

Southeast Asia

Section 4



MAIN IDEAS

1. The area today has rich resources and growing cities but faces challenges.
2. Malaysia and its neighbors have strong economies but differ in many ways.
3. Indonesia is big and diverse with a growing economy, and East Timor is small and poor.
4. The Philippines has less ethnic diversity, and its economy is improving.

Key Terms and Places

kampong village or city district with traditional houses built on stilts; slums around cities

Jakarta capital of Indonesia

Kuala Lumpur Malaysia's capital and a cultural and economic center

free ports ports that place few if any taxes on goods

sultan supreme ruler of a Muslim country

Java Indonesia's main island

Manila capital of the Philippines

Section Summary

THE AREA TODAY

The countries of Southeast Asia are Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, East Timor, and the Philippines. Like the mainland countries, these island countries face challenges, too, such as ethnic conflicts, poverty, and environmental problems.

As on the mainland, many people in Island Southeast Asia live in rural areas. They fish or farm. Rice is the main crop. Also like the mainland, many people here are moving to cities for work. In some areas, people live in **kampongs**, places with traditional houses on stilts. The term *kampong* also refers to slums around **Jakarta**, Indonesia's capital, and around other cities of Island Southeast Asia.

Underline the challenges facing Island Southeast Asia.

Circle the main crop of this area.

Section 4, continued

MALAYSIA AND ITS NEIGHBORS

Malaysia has two parts. One is on the Malay Peninsula, where most Malaysians live. Its capital, **Kuala Lumpur**, is there as well. The other part is on Borneo. Malaysia is ethnically diverse, with a strong economy. It has a constitutional monarchy, with a prime minister and elected legislature.

Singapore is located on a tiny island that lies on a major shipping route. It is one of the world's busiest **free ports**—ports with few or no taxes on goods. Singapore is modern, wealthy, and clean. It has a strict government. Brunei is on the island of Borneo. A **sultan**, the supreme ruler of a Muslim country, governs this tiny country. As a result of oil and gas deposits, Brunei has grown wealthy.

How does Singapore's location help its economy?

INDONESIA AND EAST TIMOR

Indonesia is the world's largest archipelago. It has the world's largest Muslim population and is ethnically diverse. **Java** is Indonesia's main island. More than half its people live there. Indonesia has rich resources, such as rubber, oil, gas, and timber. Its economy is growing, but many people are poor. Religious and ethnic conflicts have led to violence.

After breaking free from Indonesia, years of fighting have left the tiny country of East Timor poor. Most people there farm.

What are some of Indonesia's resources?

THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines has less ethnic diversity than other island countries. **Manila** is its capital. Although some Filipinos are rich, most are poor farmers who do not own any land. The country is mainly Roman Catholic, but some areas are mostly Muslim and are seeking independence.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Choose an island country of Southeast Asia and write an essay that explains what steps could be taken to improve its economy.