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Interesting Facts about Malaysia - Geography, Polity, National Flag

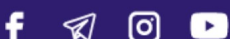
Hey aspirant, welcome back to our captivating “**Know your Country**” series. We invite you to join on an exploration of the country **Malaysia**.

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country in **Southeast Asia** and one of the wealthiest and most developed countries. Malaysia is known as ‘**Land of Malays**’. The name Malaysia is a combination of the word Malays and the Latin-Greek. Malaysia, a Nations online country profile of the nation in Southeast Asia, formerly known as British Malaya and later as the Federation of Malaya. Malaysia consists of two geographical regions separated by the South China Sea.

Now steeped in the history of the Malaysia. The country has its origins in the Malay kingdoms, which, from the 18th century on, became subject to the British Empire, along with the British Straits Settlements protectorate. Before looking at different aspects, one must know the country symbols of the particular country. The country symbols of Malaysia are:



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Malaysia	
Capital	Kuala Lumpur
Continent	Asia
President	Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr
Prime Minister	Anwar Ibrahim
Currency	Malaysian Ringgit
Language	Malaysian Malay
Religion	Muslim, with Buddhism, Christianity, and Hinduism
National Flag	
National Anthem	Negaraku
National Game	Sepak Takraw
National Bird	Rhinoceros Hornbill
National Tree	Malacca Teak
National Flower	Hibiscus



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[Source: Outlook Traveller]

So now, let's move on the first aspect of the blog i.e. **History of Malaysia**.

History of Malaysia

Malaysia's history is said to have started from the Sultanate of Malacca which was around 1400 AD. At the time of its glory, the Sultanate Territories covered most of the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia and Sumatra.

Ancient and Early Medieval Period:

In 1824, British control in Malaya was formalized by the Anglo-Dutch Treaty, However, contemporary Malaysia regards the entire history of Malaya and Borneo, and spanning thousands of years back to prehistoric times, as its own history. Between the 7th and the 13th century, much of the Malay peninsula was under the Buddhist Srivijaya empire.

Medieval Period:

The earliest evidence of modern human habitation in Malaysia is the 40,000-year-old skull excavated from the Niah Caves in today's Sarawak. This is also one of the oldest modern human skulls in Southeast Asia. In ancient Indian literature, the term Suvarnavipa (Golden Peninsula) is used in the Ramayana; some argue that this is a reference to the Malay Peninsula.

Colonial Period:

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During the late 19th century the British also gained control of the north coast of Borneo. Development on the Peninsula and Borneo were generally separate until the 19th century. The eastern part of this region was under the nominal control of the Sultan of Sulu, who later became a vassal of the Spanish East Indies. In 1888, what was left of Brunei was made a British protectorate, and in 1891 another Anglo-Dutch treaty formalized the border between British and Dutch Borneo.

However, the outbreak of war in the Pacific in December 1941 found the British in Malaya completely unprepared. During the 1930s, anticipating the rising threat of Japanese naval power, they had built a great naval base at Singapore, but never anticipated an invasion of Malaya from the north.

Independence and Beyond:

After the Japanese surrender the Brooke family and the British North Borneo Company gave up their control of Sarawak and North Borneo respectively, and these became British Crown Colonies. At the time of independence, Malaya had great economic advantages. It was among the world's leading producers of three valuable commodities, rubber, tin, and palm oil, and was also a significant iron ore producer.



[Source: Flamingo Travels]

Before going further we will get discuss about the events of the country.

Here is the timeline of some key events in Malaysia history:

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- **10,000 Years Ago:** Malays have been found to be ethnically related to people in Sumatra, Java and parts of the Philippines.
- **100 BC:** Commerce begins with China and India, establishing ports in Malaysia along essential trade routes and bringing foreign influence.
- **0-400 AD:** Buddhism and Hinduism arrive from India and are adopted; Sanskrit becomes the writing system.
- **1511:** Portugal makes first European colonial claim on Malaysia, capturing Malaysia
- **1641:** Dutch East India Company and local allies push Portuguese from Malacca.
- **Late 1700s-1800s:** Britain establishes colonies and trading ports on Malay Peninsula; Penang is leased to the British East India Company.
- **1857:** Modern-day Kuala Lumpur is founded as a trading post for immigrant miners, and becomes capital of Federated Malay States in 1896.
- **1945:** After US drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, British forces regain control of Malaya.
- **1946:** United Malays National Organization (UMNO) is founded by Onn bin Jaafar, chief minister of Johore.
- **1957:** Federation of Malaya becomes independent from British.

