

# SOUTH-EAST ASIA

## PHILIPPINES



AREA 300,000 sq km  
POPULATION 101,834,000  
MONEY Philippine peso

## THAILAND



AREA 513,115 sq km  
POPULATION 66,720,000  
MONEY Baht

## SINGAPORE



AREA 683 sq km  
POPULATION 4,741,000  
MONEY Singapore dollar



▲ **Singapore** is the world's most crowded country. Most smaller old shops and houses have been replaced by new skyscrapers.

**T**HE Equator crosses South-east Asia, so it is always hot. Heavy tropical rainstorms are common. The mainland and most of the islands are very mountainous.

**Indonesia** is the biggest country, by both area and population. It used to be called the Dutch East Indies.

**The Philippines** is another large group of islands, south of China. They were Spanish until 1898.

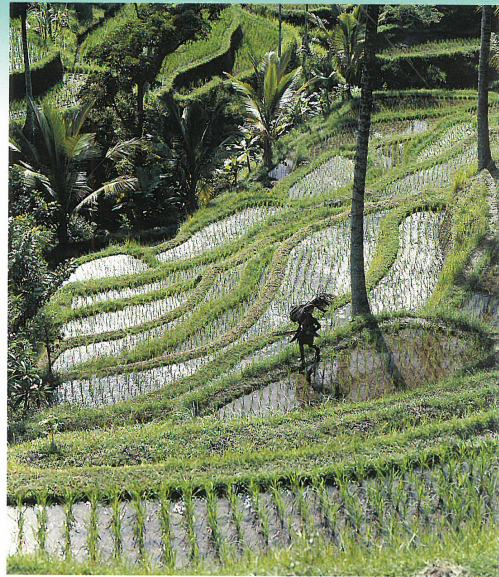
**Malaysia** includes part of the mainland and most of northern Borneo.

**Brunei** is a very small but a very rich country on the island of Borneo.

**Burma (Myanmar)** was counted as part of British India. It became independent in 1948.

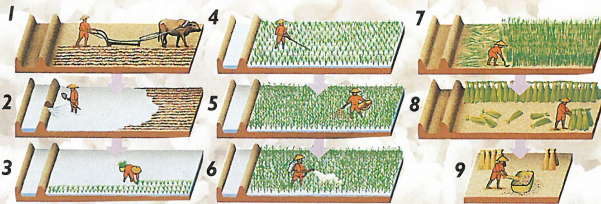
**Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia** were once called French Indo-China.

**Thailand** has always been independent, and has a king.



▲ **Rice terraces, Bali.** Rice grows on terraces cut into the mountainside in Bali. Each terrace is sown and harvested by hand. Bali is a small island east of Java. Some people claim that it is the most beautiful island of Indonesia, and in all the world!

### GROWING RICE



- |                 |               |              |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1 Ploughing     | 4 Weeding     | 7 Harvesting |
| 2 Irrigation    | 5 Fertilizing | 8 Drying     |
| 3 Transplanting | 6 Spraying    | 9 Threshing  |

Rice is the world's most important crop. The nine stages in growing rice are shown above. It is hot, hard work. Rice needs plenty of water as well as hot sunshine. New varieties of plants yield more rice, but they also need more fertilizer, more water and more care.



▲ **Floating market in Thailand.** Farmers bring their fruit and vegetables by boat to a market at Damnoen Saduak, to the west of Bangkok. Fish are cooked on some of the boats and sold for lunch.

The mountains of South are covered with thick tropical rainforests. Many animals and plants live here but will not survive if the forests are destroyed. These areas are very difficult to reach and have few people. The most important routes inland are through the valleys and deltas are very fertile.

Java, Bali and Singapore are among the most crowded islands in the world – yet several other islands, such as Sulawesi and Borneo, have very small populations.

