

Conference of Religious Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei

A. Countries Report (Malaysia and Singapore)

Diversity Profile

Historically, Malaysia and Singapore's population comprises people of many ethnicities, religions and languages due to the high level of immigration by people originating from places such as China, India and the Malay Archipelago. Hence, Living with multiple ethnicities and religions has been the way of life for Malaysia and Singapore since its founding.

<p>Official Name: Persekutuan Malaysia short form: Malaysia int'l long form: Federation of Malaysia</p> <p>ISO Country Code: my</p> <p>Local Time = UTC +8h:</p> <p>Country Calling Code: +60</p> <p>Capital City: Kuala Lumpur (pop. 6.9 million in metropolitan area). Seat of Government: Putrajaya</p> <p>Other Cities: Penang, Ipoh, Malacca, Johor Baru, Kuching, Kota Kinabalu, Alor Setar, Shah Alam.</p>	<p>Official Name: Republik Singapura Republic of Singapore short form: Singapore</p> <p>ISO Country Code: sg</p> <p>Time: Local Time = UTC +8h</p> <p>Country Calling Code: +65</p> <p>Capital City: Singapore (Sanskrit Singapura--Lion City; pop. 3.5 million)</p>

Government:

Type: Federal parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarch.

Independence: 31. August 1957. (Malaya, which is now peninsular Malaysia, became independent in 1957. In 1963 Malaya, Sabah, Sarawak, and Singapore formed Malaysia. Singapore became an independent country in 1965.).
Constitution: 31 August 1957, amended 16 September 1963.

Geography:

Location: Southeastern Asia, partly on Malay Peninsula south of Thailand and on the northern one-third of the island of Borneo, bordering Indonesia, Brunei, and the South China Sea, south of Vietnam.

Area: 330,000 km² (127,316 sq. mi.)

Terrain: Coastal plains and interior, jungle-covered mountains. The South China Sea separates peninsular Malaysia from East Malaysia on Borneo.

Climate: Tropical, annual southwest (Apr to Oct) and northeast (Oct to Feb) monsoons.

People:

Nationality: Malaysian(s).

Population: 29 million (2012)

Ethnic groups: Malay 50%, Chinese 24%, Indigenous 11.0%, Indian 7%, non-Malaysian citizens 7 %.

Religions: Islam (60%), Buddhism (20%), Christianity (10%), Hinduism (6%), Confucianism (2.6%), Animism (1%), others (including Taoism, Sikhism, Baha'i faith).

Languages: Malay, Cantonese, Hokkien, Mandarin Chinese, English, Tamil, indigenous.

Literacy: 94%.

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

Agriculture products: Peninsular Malaysia - rubber, palm oil, cocoa, rice; Sabah - subsistence crops, rubber, timber, coconuts, rice; Sarawak - rubber, pepper; timber.

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.

Currency: Malaysian Ringgit (MYR)

Government:

Type: Parliamentary Republic.

Independence: 9 August 1965 (from Malaysian Federation)

Constitution: 3 June 1959, amended 1965 (based on pre-independence State of Singapore Constitution)

Geography:

Location: Southeast Asia, islands between Malaysia and Indonesia.

Area: 597 km² (230,5 sq. mi.)

Terrain: Lowland; gently undulating central plateau contains water catchment area and nature preserve.

Climate: equatorial, a tropical rainforest climate; hot and humid.

People:

Nationality: noun: Singaporean(s), adjective: Singapore

Population: 5.2 million (2011)

GNI per capita PPP: int'l \$ 28,228

Ethnic Groups: Chinese 77%, Malay 14%, Indian 8%

Religions: Buddhist (predominantly Chinese), Muslim (majority Malays), Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Taoist, Zoroastrian, Jain, Baha'i and Jew.

Languages: Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese, official), Malay (official and national), Tamil (official), English (official)

Literacy: 93%

Natural resources: Fish, deep water ports.

Agriculture - products: Rubber, copra, fruit, orchids, vegetables, poultry, eggs, fish, ornamental fish.

