

SURVEY OF ASIAN HISTORY, 1850-1945

COURSE CODE: Hist 411 (HiHm 2045)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL BACKGROUND OF THE REGION

1. GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS

1.1. Countries of East Asia, South-East Asia and South Asian Sub-Continents

East Asia is commonly known as the Orient or the Far East. It includes countries like China, Mongolia, Taiwan, Japan, North Korea and South Korea. We can divide the sub-continent into three sub-regions based on its geographical locations. These are **Mainland** includes countries like China and Mongolia. The second sub-region is called **Peninsular** that includes North Korea and South Korea. The last sub-region is **Maritime** which comprised mainly two states of Taiwan and Japan.

South-East Asia consists countries like Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Malasia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei and Philippines.

South Asian Region is also known as the Indian Sub-Continent. It includes countries such as India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri-Lanka, Maldives, Nepal and Bhutan.

1.2. CLIMATE

The climate of the region is Tropical-Hot and Humid all the year round with plentiful Rainfall except for several rain shadow areas. The excessive rain of the region helped the existence of the second largest rainforest in the world next to Amazon in Latin America. The availability of the above mentioned forests made the region rich in wild animals. For example, there are there species of Tigers in the Sumatran Island. The Komodo Dragon which inhabited the islands of the same name is the largest species of Lizard.

2. Ethnic Composition, Religion and Economy of East Asia, South-East Asia and South Asia

The Asian continent is the home of multi-ethnic groups such as the Japanese, Han-Chinese, Mongoloids, Koreans, Austronesia's, Thais, Vietnamese and many others. The continent is also homes of many religious groups. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucius, and Shinto are native

religions of Asian countries. Besides, there are also followers of Islam, Christianity and many other religions in Asia.

Agriculture is the dominant economic activity of Asia. Trade is also important economic activity mainly for the Maritime States. European colonial rulers had collected much wealth of these geographical regions. Currently, some countries like Japan, South-Korea, Singapore and India are playing significant role in the world market.

2.1. LANGUAGE

Regarding language, each of these languages has been influenced by Colonialism. Some of these countries developed their own native language and many other used European Colonial languages as an official language of their countries. Eg. Singapore use English as an official language of the country.

2.2. Religion

Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucius and Shinto are indigenous religions of most of Asian Countries. In the later times, Islam and Christianity also got considerable number of followers.

Hinduism was first introduced into India in around 600BC. It is Polytheistic and teaches peoples that the way they act on earth will determine the type of life that they will have after death. Hinduism is older than Buddhism by one century.

Buddhism appeared in India during the 6th Century BC as part of the protest against the arrogant claims of the Brahman Priests and the degrading implication of Caste. Buddhism taught its followers that unlimited need for material things exposed peoples to much suffering. It emphasizes that stopping the wish for more material things, is the way to save oneself from suffering. Buddhism was associated with the teaching and personality of Gautama Kshatriya, Prince of minor Indian State of Oudh.

Confucius was born as ancestor religion in China during the period of Chou Dynasty. The religion got its name after the name of its founder, Confucius. He taught that human nature is basically good. He stressed on strong family value and on the importance of respecting head of family. His teachings still influence Chinese culture in the modern times.

However, since the 13th Century AD, **Islam** and **Christianity** became other rival religious groups in Asia. Islam was introduced to the region by the Indian Muslim merchants. Sumatra became the first Muslim Port in the region. In general three major factors have contributed for

the Islamization of the region: Trade, Missionaries (Sufis) and the role of the Ruling Class like in Malacca.

At present, Islam is one of the most widely spread religion in Asia numbering about 240,000,000 peoples or 40% of the entire population. It is majority in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia.

Christianity appeared in the region since the 16th Century AD with the establishment of European Colonial Rule in parts of South and SE Asian Regions. Europeans used evangelizing Christianity, trade and exploration to put their influence in Asia. Christianity is predominant in the Philippines (Spanish Colony for more than 3 centuries), E. Indonesia, E. Malaysia, E. Timor and in the New Guinea where there was Dutch Rule for long. However, Christianity was target of attack by Nationalist leaders everywhere as its contribution to expand European rule in Asia. Converted natives became vulnerable to purge. Eg. 300,000 native Christian Japanese were killed by the Seclusion Act of the 17th Century. In Thailand, converted Thais were killed in Revolution of 1688. In the get of the 20th Century, Chinese Boxers had also killed thousands of Chinese Christians. All these measures had blocked its potential expansion in those regions.

Beyond these, there are also different types of religions practiced by the peoples of the region. For example, Japan has its indigenous religion called Shinto. Confucianism also widely practiced in Vietnam and Singapore in addition to China.

2.3. Economy

The overall economic activities of Asia are categorized into two: Agriculture for the Mainland and Trade for the maritime parts of the continent. However, agriculture remained the dominant economic activity of the region up to the modern times.

Principal export items of the region included perfumed woods, gold, precious stones, spices from China; high quality cotton textiles from India; glass items, objects of arts etc from different areas of the region.

In post WWII era, some countries of Asia emerged as great industrialized nations. In the Far-East, Japan is the leading industrialized country. China is also growing as dominant economic power in the world. She is part of BRICS.

Indonesia has also the largest economy in the sub-continent. Others such as Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines were growing as the newly industrialized countries. Singapore and Brunhi are also becoming prosperous countries.

At present, Asian countries manufacture textiles, electronics, high technological goods, and heavy industrial products such as automobiles. Beyond these, Oil extraction and Tourism are also growing as important source of income in the economy of some Asian countries.

CHAPTER TWO

ASIAN HISTORY BEFORE THE CONSOLIDATION OF EUROPEAN RULE, 1850

2.1. SOUTH-EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES TO 1850

The Funan Empire

The first empire appeared in the region was Funan. It was established since the late 1st century AD in the present day Cambodia. The development of navigational transport helped for the emergence of strong trade link with India and China. This trade contact with neighbouring states made the empire of Funan prosperous. The population as a whole lived in bamboo houses. They grew sugar cane, cotton and rice using irrigational canals.

The civilization of Funan flourished for about 500 years. Dynastic conflict led to the collapse of the empire in the late 6th century. Soon it was succeeded by Chen-La, another Hindu-Khmer Dynasty which survived until the 9th century. Then it was replaced by Angkor, which was also the capital in the central Cambodia. Finally, the Funan empire began to disintegrate since about 1500.

