



INFORMATION ON INDONESIA

ASEM DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE II: TOWARDS AN ASIA-EUROPE PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

26-27 May 2010, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Hotel Sheraton

Indonesia is an archipelago consisting of an estimated total of 17,508 islands, of which only about 6,000 are inhabited. The five main islands of Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Irian Jaya and Java are home to the majority of the population. Indonesia has developed a shared identity defined by a national language, ethnic diversity, and religious pluralism together with a majority moderate Muslim population. Indonesia's national motto, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" ("Unity in Diversity" literally, "many, yet one"), articulates the diversity that shapes the country.

YOGYAKARTA

Yogyakarta is the capital of the Special Province of Yogyakarta, one of Indonesia's 33 provinces and one of the foremost cultural centers of Java. Yogyakarta was in the 16th and 17th centuries the seat of the mighty Javanese empire of Mataram from which present day Yogyakarta has inherited the best of traditions. The city itself has a special charm, which seldom fails to captivate the visitor.

Yogyakarta is known as Indonesia's city of culture. There are a lot of tourist attractions around the city that contains cultural/artistic value. On the outskirts of the city, there are many temples to visit. The most popular temple is Borobudur, which is a Mahayana Buddhist monument. The monument comprises of six square platforms topped by three circular platforms, and is decorated with 2,672 relief panels and 504 Buddha statues.

Being the site of several major universities, Yogyakarta is also known as the student city. Students from all over Indonesia and abroad come to Yogyakarta to seek higher education and at the same time experience Javanese cultural civilization

Yogyakarta is a very lively city and a shopper's delight. The main road, Malioboro Street, is always crowded and famous for its night street food culture and street vendors. Many tourist shops and cheap hotels are concentrated along this street or in the adjoining tourist areas such as Sosrowijayan Street.

VISAS

All participants need a valid passport with the appropriate entry visa to enter Indonesia. Passport holders from the following countries do not require a visa and will be given a stay permit for the maximum duration of 30 days: Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Diplomatic and Service Passport holders from the following countries do not require a visa and will be given a stay permit for a maximum duration of 14 days: Cambodia, China, South Korea, Laos, Mongolia, and Myanmar.

Visa-on-Arrival for the length of stay of maximum 30 days will be issued to passport holders from the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cambodia, China, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Laos, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, and United Kingdom. (In accordance with Indonesia's National Legislation, all delegates applying for Visa-on-Arrival will be charged a visa fee of \$25)

Passport holders from countries not stated above are required to apply for a visa at the nearest Indonesia Embassy/Consulate General/Consulate abroad.

FAST FACTS

Currency exchanges and credit cards

The Indonesian currency is the Rupiah. Indonesia uses a floating exchange rate system and the exchange rate is approximately 1 US Dollar to 9,300 Rupiah and 1 Euro to 12,609 Rupiah/March 2010 (check www.bi.go.id for current exchange rate). Daily exchange rates are published in newspapers.

All major credit cards are accepted in good hotels and major department stores.

Foreign currency exchange services are provided in all major banks and hotels, and also around the city. The US dollar is the most readily accepted currency. For travel to remote areas, it is advisable to change money and travelers cheques in advance.

Climate and weather in Yogyakarta

The region has a tropical climate and the daily atmosphere feels a little bit hot and humid. The average daily temperature range is between 26 degrees and 28 degrees Celsius with a minimum of 18 degree Celsius and maximum of 35 degree Celsius respectively. Average humidity is 74%, with its minimum of 65% and maximum 84% respectively.

Language

There are about 583 languages and dialects spoken in the archipelago. They normally belong to the different ethnic groups of the population.

Some of the distinctly different local languages are: Acehnese, Batak, Sundanese, Javanese, Sasak, Tetum of Timor, Dayak, Minahasa, Toraja, Buginese, Halmahera, Ambonese, Balinese, and several Irianese languages. To make the picture even more colorful, these languages are also spoken in different dialects.

Bahasa Indonesia is the national language which is akin to Malay, written in Roman script and based on European orthography. In all tourist areas English is the number one foreign language fairly spoken and written, whereas some Dutch is still spoken and understood by older people.

Timezone

The archipelago is spread over three time zones:

- Western Indonesia Standard Time, which covers the islands of Sumatra, Java and Madura, West and Central Kalimantan is 7 hours ahead of GMT;
- Central Indonesia Standard Time covers East and South Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Bali and Nusa Tenggara, and is 8 hours ahead of GMT; and
- Eastern Indonesia Standard Time, which covers Maluku, and Irian Jaya is 9 hours ahead of GMT.

Transportation

Driving in Indonesia is on the left-side of the street. To drive a car or a motorcycle you need a driving license. Many countries issue International Driving Licenses which are valid in Indonesia.

Public transportation includes:

- trains
- buses
- taxis
- "angkutan kota" (mini buses)
- "ojek" (motorcycle)
- traditional vehicles: "becak" (a three-wheel cycle with the driver paddle on the back), "delman" or "andong".