Industries: Electronics, chemicals, financial services, oil drilling equipment, petroleum refining, rubber processing and rubber products, processed food and beverages, ship repair, offshore platform construction, life sciences, entrepot trade.

Currency: Singapore Dollar (S\$, SGD)

1. Conference Report

Total number of Congregations	30
Number of Women Congregations	17
Number of Men Congregations	13
Congregations under separate Provinces (Malaysia and Singapore)	Canossian Daughters of Charity Daughters of St. Paul Sisters of the Infant Jesus Order of the Carmelite Discalced
	No. of Sisters per Congregation
Canossian Daughters of Charity – Malaysia	33
Canossian Daughters of Charity – Singapore	51
Daughters of St. Paul – Singapore	5
Daughters of St. Paul – Malaysia	6
Carmelite Sisters – Malaysia	10
Carmelite Sisters – Singapore	20
Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood	45
Franciscan Missionaries of Mary	65
Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception	114
Religious of the Good Shepherd	38
Sisters of the Infant Jesus – Singapore	33
Sisters of the Infant Jesus – Malaysia	114
Little Sisters of the Poor	(Not available)
Missionaries of Charity	6
Religious of the Cenacle	3
Salvatorian Sisters	5
Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary	7
Sisters of St. Francis of Sarawak	(Not available)
Congregasi Putri Karmel	27
Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition	2
Verbum Dei Missionary Fraternity	5
Total from given figures	<hr/> 589

2.4. What have you done to promote collaboration and networking in your Conference?

i. Meetings amongst Conference members twice a year and with Arch/bishops once a year
Conference of Major Superiors for Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei meets twice a year in January and July. Different religious congregations host the meeting in January. The second meeting coincides with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei. A day is set aside for a meeting between the Bishops and the Major Superiors. The objective of this meeting

is to build bridges, foster ties and provide a platform to meet and address issues that affects both sides.

ii. Support amongst the religious Congregations

The religious within the Conference support each other e.g. elderly religious are cared for in Homes run by religious, sharing of experiences in running schools, land issues, sharing of resources including retreats and spiritual formation.

iii. World Day for Consecrated Life

Religious congregations gather for the annual gathering esp. in Singapore as an expression of joy for the gift of our own vocation and belonging. Congregations gather in a show of solidarity and thanksgiving for the gift and diversity of charisms that enrich the Church.

iv. **Formation Sessions** were also planned e.g. *Stages of Celibate Life* by Sr. Linda Lizada (2013), *Ecumenism* by Deacon Sherman Quek (2012) and *Religious Life in the Future* by Timothy Radcliffe (2009). There is also intercongregational formation sessions organized for those in initial stages of formation.

v. Support Anti-Human Trafficking

Members support those Congregations that feel called to this ministry and encouraged religious to join the prayer session before they begin the walk around the “red light district areas”. This is an outreach to prostitutes and also an occasion to assist those who may have been trafficked and needs help. Others who are not directly involved advocate their schools to educate students to the awareness of this human tragedy.

vi. SEAMS XV

Collaborated together and organized SEAMS XV Congress held in Singapore.

vii. Diocesan-Religious Partnership in the Archdiocese

Since the episcopacy of Archbishop William Goh, a Commission is being formed to encourage better understanding and partnership between diocesan priests and religious. This partnership will enable better coordination among the ministries to serve the needs of the people in society.

viii. Care of sick and elderly religious as well as priests

Members of the Conference has initiated a dialogue with the Archbishop to consider the setting up of a Nursing Home for the care of sick and elderly religious besides the priests. With less vocation, Congregations foresee that religious may need to retire to a Nursing Home set up for those that cannot be looked after by their own members.

ix. Interreligious and Ecumenical Dialogue

Called to be a part of the Church in Asia, religious congregations take seriously the Church’s call to engage in interreligious and ecumenical dialogue with people of other religions as well as Christians from other denominations respectively. Some religious leaders encourage their members to join the teams in the Arch/diocese to give their time and efforts to promote this field of ministry.