The timeline showcases Malaysia as a rich and diverse history in a simple way. Let's move on to the next aspect of this blog i.e. **Geographical Aspects**.

Geographical Aspects of Malaysia

Malaysia consists of a range of steep forest covered mountains with coastal plains to the east and west, while the principal river is the Pahang. East Malaysia has a broad swampy, coastal plain that rises to jungle-covered hills in the interior. Peninsular Malaysia is dominated by its mountainous core, which consists of a number of roughly parallel mountain ranges aligned north-south. The most prominent of these is the Main Range, which is about 300 miles (480 km) long and has peaks exceeding 7,000 feet (2,100 meters).

Demographic Aspects:

The 2023 population density in Malaysia is 104 people per Km² (270 people per mi²), calculated on a total land area of 328,550 Km² (126,854 sq. miles). Malaysia has a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, The majority of Malaysia's population identifies, not surprisingly, as ethnically Malay. The Malay belong to the Malayo-Polynesian ethno-linguistic family.

Censuses were taken in Malaysia in 1970, 1980, 1991, 2000 and 2010. The total population is around 28.3 million according to the 2010 census. The population distribution is highly uneven, with some 20 million residents concentrated in Peninsula Malaysia. 74.7% of the population is urban.

Soil and Vegetation:

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Malaysia residual soils of granite, residual soils of sedimentary rock, and coastal alluvial soils. Residual soils are formed from the weathering process of rocks. Granitic soils covered a large area of Peninsular Malaysia especially the hillside and mountain ranges. Malaysian soils are highly weathered, acidic, and not very fertile for crop production. About 75% of these soils fall under the Ultisols and Oxisols soil group, which are normally found in tropical regions.

The characteristic vegetation of Malaysia is dense evergreen rainforest. Rainforest still covers more than two-fifths of the peninsula and some two-thirds of Sarawak and Sabah another fraction of the country is under swamp forest. The existing vegetation of Malaysia may be subdivided for purposes of brief and more popular discussion into several categories.

Climate and Weather:

Malaysia has a tropical climate. Malaysia's mean annual temperature is 25.4°C. There is relatively little seasonal variability in average monthly temperature, ranging one degree Celsius between a minimum of 24.9°C in January and maximum of 25.9°C in May. April, May and June are the hottest months of the year. They have high temperatures and humidifies, heavy rainfall, and a climatic year patterned around the northeast and southwest monsoons.



[Source: Wikipedia]

Now, let's look at the **political aspects of Malaysia**.

Political Aspects of Malaysia

Malaysia is a federation of 13 states and 3 federal territories. The system of government in Malaysia is closely modelled on that of Westminster parliamentary. The Constitution of Malaysia is codified and the system of government is based on the Westminster system.

The hierarchy of authority in Malaysia, in accordance to the Federal Constitution, stipulates the three branches (administrative components) of the Malaysian government as consisting of the Executive, Judiciary and Legislative branch. Whereas, the Parliament consists of the Dewan Negara and Dewan Rakyat.



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- **Legislature:** Parliament is the highest legislative body in Malaysia. It consists of His Majesty The King as the Head of State, The Senate and The House of Representatives. Article 55 of the Federal Constitution stipulates that only His Majesty The King can summon for Parliament to be in session.
- **Judiciary:** The hierarchy of courts of Malaysia starts with the Magistrates Court as the first level followed by the Sessions Court, High Court, Court of Appeal and the Federal Court of Malaysia. The Federal Court of Malaysia is the highest court of the land.
- **Executive:** Executive power is vested in the cabinet led by the prime minister; the Malaysian constitution stipulates that the prime minister must be a member of the lower house of parliament who, in the opinion of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, commands a majority in parliament.



[Source: New Straits Times]

The Prime Minister of Malaysia is the indirect head of government of Malaysia. The local government or local authority is the lowest level in the system of government in Malaysia after federal and state. It has the power to collect taxes, to create laws and rules and to grant licenses and permits for any trade in its area of jurisdiction, in addition to providing basic amenities, collecting and managing waste and garbage as well as planning and developing the area under its jurisdiction.

So now, let's look at the **Culture of Malaysia**.

Culture of Malaysia

Malaysia is a multi-cultural society. The main ethnic groups are the native Malays as well as large populations of Chinese, and Indians. When visiting the country it is clear that the ethnicities retain their religions, customs and way of life.