Buses are the main transportation between cities. Buses are cheaper than trains and are more widely available.

Electricity and water

The standard electricity supply in Indonesia is 220-240 Volt, 50 Hz, AC. Tap water is not advisable to drink. Most hotels and supermarkets provide bottled water.

Emergency numbers

Police 114

Ambulance 115

Fire 113

Weights and measure

Indonesia follows the metric system in weights and measures.

Telephones/telecommunications

Local calls can be made from public phones using coins or pre-paid cards. International calls can be made from public phones with card phone facilities or at any Telkom offices.

Local and international dial telephones and internet connection are available at the major hotels. Payment can be made in cash. Indonesia uses both the GSM and CDMA mobile phone networks. Please check with your mobile phone service provider for roaming information.

Business hours

Business offices are usually open either from 8.00 am - 4.00 pm or 9.00 am - 5.00 pm, with a break for lunch between 12.00 noon and 1.00 pm. On Saturday many business offices are closed.

Government office hours are from 8.00 am - 4.00 pm from Monday to Friday. On Saturday many Government offices are closed.

Post offices are open from 8.00am to 4.00pm daily except Sundays and public holidays.

Normal banking hours are from 8.00 am to 2.30 pm from Monday to Friday. Some bank branches in hotels, however, keep longer hours.

Security

All necessary measures will be taken to ensure the safety of all delegates. Delegates are requested to wear their identification badges at all times to gain admittance to the meeting venues, meals and other functions and might be requested to pass through a security gate.

Health

International health certificates for smallpox and cholera are not required, except from travellers arriving from infected areas.

Do's and Don'ts

When visiting Indonesia, visitors should observe local customs and practices. Some common courtesies and customs are as follows:

Although handshakes are generally acceptable for both men and women, some Muslim followers may acknowledge introductions to gentlemen by merely nodding and smiling.

It is polite to call before visiting a home. Shoes must always be removed when entering a home. Drinks are generally offered to guests. It is polite to accept.

The right hand is always used when eating with one's hands or giving and receiving objects. The right forefinger is not used to point at people.

Shoes must be removed when entering places of worship such as mosques and temples. Some mosques provide robes and scarves for female visitors.

Taking photographs at places of worship is usually permitted but always ask permission beforehand.

The country's large Muslim population does not drink alcohol.

ENTERTAINMENT

Shopping

Major cities in Indonesia have shopping complexes, supermarkets and department stores where prices are fixed. Shops are usually open all week including Sundays.

Shopping hours are usually between 9.00 am and 9.00 pm for department stores and supermarkets in the large cities with shorter hours on Sundays. In smaller cities, shops may be closed between 1.00 pm and 5.00 pm.

Bargaining is customary in small shops and markets, the art of which is to start at half the asking price and slowly increase your offer until a compromise is reached. Remember it helps to smile while bargaining.

Dining out

The staple food of most of Indonesia is rice. From the surrounding seas as well as from fresh water fisheries fish is abundant and of great variety, such as lobsters, oysters, prawns and shrimps, squid, crab, etc. Fish features prominently in the diet as fresh, salted, dried, smoked or a paste. Coconut is found everywhere and besides being produced for cooking oil, its "milk" is an ingredient in many dishes.

Spices and hot chili peppers are the essence of most cooking. The Javanese cuisine is probably more palatable to the general taste and consists of vegetables, soybeans, beef, chicken and other varieties.

Further to the east, seafood features in the daily diet, either grilled or made into curries. In Bali, Irian Jaya and the highlands of North Sumatra and North Sulawesi pork dishes are specialities. As the population of Indonesia is predominantly Muslim, pork is usually not served except in Chinese restaurants, non muslim regions and in places serving international cuisine.

There is a wide variety of tropical and sub-tropical vegetables all year round. Fruit is available throughout the year. Some fruits such as mangoes and water melons are seasonal, but most of

the other fruits can be bought throughout the whole year, such as bananas, apples, papayas, pineapples, oranges, etc.

Coffee and tea plantations are plentiful, growing on several islands, and these drinks are served everywhere from fine restaurants to small village stalls.

Chinese restaurants are found all over the country. There are also fine restaurants specializing in Continental and Japanese and Korean cuisines.

Tipping

Major hotels usually add a 10% service charge to bills. Where it is not included a tip of between 5% to 10% of the bill would be appropriate if the service is satisfactory.

Airport porters expect small tips for handling bags (usually Rp 5,000 per bag).

Tipping taxi and hire-car drivers is not mandatory, but if service has been satisfactory a small tip is sufficient for a taxi driver. Hire-car drivers would normally expect a larger tip.

Dress code

Dress is normally informal in Indonesia due to the warm, humid climate and clothing of light fabrics is recommended. Travelling in highland areas is noticeably cooler, however, and carrying a light sweater may prove useful.

Accepted attire for men is a shirt and long pants. A jacket and tie are required for official calls or for more formal occasions. Long sleeved batik or hand-woven shirts are acceptable for evening functions.

For ladies, dresses, blouses, and long pants are appropriate.