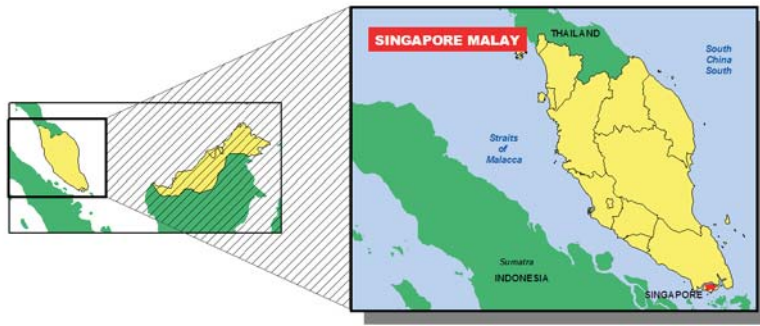


SINGAPORE MALAY



Population	Major Religion	Language
400,000	Islam	Bahasa Malaysia

Who are the Singapore Malay?

The Singapore Malay constitute fifteen percent of Singapore's multi-racial population. They are widely dispersed all over the country of Singapore. They immigrated centuries ago, mostly coming from Peninsular Malaysia and parts of the Indonesian archipelago such as Java and Sumatra. Despite being the first inhabitants of the country, they are not the largest group due to the arrival of Chinese and Indian immigrants in later years.

The Singapore Malay speak Bahasa Malaysia which is considered one of the major languages of Singapore.

What are their lives like?

More than half of Singapore Malay depend on employment in the public sector. There are few who are in high-level political or civil service positions and in the armed forces. Some are employed in foreign-owned factories. The Singapore government's drive to break up racial communities and resettle village dwellers in urban housing and apartment complexes had a great effect on the Malay and their ways of living.

Evidence of the unification of Malay patterns of living with those of the rest of the population of Singapore shows the Malay birth and death rates are now declining, which originally was quite high. Malay women are working outside their homes more than ever before. Some women are marrying later, bearing fewer children, and divorcing less frequently.

The Malay despite being a minority in Singapore are a vital force in Singapore. Among the qualities of the Singapore Malay are their strong sense of community, their superb spicy cuisine, and their Islamic religious values.

The Singapore Malay culture is a combination of the culture of Malaysia and Indonesia.

Intermarriages is allowed as long as both share the same religion. Most common intermarriages are between Malay and the Mamak.

In the past several decades, Singapore has experienced significant economic growth. Such economic growth and success has affected Singapore Malay. Families once held together with strong community ties are now experiencing troubled marriages and rebellious teenagers.

What do they believe?

The Malay in Singapore are Sunni Muslims. Islam is the major influence in everyday life and is the medicine of the Malay society. The Malay are devoted to prayer and study the Qur'an (Islamic Book) and observe the Islamic festivals such as *Hari Raya Aidiladha* (pilgrimage performed by the Muslims to the holy city of Mecca), *Hari Raya Aidilfitri* (the end of fasting month), and Prophet Mohammad's birthday (Muslims began celebrating his birthday after his death to remind them of the Prophet's fight to spread and uphold Islam).

What are their needs?

In recent years in Singapore many have had economic hardship but among the hardest hit have been the Malay people. The Singapore Malay have often been in the majority of those unemployed.

Pray that more believers would help their fellow Singaporean Malay who are struggling economically and find creative ways to bless them. Pray that the Good News could help mend some of the broken hearts and families of the Singapore Malay.