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- **Language:** The national language of Malaysia is Malay, aside from being one of the two authority dialects. Likewise called Malaysian Malay or Malay, it is spoken by over 80% of the populace. The second official language of Malaysia is English, which is likewise one of the most regularly communicated in dialects.
- **Cuisine:** Nasi lemak is a dish originating in Malay cuisine that consists of fragrant rice cooked in coconut milk and pandan leaf. It is commonly found in Malaysia, where it is considered as the national dish.
- **Festivals:** Hari Raya Aidilfitri is celebrated by Malaysian Muslims every year after Ramadhan, the fasting month. Celebrated as a two-day nationwide holiday, the first day of Hari Raya starts early with the prayers at mosque, seeking for forgiveness from their family members and friends.
- **Performing Art:** Malaysian artisans have traditionally used a variety of materials and techniques to create beautiful and unique items. One of the most popular Malaysia arts and crafts is batik. Batik is a form of fabric painting that uses wax resist to create patterns and designs on cloth.
- **Sporting Culture:** The national sport of Malaysia is Sepak Takraw. It is a sport in which the players must kick a takraw over a net. It is similar to volleyball or badminton except players cannot use their hands.
- **Art and Craft:** Popular traditional craft pieces include Perak's labu sayong, geluk, belanga, Chinese dragon kiln ceramics, and Sarawakian pottery tribal motif. Contemporary pieces include vases, flower pots, decorative pottery, sculptures, and kitchenware.
- **Cultural values:** Malaysia is a multi-cultural society. The main ethnic groups are the native Malays as well as large populations of Chinese, and Indians. When visiting the country it is clear that the ethnicities retain their religions, customs and way of life.
- **Multiculturalism:** Malaysia is a multicultural society of which the population is made up by different types of ethnic groups includes Malays, Chinese, Indian and the Native.
- **Indigenous Heritage:** Indigenous Peoples are distinct social and cultural groups that share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live, occupy or from which they have been displaced.



[Source: Travel Triangle]

So now, let's look at the **Educational aspects of Malaysia.**

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Education in Malaysia

The education system in Malaysia involves four levels, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, and postsecondary schools. There are both private and government regulatory schools, and parents are free to pick any of the schools. Malaysian schools offer courses in various languages like English, Tamil, and Chinese.

Because Malaysia is affordable and English is widely spoken here, Malaysia has become one of the leading education hubs in Southeast Asia. Students from Southeast Asia and as far as Africa come here to complete their tertiary studies as they know that Malaysia's universities offer top-notch quality education.

Economy of Malaysia

Malaysia is a middle power in Asia. The country's overall score **declined by 0.3 points** over the past year, In Southeast Asia, it is the third most powerful country after Singapore and Indonesia. Malaysia performs best in the cultural influence measure, placing sixth. Manufacturing has a large influence in the country's economy, accounting for over **40% of the GDP**. Malaysia is also the world's largest Islamic banking and financial centre.

Malaysia is rich in mineral resources, and mining accounts for a significant portion of GDP, although it employs only a tiny fraction of the workforce. The major metallic ores are tin, bauxite, copper, and iron.



[Source: CNBC]

Now, let's check out some **interesting facts about Malaysia**.

Interesting Facts about Malaysia

Malaysia is the only country in the world to include territory on the mainland of Southeast Asia as well as on the islands that stretch between Asia and Oceania. 12. Borneo is the third-largest island in the whole world, after Greenland and New Guinea.

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- **Aurea Chersonesus:** One of the old names of Malaysia, "Aurea Chersonesus" was given by the famous geographer Ptolemy in around 150 AD. In his book Geographia, he referred to Malaysia as "Aurea Chersonesus," meaning "peninsula of gold."
- **Petronas Towers:** Holding the record for the tallest building in the world till 2004, Petronas Towers boasts of the highest sky bridge between two buildings in the world, while also being the tallest twin towers in the world.
- **Corpse Flower:** This interesting flower is so called because of its peculiar corpse like stench. Otherwise known as *Rafflesia arnoldii*, this is a parasitic flower which embeds itself onto the host flower and the only part that is visible is the 3 feet wide head of it. The largest flower in the world, it can weigh upto 7 kgs.
- **Bintangor Trees:** Native to Sarawak in Malaysia, a compound found in Bintangor trees – Calanolide A is being used for clinical trials for anti HIV drugs.
- Malaysia reaffirms its strong commitment to efforts to address sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, and strongly believes.



[Source: BudgetAir Australia]

However, Malaysia is the 66th largest country by total land area, with a total area of 330,803 km² (127,724 sq mi). It has land borders with Thailand in West Malaysia, and Indonesia and Brunei in East Malaysia. It is linked to Singapore by a narrow causeway and a bridge. Check out the interesting facts of other countries on [KD Live](#) and update yourself with the time. So, we will meet in some other blog. till then, stay tuned!