Cambodian society was divided into higher and lower classes. The higher class includes the Brahmanas and the Kshatriya (warrior caste). The lower social groups had its own three subdivisions: the Commoners, Slaves and the Hill-Salvagers. Women were active participant in overall affairs of Cambodian society. They held government positions like judges and secretaries of the kings.

Cambodians developed their writing script and counting system based on units of five. Pottery and weaving were well developed.

Vietnam

Vietnam emerged as an independent state in the last years of 9th century AD. However challenges continued to the new state from China in the North and from Champa and Cambodia in the South. In 1802, both North and South Vietnam were united by the Nguyen Dynasty with Hue as their capital.

2.2. SOUTH ASIAN REGION UP TO 1850

The Mughal Empire In India

The rise of Mughal Empire was in the 16th century. But, strong, vast and centralized Mughal empire was built during the rule of Akbar (r. 1556-1605).

His son, Jahangir (1605-27), his grandson, Shah Jahan (1627-58), then his great grandson, Aurangzeb (1658-1707) ascended to his throne one after the other. The dynasty continued to rule the empire with some fragmentations until the establishment of British Colonial rule in the empire, 1858.

2.3. THE BEGINNING OF EUROPEAN COLONIAL RULE IN ASIA

PORTUGAL

Portugal conquered most of Ceylon in 1505. Then, it inaugurated the establishment of colonial rule in Malacca in 1511. Gradually, the Portuguese founded the trading settlement of Goa in the West Coast of India. In 1514, Portuguese caravels landed near Guangzhou. But, the Chinese were unfriendly to Europeans and called them “Ocean Devils”. Beyond this, they landed at Japan in 1543 and began trading temporarily. Portugal also controlled Taiwan which they called it as Formosa in 1590.

SPAIN

In 1519, Ferdinand Magellan made Spain the first European country to reach Philippines. After long wars, Spain controlled Philippines in 1565 and gave the name of their king, Philip the II to the new colony. Spaniards introduced new crops such as maize (corn) and cocoa from the Americans to the Philippines. The Spanish rule lasted for three centuries, until 1898.

THE DUTCH (NETHERLANDS)

The Netherlands first established the Dutch East Indian Company in 1600. This enabled the Dutch to be the 3rd in establishing colonial rule in the region. Between 1595 and 1620, Holland set up trading posts in Java, Moluccas, Celebes, Timor, Sumatra, Borneo and Jakarta (Capital of Indonesia).

FRANCE

The French merchants began limited trade with Vietnam and other peoples of SE Asian region of Indo-China since 1600. In 1664, French merchants of the region established the French East Indian Company (FEIC) and expand its trade relation mainly in Indo-China. In the process, the French Roman Catholic Missionaries settled in Indo-China and converted many Vietnamese to Christianity. However, devoted to Confucian ideas, the Vietnamese emperors persecuted their Christian subjects in an attempt to keep Indo-China detached from Europeans.

French force marched to the region to give protection for the local Christians since 1858. With this France established colonial rule in the region since 1860s. In 1887, France controlled Indo-China, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos.

BRITAIN

The British were late to the colonial conquest in the region in comparison to other European countries. However, through its British East Indian Company (BEIC), Britain developed a great colonial empire in SE Asian and South Asian regions. Perhaps, Britain had changed the shape of these regions dramatically.

2.4. EAST ASIAN SUB-CONTINENT TO 1850

CHINA

Chinese called their country “Zhongguo” to say as Middle country. The name China was given by foreigners from the name of its people, Ch’ins. China is the 3rd largest country in terms of territorial width in the world next to Russia and Canada. It comprises the Fifth territory of the entire continent. China is also the largest in the world in population by comprising the Fifth of the entire world.

China is the home of world’s ancient civilization. The Chinese introduced Compass, Paper and Silk cloths to the world. They had their own writing system called Logography. Their written history goes back to 3,500BC. In its long history, China was ruled by several dynasties.

Developments of Dynasties In China

The 1st great dynasty in China was Chou, pronounced by Chinese as Jo. It ruled the country almost for 800 years, from 1000BC to around 256BC. The Chou dynasty had some successes in developing the country like:

- Towns and cities grew.

- The middle classes such as merchants and artisans became rich.
- Farming methods show improvements.
- Coins that served for almost 2000 years developed.
- Arts and literatures flourished.
- Confucius, which influences Chinese culture to the present, was introduced in this period.

In around 221BC, one feudal lord, Cheng, established a new dynasty, Ch'in (Qin) in China. The great achievement of the dynasty was the completion of the Great Wall of China built to protect the country from foreign invaders. At present, it is serving as the greatest example for the development of Chinese Architecture. UNESCO has registered the Great Wall as one of the seven wonders in the world. Ch'in ruled the country only for 50 years and was succeeded by the Han Dynasty for the next 400 years. Chinese border was expanded by Han dynasty. The fall of the dynasty around 220AD led the country to another civil war fought for the next 400 years.

In 589AD, Yang Jian united both North and South China. With the title of emperor, he founded the Sui Dynasty. The emperor used forced laborers which made him unpopular by the peasants. Due to this, his reign became short, only for 29 years.

The Tang Dynasty came to power under its first emperor Li Yuan in 618AD which ruled China until 907AD. During this period, Buddhism became especially popular in China. The period of Tang Dynasty brought the golden age to China because it brought stability of the government, the prosperity of the people, relaxation of taxation and improvement of life of the common people. The Tang Dynasty lasted for about 300 years.

The Sung Dynasty succeeded Tang Dynasty under its first emperor, Zhao Kuangyin in 960. Sun Dynasty ruled China for the next 300 years.

In the early 13th century, China was invaded by the Mongols who established a new dynasty called Yuan Dynasty in China. It was during this time that Marco Polo, an Italian Explorer, visited China where he spent 17 years studying about China.

In 1368AD, young Chinese Buddhist Monk, Zhu Yuanzhang, defeated the Yuan Dynasty of Mongols. Then, he became emperor by the name of Hong Wu. With this, he established a new dynasty, Ming in Chinese word, "Brilliant" and his capital at Nanjing. Ming Dynasty ruled for the next 300 years with peace and stability.

In April 1644, a former minor Ming official, Li Zicheng, made a coup and overthrow the Ming dynasty then established a new dynasty called Shun Dynasty. But, loyal Ming General named

Wu Sangui defeated Li Zicheng with the help of tribes of Manchu region and brought the short lived Shun Dynasty to its end. Soon after this victory, the Manchu established a new dynasty, the Qing Dynasty, a Chinese word for “Pure”.

