

Second Quarter 2022 – Southern Asia-Pacific Division Fast Facts and Mission Posts

Timor-Leste

1. Timor-Leste Mission was organized in 2009 and is attached directly to the Southern Asia-Pacific Division. There are 696 members worshipping in one church and two companies. In a population of 1,318,000, that's 1,874 people for each Adventist.
2. The official name of the country is the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and it is a semi-presidential republic. The capital is Dili.
3. The currency of Timor-Leste is the U.S. dollar.
4. Timor-Leste covers the eastern half of the island of Timor, an area called Oecusse (on the northwestern coast of Timor), and two small islands, Atauro and Jaco. The western side of the island is part of Indonesia. The total area of Timor-Leste is 5,743 square miles (14,874 square kilometers).
5. Most of the people are of Papuan, Malayan, and Polynesian origin and nearly all the population is Roman Catholic, with tiny Protestant and Muslim minorities. There are about 40 different Papuan and Malayan languages or dialects spoken in the country, but the two official languages are Tetum, spoken by most people, and Portuguese, which is only spoken by a small percentage. English and Indonesian are "working" languages.
6. Dutch and Portuguese traders were the first Europeans to arrive in Timor, around 1500, and both countries struggled for dominance in the area until 1906, when they decided to divide the island, with the western half going to the Netherlands, and the eastern half going to Portugal. Although the Japanese occupied the country during World War II, it again became a Portuguese colony after the war. In 1974, Portugal pulled out of East Timor and, shortly after, it was invaded by its neighbor, Indonesia. The country wrestled with strife and unrest as rebels tried to hold off the Indonesian invasion until, in 1999, an Australia peacekeeping force entered the country and ended the violence. East Timor became an independent country, Timor-Leste, in 2002. Although the violence of the conflict destroyed much of the country's infrastructure, it has been slowly rebuilding.
7. About 60 percent of the people live in rural areas and most work as farmers, growing cassava, coconuts, coffee, corn, rice, and sweet potatoes, as well as some livestock. The industrial sector produces clothing and bottled water and there are reserves of oil and natural gas offshore.
8. Timor is mainly mountainous and dry. In hilly areas, sandalwood trees grow, and in the lowlands, coconut palms, and eucalyptus trees can be found. Wildlife includes civet cats, crocodiles, deer, monkeys, and snakes, as well as marsupials called cuscuses

Laos

1. Laos Region is in the Southeast Asia Union Mission. It only has 1,908 members worshipping in two churches and three companies. With a population of 7,242,000, there are 3,796 people for each Adventist.
2. The territory of Laos is a part of the Southeast Asia Union Mission in the Southern Asia-Pacific Division. The first Seventh-day Adventist mission station was opened by Richard C. Hall and his family in 1957 at Nam Tha, in one of the northwestern provinces. A short time later, Nai

Mun Lansri and Abel Pangan and his wife joined them, and, by 1961, a church with 44 members, mostly from the Maeo tribe, had been organized. Unfortunately, in 1962 all mission personnel were evacuated from Laos because of war. Shortly after the missionaries left, military forces overran Nam Tha, and the mission buildings were destroyed.

