



Day

20

Oct. 2, 2007

Brunei

A rich nation which oppresses Christians



The tiny country of Negara Brunei Darussalam, known as Brunei, faces the South China Sea. It became a Muslim nation in the 15th century, and the same family has ruled for over six centuries. Brunei is very rich in oil, and its sultan is one of the world's richest men. The government collects no taxes, but provides health care, pensions, education, and for those without the means, assistance in making the Hajj to Mecca.

The national constitution states, "The religion of Brunei Darussalam shall be the Muslim religion." Islamic Shari'a law in Brunei supersedes civil law, and it regulates all aspects of life. This makes life difficult for Christians in Brunei. Some have lost their jobs without any notice, while those seeking opportunities for higher education must leave the country to access universities. Evangelism is strictly forbidden, and some Christians have been arrested and detained for planning local outreaches. Expatriate schools must teach Islam to all students and are not allowed to teach Christianity.

A number of Brunei Malays have believed over the years, but the conservative environment is hardly conducive to Muslim-background believers being open about their new

faith. Indonesian Christian broadcasting is easily accessible in Brunei. Although it is not possible to buy Bibles or Christian books inside the country, Christian literature for personal purposes can be carried in from neighboring Malaysia.

Brunei statistics

- *Population 380,000 (July 2006)*
Malay 67%, Chinese 15%, indigenous 6%, other 12%
- *Muslim 67%, Buddhist 13%, Christian (all denominations) 10%, indigenous beliefs and other 10%*

Also pray for ...

- ▶ *Thousands of men accustomed to the sea in the Banda Aceh area survived the Dec. 2004 tsunami but lost their wives and children. Many of them have found it very difficult to start their lives over again. Many suffer from depression and hundreds if not thousands are seeking new spouses.*

PRAYER REQUESTS

- ▶ *Pray for the expatriate Christians who are serving in Brunei. May their lives be an example of Christ to those around them.*
- ▶ *Pray for foreign believers to provide encouragement to local Christians as the Lord helps them to build meaningful relationships.*
- ▶ *Pray for the royal family and their influence. Remember the Sultan's second wife, Azrinaz Makar Hakim; Crown Prince Billah and his wife, Sarah (Acts 16:31). The parliament is beginning to meet again after being closed for 20 years.*