The dynasty is also known as Manchu Dynasty, after the name of its founders, who were hunters, fishermen and farmers of Manchu Region, currently minority ethnic group, found in NE China, Manchuria.

During Manchu Dynasty markets were expanded and China continued to export tea, silk and manufactured goods. The trade with Westerners in the 18th century was favorably balanced.

JAPAN

Japan is located in the Pacific Ocean made up of 4 large groups of Islands of Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu and Hokkaido with several many other smaller Islands. According to historical sources the first inhabitants of Japan were hunters and gatherers migrated to the islands from the mainland 10,000 years ago.

Since the establishment of the first settlement in Japan, there was an Emperor and Royal Families. Separate clans ruled their own regions. They worship to a form of animism, Shinto, means “the way of gods.”

Buddhism entered to Japan from China through Korea soon after 552AD. This marked the beginning of Chinese cultural influence on Japan.

The Rise of Shogunate (Military Governments) In Japan

In the 12th century, Japan entered into a series of civil wars between the Taira and the Minamoto clans for power. In the conflict, the Minamoto emerged victorious during the reign of Tokugawa in 1185. Since then, the head of the Tokugawa Dynasty gained the title of Shogun (General). The Shogun held the real political and military power and run Shogunate or military government at Kamakura, near present day Tokyo.

The warriors and powerful land owners in the countryside were called as Samurai. The most powerful Samurai would be Daimyo (Lords).

In 1336, the Ashikaga family controlled the power of Shogunate. But, they failed to control regional warriors. Due to this, Japan soon broke into individual rival states. In the periods between the middle of the 14th century to the middle of the 16th century, Daimyos waged war against their neighbors to expand their fiefs which was expressed by the Japanese as “Strongest

eat and the weak become the meat". The Japanese called the political system of the period as the Tokugawa Shogunate.

Reunification of the Japanese Rival States

Oda Nobunaga became the 1st military leader to begin uniting the warring Daimyos. But, he was murdered by untrustworthy soldier in 1582. Soon his power was shifted to Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the best general of Nobunaga. But, he died in 1598 before completing the unification.

The 3rd Shogunate, Tokugawa Ieyasu completed the struggle of the unification at the battle of Sekigahara by defeating the last of his opponents in 1600. Since then, the families of Tokugawa retained the Shogunate power for the next 250 years.

Social and Economic Development of Japan

Socially, the Japanese societies were divided into four social classes. These were:

1. The Samurai: placed at the top with the Daimyos and held the political power. They wear symbols of authority: a Sword and a distinctive topknot in their hair.
2. The Farmers: were the major food producers.
3. Artisans: made different goods.
4. Merchants: were involved in the exchange of goods.

Changing social class or performing tasks of others class was strictly prohibited to all societies.

Japan and the West (Europeans)

Since the arrival of Portugal in the region, Japan began to buy muskets and cannons from Portugal. With this, Jesuits converted considerable number of Japanese under the leadership of Xavier. By the 1614, the number of Japanese Christians reached to about 300,000. Gradually, with the development of some revolts and the experience of Spain in Philippines, the Shogunates suppressed missionary activities. In some instances, they persecuted or forced to leave the country.

Finally, they introduced the Act of Seclusion in 1636. This act forbade any converted Japanese to leave the country and ordered to punish all Japanese residing abroad by capital punishment as soon as they return home. The Japanese expelled all Europeans. Due to this, all kind of its trade relations with most Europeans was cut off since the mid-1600s.

The Dutch became exceptional from the Seclusion Act unlike Spain and Portugal for their anti-conquest and anti-missionary policies. In Japan, the Dutch restricted themselves only in trading

activities. Even the Dutch were not left free to move throughout Japan rather confined to a tiny island in Nagasaki Harbour since 1641. This made Dutch merchants source of trickle of information about the West to Japan.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORY OF ASIANS FROM 1850 TO 1914

SOUTH AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA

THE SEPOY (INDIAN SOLDIERS) REBELLION

In 1857, the majority of India became in the hands of British East Indian Company. In the same year, revolt against the colonial rulers began by Indian Soldiers.

The major causes of the Sepoy Rebellions were:

- ❖ The attempt of Britain to abrogate the Property Rights.
- ❖ Attempt of British soldiers to impose Christianity and European customs on them.

The revolt spread throughout the old warrior regions for two years. The rebellion had got the support of last ruler of Mughal. The Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 was the 1st revolt of Indian soldiers against the British Commanders. However, the British soldiers suppressed the revolt by using force up to 1859 and with this they removed the last King of Mughal in 1858.

On the other side, the uprising forced the British government to relax its control over India. In 1858, the British Parliament dissolved the BEIC and sent a Viceroy (Royal Representative), to take over the company's territory. In 1877, PM Disraeli conferred upon Queen Victoria the Title of "Empress of India". English became a cosmopolitan language mainly in India and Ceylon since 1833.

With expansion of urbanization, the British installed telegraph lines in India. Schools and universities opened, paved roads, rail way systems and irrigational canals were also built. On the contrary, British colonial officials continued their harsh rule which developed Indian national view. Eg. Farmers were ordered to grow cotton instead of wheat, to meet the demand of British textile mill. This led to severe shortage of food which killed millions of Indians during 1800s. In 1885, some of Indians formed the Indian National Congress (INC) which eventually led the long struggle of Indians for independence. In 1906, All-Indian Muslim League (AIML) founded

within the Indian National Congress at Dhaka. Nevertheless, British India continued to serve as the cornerstone to the expansion of British colonial empire in the rest of the world in those years.

The Kingdom of Siam remained the only independent buffer zone between the British and French colonies of the mainland. The rivalry between Britain and France helped Siam to keep its independence. King Mongkut of Siam set competitive situations among Europeans one against the other in order to protect its independent. The second contributing factor for Siam independence was its great emphasis to education. In this regard, royal members and Siam scholars were sent to higher education to Europe and Russia. They study science and European languages with the Christian missionaries.

THE FAR EAST ASIA FROM 1850-1914

THE TAIHING REBELLION OF CHINA

It was regarded as the first revolt of China in an Anti-Manchu sentiment held in the mid-19th century. The rebellion threatened the stability of the Qing Dynasty which significantly led to its decline. Famine and widespread unrest were the immediate cause of the revolt.