3. The work was reopened in 1968 when A. G. Biton, a Filipino missionary, and his family were called to Laos, but in 1975, because of Communist advances in Southeast Asia, all Adventist contact with Laos was cut off until 1984, when the border with Thailand was reopened. Two churches were still worshiping, despite having been cut off for nearly 10 years.
4. The official name for the country is Lao People's Democratic Republic and it has a communist government. The capital is Vientiane (or Viangchan as it is known locally). The area of Laos covers 91,429 square miles (236,800 square kilometers) with a population of 7.2 million.
5. The official language is Lao, and the currency is known as the Kip.
6. In 1353, a Lao prince named Fa Ngum made himself king of a new country he called Lan Xang, "the Kingdom of a Million Elephants."
7. Laos is the only landlocked country in Southeast Asia.
8. Nearly 75 percent of Laos is covered in mountains and forested hills too steep to live on. Travel by land is difficult. Only 10 percent of the country lies below 600 feet (183 meters) elevation. The highest peak in the mountains, Phu Bia, is 9,242 feet (2,817 m) high. The lowland areas are the most fertile, as the flooding of the Mekong River provides the soil with the nutrients to grow rice and other crops.
9. Most of the population of Laos lives along the Mekong River, which stretches more than 2,600 miles (4,180 km) from China, through Laos, and empties into the ocean in southern Vietnam. The Mekong is important as a route for both cargo and passengers, for generating electricity, for irrigation of crops, and as a source of fish, which features heavily in Laotian cuisine.
10. Laotians, as well as other people in Southeast Asia, play a sport called *kataw*, which is like a cross between volleyball and soccer. Players must get a small hollow bamboo ball over a high net without using their hands. Rhinoceros-beetle wrestling is also popular; people bet on which beetle will stay standing the longest.
11. One of the world's most dangerous snakes, the 14-foot-long (4.2 m) king cobra lives in Southeast Asia and can be found in Laos. It is the longest venomous snake in the world.
12. The Laos flag is striped horizontally; red represents the blood of Laotians who fought for freedom and independence, blue represents prosperity and the Mekong River, and the white circle in the middle is an homage to Japan's flag, as the Japanese encouraged the Lao independence movement in World War II.
13. The UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Plain of Jars is comprised of more than 2,100 stone jars that were used for funerals during the Iron Age (from 500 BC to 500 AD).

Thailand

1. Thailand Mission is in the Southeast Asia Union Mission. There are 54 churches, 75 companies, and 15,137 members. With a population of 66,534,000, there are 4,395 people for each Adventist.
2. The first Adventist to visit Thailand was R. A. Caldwell, who canvassed in Bangkok for a few weeks in late 1906 or early 1907. More than 10 years later, colporteurs from the Singapore mission school, working in Bangkok with Chinese books, reported discovering a group of Sabbath-keepers there. This led to a permanent mission being established in 1919; E. L.

Longway, Forrest A. Pratt, and Tan Thiam Tsua, who had accepted SDA teachings in China, settled in Bangkok.

3. The first Thai convert was a young man who was baptized by Pratt in 1925 and later became the assistant business manager of the Bangkok Sanitarium and Hospital.
4. The official name of the country is the Kingdom of Thailand and it is ruled by a constitutional monarchy. The official language is Thai, although more than 60 languages are spoken in Thailand. English is a mandatory school subject.
5. The Thai language has five tones and is called a “tonal language,” like Chinese and Vietnamese. The Thai alphabet has 44 symbols for consonants and 16 symbols for vowels.
6. The currency is the Baht.
7. The area of Thailand is 198,115 square miles (513,115 square kilometers). Cambodia and Laos are its neighbors on the east and northeast, and Myanmar to the northwest. On the west lie the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. The long region in the south connects with Malaysia and is mountainous and forested, but the highest mountains in Thailand are in the north.
8. About 95 percent of Thai are Buddhist, although around three million Muslims live in the south near the border with Malaysia.
9. Thailand means “land of the free” and was known as Siam until 1939. Thailand is the only Southeast Asian country never to have been colonized by a European power. In 1932, a revolution led to a constitutional monarchy, where the king is the head of state, but a prime minister is chosen from among members of the House of Representatives and appointed by the king.
10. The national symbol of Thailand is the Garuda (a mythical figure that is half bird and half man), the national animal is the elephant, and the national colors are red, white, and blue
11. The most important industries in Thailand are agriculture and tourism.
12. The most popular sports in Thailand are volleyball, football (soccer), and rugby. Thailand is also known for *Muay Thai*, a Thai style of boxing.
13. The traditional Thai greeting is called *wai*. Younger people greet older people first to show respect. Male speakers say “*sawatdi khrap*” and female speakers say “*sawatdi kah*” while bowing their heads, pressing their hands flat together, and touching their fingertips to their head.
14. Speaking badly of the Thai royal family can send you to jail, regardless of where you are from. In 2015, a Thai man was charged with making a “sarcastic” internet post about the king’s pet dog. In 2012, an American was jailed after he insulted the Thai king. Tourists are advised to not mention the king at all.
15. Thai children attend elementary school for six years; they can then attend high school for another six years, but their families must pay for their education. Boys begin military training in ninth grade.
16. Chinese and Indian cultures have influenced Thai cuisine. Most Thai dishes are spicy; many dishes include hot chilies, ginger, lemongrass, basil, and coconut milk.
17. Thai farmers cultivate mulberry trees and feed their leaves to silkworms. The worms create silk fibers, which are made into silk clothing around the world.
18. Bangkok is called the Venice of the East because of the many canals. Thousands of boats selling fruit, vegetables, and fish fill the canals and create floating markets.
19. The forests deep in Thailand are home to tigers, leopards, elephants, wild ox, and the Malayan tapir, whose fur is black on the front half of its body and white on the back half. Crocodiles can also be found in Thailand.

