

ASIAN FACTOIDS

Asia and Young People

Percentage of population below 15 years of age

Cambodia	44.9
Pakistan	44.3
Philippines	38.3
Malaysia	38.0
Vietnam	37.5
India	35.2
Indonesia	33.0
Thailand	28.3
China	26.4
So. Korea	23.6

Source: World Resources 1996-97

- Asia accounts for 61 percent of the world's total child labor force (ages 5-14), i.e. 153 million child laborers from Asia.

Source: *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 21, 1996
Submitted by E. A. DeVido, National Chengchi University, Taiwan

Female worker's average earnings for every \$1 earned by a male worker, 1980s and present, in cents

	1980-84	most recent data
Thailand	75	80
Philippines	70	80
Indonesia	55	60
South Korea	41	50
Japan	41	41

Source: The World Bank; Review Data

Chinese Military Spending Growth

In early March, China announced plans to boost its annual defense budget by 12.7 percent to 80.6 billion yuan (\$9.7 billion). It was the ninth consecutive double-digit year-on-year increase in China's defense budget.

Source: *Japan Times Weekly Edition*, April 21-27, 1997

Traces of the Empire

Number of British Citizens in Hong Kong

December, 1987 14,100

December, 1996 25,500

Source: Hong Kong Immigration Department

Asian male life expectancy at birth (in years)

Japan	76.8
Hong Kong	76.2
Singapore	73.5
Sri Lanka	70.9
Malaysia	69.9
China	68.2
Philippines	66.6
Thailand	65.2
Indonesia	63.3

Source: United Nations Population Fund

Dwight D. Eisenhower on Vietnam:

"When we talk about Dien Bien Phu, maybe I need to tell you this, but I was the only one here who was against American forces going in. I tell you, the boys were putting the heat on me." U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower on Vietnam, in a just-released tape of a conversation in February 1955 with a newspaper publisher.

Far Eastern Economic Review, July 3, 1997

Asian (and U.S.) Economies' 1996 Rankings for Economic Competitiveness

World's Most Competitive Economies

1. Singapore
2. Hong Kong
3. United States
8. Taiwan
9. Malaysia
14. Japan
15. Indonesia
18. Thailand
21. Korea
29. China
34. Philippines
45. India
49. Vietnam

Source: World Economic Forum, 1997

Editor's Note:

EAA readers are invited to send material for this column. Please include a source for your "Factoid."

Does Katakana Work for the Japanese?

In the Japanese language, imported words are written in *katakana* which is the alphabet used primarily for writing foreign words. Recently, the usage of these words has increased dramatically in newspapers and magazines.

However, according to a survey released on April 18, 1997 by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan, nearly 90 percent of Japanese said that they had difficulty grasping the full meaning of imported words when they were written in *katakana*.

Source: *Understanding Japan*, May 1997

Asia Rising from Poverty

Poverty has declined faster in Asia than anywhere in the world thanks to strong economic growth. Poverty has been largely eradicated in East Asia and has sharply declined in Indonesia and Thailand. "This decline in poverty is probably completely unprecedented in human history," said Michael Walton, who helped edit the report. "In the mid-1970s, six out of 10 households in East Asia lived in absolute poverty. In the mid-1990s that (figure) has declined to two out of 10."

Source: *Everyone's Miracle: Revisiting Poverty and Inequality in East Asia*, The World Bank, 1997



Illustration from *Traditional Chinese Designs*
Edited by Stanley Appelbaum, Dover Publication, Inc. 1987