The Taiping Rebellion was began in Guizhou province in 1851 by the leadership of Hong Xiuquan, who claimed brother of JESUS CHRIST and forced the order of CHRIST in his rule. In the early phase of the Taiping Rebellion, they scored decisive victory over the forces of the Qing and captured one of the regional capitals, Nanjing in 1853. In the attack, the rebels massacred entire Manchu garrison and their families in the city.

Gradually, internal crisis accompanied by defections and corruptions grew among the members of the revolt. Europeans, mainly Great Britain and France, equipped with modern fire arms rendered their support to the Qing government to suppress the revolt. The war between the Taiping Rebellion and the Qing rulers is registered as the worse bloodiest civil war and the second bloodiest war in the world next to WWII. The revolt was finally crushed after 14 years of resistance taking the life of 20 to 30 million peoples.

Muslims launched the next rebellion against the Qing rulers in the Dungan Revolt of 1862-71 in the NW China. The Panthay Rebellion followed as the 3rd revolt from 1856-73 in Yunan Province. All these three wars devastated mainly the South half of China.

Unequal Treaties

The victory of Britain over China in the 1st Opium War of 1839-42 and the treaty signed at Nanjing made it to get reparation payments and were allowed unrestricted access to five of Chinese ports. Hong Kong Island was also given to Britain in the treaty. All these humiliating demand of Britain made the Chinese to call the treaty “Unequal”. Therefore, it provoked the aforementioned widespread revolt against the already unpopular regime.

Even worse, Britain demanded to revise the Nanjing Treaty in 1854. In the negotiation Britain requested to get access of its ships in Chinese rivers and to open embassy at Beijing. Qing rulers, however, were annoyed and rejected those demands which led to the 2nd Opium War of 1856-60 that resulted in the defeat of Chinese army by two allied European forces. In the war, the combined forces of Britain and France numbering about 25,000 troops invaded Beijing, the capital, temporarily in 1861.

The war led to the second “Unequal Treaty” signed at Tientsin. The treaty contained deeply offensive demands to the Chinese. The most humiliating were the request of all Chinese official documents to write in English and to get grant of unrestricted access of British warships in all navigable rivers of China. Since then, British, France, Germany, Russia, Japan and USA signed the Unequal treaties with China for the next 60 years. All these treaties made China Vulnerable to Western influence as a semi-colonial region and weakened the Qing Dynasty. Among the above imperialist countries, only USA did not claim a sphere of influence. But others did. USA tried to open China to trade of all nations through the Open Door Policy. During the 1900s, foreign power in China reached to its peak.

The Boxer Rebellion

Parallel with the growth of foreign influence in China, resentment grew particularly among Chinese Youths. Henceforth, Chinese anti-foreigner groups gathered in secret to plot ways of driving out the imperialists. One of such groups called itself the Society of Righteous and Harmonious Fists. It practiced a Chinese form of Boxing and its members called as Boxers.

In June 1900, they launched attacks and killed several hundred foreigners of eight nations including the German Ambassador to China and thousands of Chinese Christians. The governments of those foreigners formed a combined army of 25,000 troops and launched an attack on Beijing and suppressed the rebellion with bullets which left thousands of Chinese dead on the streets.

The Revolution of 1911

After the Boxer Rebellion, Ci Xi (Empress Dowager), struggled to hold on power. She agreed to allow foreign troops to remain in China and gave into some of her people's demands for change and her own national interests mentioned above to prolong the period of her rule.

Many Chinese decided to establish a Modern Republic government through a Revolution. The revolutionaries wanted to restore the glory of ancient China. One of them was, a doctor named Sun Yat-Sen. The revolutionaries formed a United League; latter called the Kuomintang or the Nationalist Party, in 1905. Sun Yat-Sen was chosen as the leader of the party. Soon, they began to attack loyal troops of the king. In the mean time, the Empress died on Nov. 15, 1908 by ordering her loyalist to poison Guangxu, the Emperor. A two year baby, Prince Pu Yi, the son of Zaifeng, was crowned as new emperor with Zaifen as a Dowager.

The Wuchang Uprising held on Oct. 10, 1911 led to the establishment of new central republic government, the Republic of China, at Nanjing. Sun Yat-Sen was elected as provisional president of the Republic. With this development, China entered into the modern age.

In Jan. 1912, an Imperial Edict was issued which ordered the abdication of Emperor Pu Yi. This brought the long rule of Qing Dynasty (Imperial Regime) in China to its end after 2,000 years. Meanwhile, an extended period of instability of warlord factionalism was begun in the period.

JAPAN

On July 8, 1853, the first American Naval Force led by Commodore Mathew C. Perry arrived at Ura Harbor of Japan successfully. His arrival ended the two and half centuries of Isolationist of Japan declared by Tokugawa. In the following year, Perry forced Japanese Shogunate to sign treaty with USA in Feb. 1854, which marked the end of Seclusion.

The Meiji Restoration

Furthermore Japan was forced to sign trade treaties with France, Holland, Russia and the USA since 1854. The treaties favored imperialist powers. Therefore, the Japanese people, like the Chinese, called them the "Unequal Treaties". The treaties led to the removal of the Shogun (Great General) by the Samurais in 1868.

Following the victory, a group of Samurai crowned a new emperor, Mutsuhito, as a head of state and Shinto Religion in 1868. But, the real political power of government remained in their hands. Mutsuhito was known as the Meiji or Enlightened Emperor. Since then, Japanese leaders were called as the Meiji leaders. With this the transfer of power from Tokugawa Shogunates to the Meiji Emperor was known as in history as the “Meiji Restoration”.

Reforms of Meiji

The Meiji introduced more radical reforms than Russia like:

- Abolish of Feudalism
- Centralization of political power
- Abolish of the samurai Classes
- Sent Japanese citizens including samurai abroad to study western science and technology
- The rise of new nobility class

The Meiji leaders worked to make Japan a great power capable of competing with Western nations. They adopted a slogan “Rich Country, Strong Military”. With this, the government declared the equality of all classes which made Samurai to lose their class privileges. By 1876, the government banned the wearing of the Samurai’s Sword and cut off their top knots in favor of Western style and employed themselves in job businesses and other professions. High priority was given by Meiji rulers to universal education.