Indonesia

1. The Adventist Church in Indonesia is comprised of the East Indonesia Union Conference and the West Indonesia Union Mission. There are 1,841 churches, 495 companies, and 220,757 members. With a population of 271,739,000, that's 1,231 people for each Adventist.
2. The first Seventh-day Adventist to visit Indonesia may have been Abram La Rue, who is reported to have been in Java sometime between 1888 and 1903. Adventist work in Indonesia began in 1900, when R. W. Munson, formerly a missionary for another denomination in Singapore, and able to speak the language, opened a mission at Padang, on the west coast of Sumatra. One of his first converts was Tay Hong Siang, a Chinese Christian preacher, who had previously been an orphan in Munson's orphanage in Singapore.
3. Indonesia is an archipelago located off the coast of mainland Southeast Asia in the Indian and Pacific oceans. It lies across the Equator and stretches a distance equivalent to one-eighth of the Earth's circumference. Its islands are grouped into the Greater Sunda Islands of Sumatra, Java, the southern part of Borneo, and Celebes; the Lesser Sunda Islands of Bali and a chain of islands that runs eastward through Timor; the Moluccas, between Celebes and the island of New Guinea; and the western extent of New Guinea (Papua). The Indonesian capital, Jakarta, is located near the coast of Java.
4. Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world, the largest nation in Southeast Asia by size, and the fourth most populous country on earth, with more than 270 million people. Only China, India, and the United States have more people.
5. Indonesia is thought to derive from the Greek *indos* ("India") and *nesos*, ("island"). It was formerly known as the Dutch East Indies (or Netherlands East Indies); Indonesia did not become the country's official name until its independence from the Netherlands in 1945.
6. Bahasa Indonesia is the official language, and Javanese, with over 84 million speakers, is the second most prominent language. However, there are more than 700 languages and dialects spoken across the archipelago. Papua alone has over 270 spoken dialects.
7. More than 50 percent of the country is covered by forests.
8. Indonesia has more volcanoes than any other country in the world, outranking even Japan and the United States, and 127 of them are active. Indonesia is so populous that millions of people live within eruption zones at any given time. The volcano Gunung Agung, on the popular tourist island of Bali, erupted in 2017 and 2018. In 1883, Krakatoa, between Java and Sumatra, erupted and produced one of the loudest sounds in history, rupturing the eardrums of people over 40 miles away and producing tidal waves that were measured as far away as the English Channel. The blast created airwaves that circled the earth seven times and were still being recorded on instruments that record air pressure five days later.
9. No one really knows just how many islands there are in the archipelago that makes up Indonesia. Some islands appear only at low tide. The Indonesian government claims 17,504 islands, but other counts over the past 20 years have come up with numbers between 13,466 and 18,307 islands. There are about 8,850 islands that have been named, but fewer than 1,000 are believed to be permanently settled.
10. Indonesia is the only place in the world to see the endangered Komodo dragons in the wild. The best places to spot them are Rinca and Komodo Islands, which are in a national park in the East Nusa Tenggara province. Komodo dragon bites are very dangerous and for decades it

was assumed that their saliva, which is highly bacterial, was solely responsible. However, in 2009 researchers found what they thought could be venom glands.

