaurants all over country. They are also famous as traders; dealing primarily in clothing and jewellery.

However, they need better educational and industrial opportunities. Tourism is a potential sector for growth.



Most Minang are orthodox Muslims. Those who leave Islam are disowned by their family and community and can lose their job.

#### Location of West Sumatra in Indonesia

- Pray for workers with a deep desire to go to the Minang people.
- Pray for better educational opportunities to not only improve their economic situation, but as a means for sharing Jesus Christ with them.
- Pray that soon there will be many families from this people group studying the Bible together and following His ways.

Source: Joshua Project [https://joshuaproject.net/people\\_groups/13724/ID](https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/13724>ID)

#### Saturday 26th October

##### Pray for Brunei



Brunei is a very small country made up of two enclaves on the island of Borneo. It became an English colony in 1888 and in 1984 the nation gained independence. The monarchy of Brunei, which has been run by members of the same family for six generations, has absolute power, such that the Sultan of Brunei is both head of the state and of government.

Brunei is one of the richest states in Asia, owing to its oil and gas reserves. Free healthcare is provided for its citizens, as well as free education, including for university studies. Citizens do not pay income tax and housing, fuel and food is heavily subsidised.

Boundaries of Brunei (green) since 1890

Islam is the state religion. About 65% of the population are Muslim and despite constitutionally guaranteed freedom of religion, it is illegal to proselytise and illegal for a Muslim to convert to another religion. It is estimated that Brunei has more mosques per square kilometre than any other country in the world.

Few foreign Christian workers are permitted and importing bibles for ministry purposes is illegal, although Bibles are permitted for personal use. Though Christianity is second to Islam, representing about 10% of the population, it is not recognised by the state.

To learn more about this country, watch a Prayercast video [here](#)

- Pray for salvation for the royal family, that they would lead their nation with righteousness and govern with just laws.
- Pray for more openings for kingdom workers to minister inside this nation and to stand strong for the truth despite persecution. Let's ask for God's protection and encouragement on them.
- Let's ask for eyes to be opened drawing many to repentance and salvation.
- The ground is spiritually hard and needs to be watered by prayer and the word. Let's pray for more people to have a burden to pray for this country.

Source of some material: <https://www.prayercast.com/brunei.html>