In 1889, a progressive constitution was introduced to the people. It granted:

- ✓ The right of changing the constitution only to the emperor or his advisors.
- ✓ The establishment of constitutional monarch
- ✓ The establishment of new Parliament, Diet, created based on the German model.
- ✓ The right of voting granted only to the wealthiest class (5% of the entire population). It allowed to all men in 1925.
- ✓ Accordingly, in 1890 Yamagata Aritomo become the 1st Prime Minister of Japan.
- ✓ The parliamentary government changed Japan into Industrial Society within 2 decades.

Industrial Revolution and Military Expansion of Japan

In regard to industrial development, in 1870s, Japan began industrialization to strengthen its economy, the Japanese government laid down the base for industrialization by revising the tax structure in order to raise money for investment. It also developed modern currency system and supported the building of postal and telegraphs networks, railway lines, roads and port facilities.

All these constructive measures of the government together with the growing population that provided a continuing supply of cheap labour brought industrial revolution in Japan.

The main features of Japanese industrial revolutions were:

- Armaments were updated and modern navy was created.
- Industrial tax replaced agricultural tax which rise government revenue.
- Rapid growth of Japanese economy since the early 1880s.

However, its growth was challenged by the limited natural resources of the country.

In the 1890s, Japan began military conquest in Asia to get access to those natural resources. Their first attention was neighbouring Korean peninsula. In 1894, Koreans revolted against their Chinese rulers. The need to control Korea made Japanese to support the rebels which led to the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-1895. In the war Japan scored victory over China. Therefore, Korea became officially independent from its former colonial ruler and separate country. But, granted Japan partial control of its trade and settlement area for the thousands of Japanese in Korea.

Beyond these, Japan's interest in Korea clashed with Russian Empire which had also interests in Korea and the NE China mainly Manchuria. In 1904 Japan provoked Russian navy at Port Arthur which led the two countries into the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05. In the war the superior Japanese navy under Admiral Togo Heihachiro crushed Russian navy at the battle of Tsushima, a strait between Korea and Japan, in 1905. The defeat forced Russia to sign a treaty which granted Japan control over Korea and other nearby areas in 1905. Moreover, it helped Japan to establish overseas empire in the region. On the contrary, the defeat partially led to the Revolution of 1905 in Russia.

Japan annexed Korea as a colony in 1910. In the treaty signed with Russia in 1916, Japan got Russian recognition of its special position over Southern Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia. The League of Nations also granted former German Colonies, like Northern Chinese Province of Shantung, to Japan as mandated territories. In this way, Japan continued to expand its empire for the next 20 years. All these enabled Japan to be one of the leading industrial nations of the world in the interwar period.

CHAPTER FOUR
HISTORY OF ASIANS IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD, 1919-1939
FAR EAST ASIAN REGION IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD
JAPAN IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Militarism in Japan

During WWI, Japan fought on the side of the Allies. In the war, Japan supplied weapons to their European partner, particularly to Russia. At the same time, the war benefited Japan to expand its economic and political influence in East Asia. In addition to ruling Korea and Taiwan, Japan pressed for an enlargement of its role in China. In 1915, Japan forced China to accept a list of terms known as the Twenty-One Demands which made China in practice Japanese Protectorate.

Japan and the West

At the end of WWI, Japan received German's Pacific Islands North of the Equator as Mandate from the League of Nations. Japan became one of the participants of the Disarmament Conference held in Washington DC in 1922. It was a Five Powers Agreement among Japan, Great Britain, France, Italy and the USA. The Conference allowed Japan to become World's Third largest naval Power after Great Britain and the USA.

Still the Japanese remained bitter towards the West. First, Japan felt that the West did not accept it as "Unequal". In 1919, the LN was dominated by Western Powers and refused to accept Japanese demand for a Statement on Racial Equality in the Leagues Charter. Japanese regarded this rejection as a humiliation.

Besides, tensions mainly with America became critical when the USA banned further Japanese immigration to its shores in 1924. In response to the ban the Japanese staged demonstrations and boycotted American goods.

The refusal of Western Powers to support Japanese claim on China made Japan furious. Japan had to abandon the Twenty-One Demands and recognized Western interests in China.

Social, Economic and Political Tensions and Changes In Japan

After the WWI, Japan faced social and economic challenges at home. The major concern was Population Explosion (35 million in 1872 to 60 million in 1925). The increase in number of population aggravated the land scarcity by a land fragmentation and created high population

migration to urban areas. To make matters worse, the Tokyo-Yokohama area was devastated by a terrible earth quake in 1923.

The interruption of emigration to USA made Japan to focus on manufacturing and foreign trade. Government banks provided the needed capital to encourage the expansion of heavy industry. Most of the Japanese economy was in the hands of large privately owned business known together as the Zaibatsu.

During the 1920s and 30s, Japan industries grew rapidly and their manufactured goods began to crowd world market. The increasing industries demanded the increase in raw materials. This forced Japan to look over seas to avoid the scarcity.

With increase in number of working class, Labour Unions became more powerful with more than 300,000 members by the end of 1920s. This growth of both urban and rural areas demanded social changes. American music, dancing and sports especially became popular. The need for better higher education increased in the time. With the growth of the working and Middle Classes, steps were taken towards greater political democracy. In 1925, the Japanese parliament granted universal male suffrage. This increased the number of voters from 3 million to 14million.

In spite of these successes, democracy remained very limited in Japan. Political power was actually in the hands of Nobles and Urban industrialists. Emperor Hirohito was a constitutional monarch. However, he still retained a powerful symbol of traditional authority. The Great Depression devastated Japanese silk factories and other industries. Millions of workers lost their jobs. With this decline of economic development, anti-democratic nationalists groups grew in Japan in 1930s. In Nov. 1930, members of Secret Society shot Prime Minister Osachi Hamaguchi. The murder paved the way for the rise of strong military leaders such as Hashimoto Kingoro.

Military Expansion

In Sep. 1931, the military leaders unilaterally decided to invade the North-East region of China, Manchuria. This showed the weakness of Japanese government to control its own army. The Japanese army conquered the whole Manchuria within five months.

In 1932, they killed the Prime Minister who opposed their view. Though collapsed, the military officers led an armed revolt in 1936. Gradually, the military officers continued to dominate government policies. By 1937, the government and military of Japan became one and the same.

CHINA IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Chinese Civil War

As we discussed in the previous chapter, after the 1911 Revolution, China built a Republican government with Dr. Sun Yat-Sen as its first president since 1912. However, he was expelled by his military allies, Yuan Shikai, which turned the republic into dictatorship. The attempt of Sun Yat-Sen to remove Yuan Shikai by the new reorganized army failed which forced him to flee to Japan. After four years of rule, Yuan died in 1916.