11. Sumatra (entirely in Indonesia) and Borneo (shared between Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei) are the only places in the world to see wild orangutans.
12. Lorentz National Park, on the island of Papua (one of Indonesia's Unesco World Heritage sites) is huge—covering 9,674 square miles (15,569 square kilometers). Its highest point, Puncak Jaya, (16,024 feet [4,884 m]) is the tallest mountain between the Himalayas and the Andes.
13. *Rafflesia arnoldi*, native to Sumatra, produces the largest individual flower on Earth. But it is said to smell like decaying flesh, earning it the nickname “corpse flower.”
14. The rare Javan rhino, which can only be found on the island, has 50 or fewer individuals left.
15. The Garuda (a mythical bird) is the national bird of Indonesia.

Recipes

Indonesia

Nasi Tumpeng (Yellow Rice)

Tumpeng is often served in Indonesia at celebrations like weddings, birthdays, baby showers, and anniversaries.

It is made by cooking rice with coconut milk and turmeric, to give it color. It is then turned out in a cone shape onto a platter and surrounded with side dishes of meat, vegetables, noodles, or eggs, and decorated with carved vegetables.

Ingredients

2 cups (400 g) white rice
2 cups (475 ml) coconut milk
1 3/4 (425 ml) cups water
1/2 (2.5 ml) teaspoon salt
1 tbsp (15 ml) turmeric powder
1 inch (2.5 cm) of fresh, peeled ginger, grated (optional)

Instructions

Put rice, water, coconut milk, and the rest of the ingredients in a pot and set over a medium-high to high heat. Stir occasionally until it begins to boil. Cover with a lid and turn the heat down to low.

Let simmer, with the lid on, for 15–20 minutes, checking towards the end to make sure that it does not boil dry. When most of the liquid is gone, take it off the heat and let it sit, covered, for 5–10 minutes to let the rest of the liquid absorb.

Make a cone out of paper or kitchen foil. While the rice is still warm, but is cool enough to work with, spoon it firmly into the mold and then let it cool completely. When ready to serve, turn it upside down on the serving platter and carefully remove the mold. Surround with whatever accompaniments you would like.

Possible side dishes

Boiled eggs, cut in half lengthwise
Veggie meatballs
Fried tofu cubes
Various vegetables, fresh or cooked
Fried noodles

[Optional side-dish recipe to go with the Nasi Tumpeng]

Potato Patties (Perkedel Kentang):

2 lb (1 kg) potatoes
1 teaspoon (5 ml) salt
1 teaspoon (5 ml) sugar
1/2 teaspoon (2.5 ml) grated nutmeg
1–2 finely chopped scallions/spring onions/chives
1–2 eggs, lightly beaten
oil for frying

Peel and cube the potatoes. Fry them in some of the oil until golden, put them in a mixing bowl and then mash them with a fork while they are still hot.

Add salt, pepper, sugar, nutmeg, and scallions/spring onions/chives and mix well.

Divide mixture into 16 patties. Lay out on a baking sheet and chill in the fridge for 1 hour.

Heat the rest of the oil in a pot, at least 2 inches (5 cm) deep. Once the oil is hot, dip and coat the patties in the lightly beaten egg, and deep fry until golden brown. Drain the excess oil on a wire rack or kitchen paper.

Games

Thailand

A fun toy that children in many parts of the world, including Thailand, like to play with is a paper helicopter.

All you need is an empty cereal box, a straw, scissors, a ruler, tape, and something to punch a hole with.

Cut a strip of cardboard from the box, around 2 inches (5 cm) wide, and 9 inches (23 cm) long.

Fold it in half, bringing the short sides together, to make a crease in the middle.

Starting at one of the short ends, cut a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) wide strip off the long side, ending about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) from the middle crease, and then turn over and repeat from the opposite end. About one inch (2.5 cm) from each end, fold wing up slightly

Cut a hole in the middle of the uncut section.



Slide the straw through the hole about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (1 cm) and wrap some tape around it above and below the propeller.

To make it fly, hold the straw between your hands, pull one hand back so your fingertips are on the straw and then push them forward, spinning the straw along your other hand until the helicopter flies off the fingertips of the second hand.

You can adjust the way it flies by making the propellers longer or shorter, or by twisting them slightly in opposite directions.