Following his death, China entered into chaos. In 1917, Sun Yat-Sen returned home and rebuilt the Kuomintang (KMT) Party and tried to restore strong central government, but not successful. This internal division paved the way for the rise of imperialists' influence in China. For Eg. In 1915, Japan forced China to sign the Twenty-One Demands and Western Powers undermined Chinese might in the Treaty of Versailles that signed in June 1919. In the treaty the Shandong Peninsula of NE China was granted to the expansionist Japanese economic interest. This settlement was a humiliating and surprising blow to China.

The Rivalry Between The Kuomintang (KMT) and The Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

It was the coming of an ambitious young officer, Chiang Kai-Shek, which brought military strength to the KMT since 1923. After the death of Sun Yat-Sen in 1925, Chiang Kai-Shek led the army to victory over the warlords. He made Nanjing the seat of his government. KMT government was undemocratic, but promoted economic development by building schools, roads and railways. However, the government did very little to raise the living standards of peasants who comprised the majority of the Chinese Population.

As a result of this, many peasants, intellectuals and urban workers supported the rival of KMT, CCP. The CCP was established in 1920. It provided military support to KMT in the war against the warlords.

The CCP made unsuccessful attempt to take power of the government from the KMT in 1927. Since then, Chiang Kai-Shek turned his face against the CCP and tried to wipe them out. In the city of Guangzhou alone, KMT soldiers killed 6,000 Communists and suspected communists within three days. As KMT began its purge, tens of thousands of communists fled to the mountains in the southern province of Jiangxi. Here the communists gathered their forces and formed the Red Army under the leadership of Mao Zedong. As the son of peasant family, he depended on the support of Chinese Peasants for the victory.

The Red Army gained popular support in rural areas of the country by overthrowing local landlords and distributing their land to peasants. Before the Long March, the number of the Red Army reached to about 250,000. The success of the Red army worried KMT and ordered a series of “extermination campaigns” to destroy this rival army. In Oct. 1934, the KMT troops had nearly surrounded millions of the Red Army. This forced Mao to retreat once again with his 100,000 peasant troops from Jiangxi province in a desperate gamble for survival.

The Long March

Mao’s retreat from Jiangxi covered about 6,000 miles (9,600 km) lasted for one year. In the Long March the Red Army travelled on average of 16 miles (26 km) a day across rivers and mountains. This movement was accompanied by a series of wars. On their march the Communist army defeated ten provincial armies. Thousands also lost their lives on the Long March. Out of 100,000 troops, fewer than 8,000 remained at the end of the March in 1935.

The Threat From Japan

In 1931, the Japanese conquered the largest section of North-East China, Manchuria while the two parties were in conflict. Both gave attention to Japanese invasion. CCP responded by offering assistance to its rival KMT, but was rejected by Chiang Kai-Shek. Members of the KMT then kidnapped Chiang and held him prisoner until he finally agreed to end his war with the Communists.

However, the unity of the two parties could not stop the invasion of Japan which came eight months later. In 1939, Japan controlled most of Eastern China. During this time, the entire world had already entered into the Second World War.

THE SOUTH ASIAN REGION IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Indian Struggle for Independence

During WWI, Indian nationalists supported Great Britain and its allies. In return, Britain promised to grant “The Gradual Development of Self-Government Institution” in India in 1917. In the Post-war period, nationalism grew in India as in the rest of the world. But, Great Britain refused to keep its promise to India. This led to nationalist movement and conflict between Indians and the colonial rulers.

The Amritsar Massacre

Soon after the war, the Indian national Congress (INC) staged demonstrations to protest British colonial rule. But nationalist movement did not show proper development in India in the period for two factors: Religious Differences and Unwillingness of the British to see the reduced power of their empire. The majority Hindus and Minority Muslims did not trust each other. The British colonial officials encouraged that distrust. In 1919, Great Britain imposed harsh rule in India to suppress the oppositions.

The suppression became extreme in the Northern city of Amritsar in April 1919. In the city, the colonial officials outlawed all large gatherings. Meanwhile, 10,000 unarmed Indians assembled in a walled garden in Amritsar for a political gathering in April 1919. The colonial army began to fire into the trapped crowd. At the end of the attack, nearly 400 people including children lay dead. About 1,200 people were wounded. The massacre brought international critics to the colonial rulers of the region.

The entire Indians were shocked by the brutal massacre and the justification of the general. But they determined to drive out of the British from their land. The continuity of the struggle however, demanded a strong leader Mahatma Gandhi, who was Pacifist, opposed using war and other violence to settle disputes. Gandhi used protest methods based on Civil Disobedience, means refusing to obey laws which he considered them unjust. After returning home, he began to work with the Indian national Congress. Indians called Gandhi “Mahatma” meaning “Great Soul”.

One effective form of protest was the boycott, in which Indians refused to buy British cloth and other manufactured goods. Gandhi’s courage inspired millions of Indians to join the nationalist movement in protest. However, the British forces arrested Gandhi in 1922. However, INC continued to protest undisturbed with a very little success until the return of Gandhi in 1930. The British arrested thousands of his followers and even prison him after a month. Still, the protest increased. But the British responded with guns and clubs for every Indian protest. Their measures could not stop millions of Indian nationalists.

Limited Self-Rule

The pressure of nationalists, forced the British colonial power to grant more political power for Indians. In 1935, the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act. The act created a

constitution for India. The majority of Indian nationalists still rejected the Act, demanding complete independence. However, the INC finally accepted the Act as the first step towards self-rule by the initiation of Gandhi. Nonetheless, independence was not yet won until the end of WWII.

The road to independence in India was delayed mainly by Religious Conflicts of Hindus and Muslims. The conflict reached to its peak in 1930s. The ratio of Muslims from the entire population was one third. Muslims worried about their future treatment by the Hindus in the post-liberation period. Therefore, many Muslims joined the Muslim League.

Beyond this, in 1936, the Hindu dominated Indian National Congress won election of majorities in seven out of eleven provinces. The Muslim League headed by Muhammad Ali Jinnah split from the Congress party and demanded a separate Muslim nation for the millions of Muslims in India. The Hindus led by Jawaharlal Nehru, a follower of Gandhi still wanted a united India. During WWII, the nationalist movement continued separated into two uncontrolled to Gandhi.

CHAPTER FIVE

ASIANS AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR (1939-1945)

THE FAR-EAST DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

JAPAN'S EXPANSION IN ASIA

Soon after Japan had conquered Manchuria in Sep. 1931, she established a puppet government with a new name Manchukuo. In the puppet government Japan restored the last Qing Emperor, Pu Yi. The League of Nations, led by Great Britain and France, ordered Japan to return Manchuria to China. But Japan responded by withdrawing from the League in March 1933. This revealed the powerless nature of the League of Nations.

Consequently, during the summer of 1937, the Japanese launched a full scale invasion of China. In August, Japan attacked Shanghai and drove the Chinese army to Nanjing, Chinese capital. Japan attempted to invade South China but was defended by Chinese nationalist forces led by Chiang Kai-Shek.

Then, Japan shifted its attention to the European colonies in East and SE Asia. Using the advantage of Hitler's aggressions measure in Europe, the Japanese acquired many of these territories. The collapse of France left French Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies virtually left

defenseless. When Hitler approached Great Britain, Britain took their fleet from Singapore, leaving that colony vulnerable to Japanese attack. In July 1940, Japan's government announced its plan to create a "New Order in Greater East Asia" proclaiming "Asia for Asians".

During WWII, USA banned the sale of Scrap Iron to Japan. In responses, Japan signed the Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy on Sep. 27, 1940.

THE PEARL HARBOUR INCIDENT

When Japan invaded Southern Indo-China on July 24, 1941, President Roosevelt demanded that Japan should withdraw not only from Indo-China but also from China. Negotiations between the two governments continued during the summer and fall. American Congress placed an embargo on oil and froze all Japanese assets in the USA.

Japan's government decided to declare war against USA, because it believed that USA found challenging against its expansionist plan in the East. Japan's military leaders preferred to destroy the American Pacific Fleet Base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii at first in order to defeat American military force. On the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbour. Within 25 minutes, they damaged the 5 battleships, sunk or disabled 19 ships and destroyed 188 airplanes. In the attack, Japan killed more than 2,400 people and wounded 1,100 men. However, fortunately to the USA, its aircraft carriers were at sea which helped them to escape this devastating attack.

In the next day, Dec. 8, 1941, American Congress declared war on Japan. On Dec. 11, 1941, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy declared war on the USA to stand with military Japan based on their tripartite Pact. The early months of 1942 were negative for the Allies but positive for the Axis. Japan had controlled the Pacific Ocean. In Dec. 1941, Japan forces had captured the British colony of Hong Kong and invaded Malay Peninsula in the west. In 1942, it also captured Singapore, Burma, Dutch East Indies, Guam, Wake Island and the Philippines.

In May 1942, the Allies got victory at the battle of Coral Sea. Again in June 1942, the American navy scored the second victory over Japan at the battle of the Midway. The victory ended the Japanese naval superiority in the Pacific. The Americans continued to advance in the Pacific regions. However, Japanese leaders called upon their soldiers to die for their homeland. Japanese pilot known as Kamikazes, volunteered for suicide mission, crushing their bomb-laden aircraft into Allied bases and ships. In this way Japan became far from ready to surrender.

Allied Victory

In the Conference of Yalta, held in Feb. 1945, Franklin Roosevelt of USA, Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain and Joseph Stalin of USSR made meeting in the Soviet Resort on the Black Sea in Crimea. At this conference, the Allies proposed that France and China should help USA, USSR and UK in establishing the United Nations. The main objective of such organization was to maintain peace and security in the post war period. In the conference America and Great Britain persuade the USSR to declare war on Japan. Joseph agreed to declare war on Japan hoping to get some Islands that were ruled by Japan.

By the early summer of 1945, the Allied victory over Japan became very clear. American planes began to bomb Japanese cities since the end of 1944. In Oct. at the battle of Leyte Gulf in the Philippines, Japan lost most of its remaining naval power. But, Japanese continued their fighting.

In the early months of 1945, Japan and America fought in two battles of Pacific to control the Islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Japan lost both battles. The victories enabled the Allies to control Japanese Air Bases within reach of Japan. On July 26, 1945, USA issued the 2nd Ultimatum to Japan demanding its unconditional surrender. Using the Japanese refusal to the terms as an advantage, USA dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945 and Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945 within three days of differences.

The bombs dropped on two towns killed about 200,000 Japanese. The attack forced Emperor Hirohito of Japan to surrender on Aug. 14, 1945. In the next day, President Truman declared VJ Day (Victory over Japan). On Sep. 2, 1945, the war became over with the official surrender of Japan.

RESULTS OF WWII OVER ASIAN COUNTRIES

More than 70 million peoples of the entire world fought in the WWII. The casualties were shocking. Among others:

- ❖ In the Far-East, Japan alone lost 2,000,000 people. It also lost much of the territories it had acquired.
- ❖ Great Britain, France and the Netherlands withdrew from their Asian Colonies which led to the rise of many new independent nations in Asia.
- ❖ Communists won political power in China, North Korea and Vietnam.
- ❖ The Koreans remained divided into two (North and South) and Indians split into three (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh).

ASIANS AFTER WORLD WAR II

JAPAN

The proud nation of Japan with its long history of self-reliance ended with WWII, its pride crushed, its economy wrecked and its people demoralized by the humiliating defeat. The victorious countries established an occupation government, the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers (SCAP), led by American General, Douglas Mac Arthur, to govern Japan in the post war period.

The SCAP ordered Japan to adopt a new constitution in 1947 which gave a political power for Japanese citizens. The constitution allowed the emperor to remain in office as a symbol of the state and forced to abandon any claims to divine origins. The constitution also ordered Japan not to go to war except for defense of its sovereign rights.

Japan became important ally of the USA in the Korean War of 1950-53 by supplying logistics materials to the UN forces in South Korea. Consequently, the USA and Japan signed a formal peace treaty in 1951 that ended American occupation of Japan in the same year.

CHINA

WWII removed expansionist foreign power from China. Soon, the civil war between the Communist and the Kuomintang, supported by USSR and USA respectively, revived. In 1949, the Communists controlled the mainland of China and proclaimed the Peoples Republic of China (PRC), with Beijing as its capital. Mao Zedong became the 1st president of PRC and remained in office until his death in 1976. For the next four decades, China showed dramatic changes. The Communists under the leadership of Mao transferred China radically.

The defeated Nationalist leader, Chiang Kai-Shek, and nearly 2 million of his followers retreated to the Island of Taiwan and established the Republic of China with Taipei as its capital. However, the mainland China is still claiming Taiwan as part of its territory up to the present time.

TAIWAN

The status of Taiwan has been striking issue in the political affairs of China since 1949. Both Nationalist and Communist parties accepted Taiwan as the province of China. Each government claims to be the legal ruler of both the island and the mainland of China.

Under the leadership of its 1st president, Chiang Kai-shek, Taiwan became prosperous. Upon his death in 1975, his son, Chiang Ching-Kuo, became president of Taiwan until 1988. In this way Taiwan remained separated from China until the present day.

KOREA

Japan ruled Korea until the end of WWII. Korea was liberated from Japanese military rule by the Allied Powers. Accordingly, USA occupied Korea South of the 38th Parallel while USSR occupied north of it. Koreans expected that the division of their country would be temporal lasting only until UN could establish a new government. However, the nature of the Cold War made Korea to continue divided along the 38th Parallel. Two separate governments, North and South Korea, were emerged each claimed to be the legal ruler of the entire peninsula.

North Korea, officially called the Democratic Peoples Republic Korea, with capital Pyongyang, became close ally of the Soviet Union and Peoples Republic of China. However, the Soviet Union withdrew their troops from North Korea in the late 1948. South Korea, officially the Republic of Korea, established its capital at Seoul. It maintained close relations with the USA. However, USA withdrew its troops from South Korea in the mid 1949.

THE KOREAN WAR (1950-1953)

As an attempt to bring unity of the country, North Korea under the Communist government, invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950. The UN Security Council, in the absence of USSR, voted to condemn the invasion and organized an army to defend South Korea. 16 countries, including Ethiopia, contributed troops to the UN Force. The USA covered more than 90% of the total UN soldiers.

In the first months of the war, North Korea marched southward and conquered almost all of South Korea. However, on Sep. 15, 1950, UN troops led by General Douglas Mac Arthur of the USA counterattacked. The UN launched a surprise invasion at Inchon. Within six weeks, the troops of Mac Arthur had reoccupied all of South Korea and most of North Korea.

China then supported her ally, North Korea. The Chinese troops forced the UN army to retreat southward. On July 27, 1953, the two sides agreed to stop fighting and accept a temporary armistice line (38th Parallel). After the death of 5 million Koreans, the war ended leaving Korea divided.

NORTH KOREA

Kim Il Sung, leader of Communist, became the first president of North Korea in 1948. They called him as the “Great Leader”. It prepared a Communist program of economic development like its neighbours, the USSR and China. As a result, North Korea registered some progress in developing economy but less than the economic development of its rival, South Korea.

SOUTH KOREA

Since its establishment, 1948, it was led by successive military dictator leaders for long. But South Korea scored an impressive economic growth since the mid 1960s. At present, South Korea electronic products, automobiles and other goods are competing with Japan in the world market.

In 1987, a new constitution was adopted by a referendum in South Korea. The constitution allowed almost a complete political freedom. Roh Tae Woo became the first elected president of South Korea.

VIETNAM

Vietnamese nationalists in the Indo-Chinese Communist Party, known as the Vietminh, established the independent Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, in 1945. However, its former colonial ruler, France, claimed to restore its colonial rule in Vietnam and went to war to remove the Communist government in 1946. USA supported its ally France by providing military and financial aid. In May 1954, the Vietminh defeated French forces at Dien Bien Phu decisively. After the defeat France agreed to recognize the independence of Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The meeting between France, USA and Vietnam held at Geneva in Switzerland divided Vietnam into North and South along the 17th Parallel. The North became Communist and the South became Pro-Western. This was to last until 1956 when elections would be held. But, the proposed election collapsed which led to the civil war of the two Vietnamese powers. USA provided logistic support until 1960s. USA fought against North Vietnam, but lost the war after eight years of fighting. The defeat of USA preserved the unity of Vietnam.

On the other hand, the battle of Dien Bien Phu forced France to grant its colonies of Indo-China their independence. Accordingly, Cambodia became independent from France in 1953. The country became a constitutional Monarch led by King Norodom Sihanouk. The other country of Indo-China, Laos became independent from France in 1954.

MYANMAR (BURMA)

Myanmar (Burma) was made part of British Indian Colony since the second half of the 19th century. Following the independence of British India, British granted independence to Myanmar in 1948.

THAILAND

Thailand remained less violent in comparison to its neighbors. This was because it preserved its independence in the colonial era. It did not have nationalist struggle for independence or forge a new national identity. The monarchy continued as a unifying force in Thai society. But the real power remained in the hands of top military leaders.

INDONESIA

Indonesia got its independence from nearly 300 year of Dutch rule in 1949. Shmed Sukarno became the first president of independent Indonesia. The country is the home of multi ethnic and multi religious peoples.

MALAYSIA

Malaysia was established in 1963. Its largest ethnic groups are Malays and Chinese. It is made up of Malay Peninsula and the island of Borneo. Conflict between the countries' two largest ethnic groups became a frequent source of tension in its short history.

SINGAPORE

Singapore becomes independent from 150 years of British colonial rule in 1965. It becomes leading international port and commercial center. Their standard of living at present is only surpassed by Japan in Asia.

INDIA

Following the agreement of Britain to grant independence for India, violent riots between Hindus and Muslims erupted across the country. This led to the creation of two countries: India and Pakistan, out of the British Indian Colony in August 1947. Muslim dominated areas of far-west and far-east region became Pakistan. The vast area in between Pakistan, dominated by Hindu peoples, become India.

The first Prime Minister of India became Jawaharlal Nehru who was aristocratic and British educated. He led the struggle for independence for long along with Gandhi. He stayed in the position of prime minister until 1964.

PAKISTAN

In the post liberation era, Pakistan faced difficulties in administering two distinct regions separated by over 1,000 miles of Indian Territory. West Pakistan speaks Urdu language while East Pakistan speaks Bengali. The only common bond for the two regions of Pakistan was Islamic Religion.

In March 1971, civil war broke out between the two regions. In Dec. 1971, India joined the war supporting East Pakistan. The war ended quickly by granting independence to East Pakistan which was established as the Republic of Bangladesh.

In 1948, a year after independence of British India, Great Britain granted independence to Ceylon, later known as Sri Lanka since 1972. It is situated on the South-East coast of India.

The Philippines is a group of islands located East of Vietnam. It gained independence from the sixty years of colonial rule of the United States in 1946.

THE END!!!

