

ASIAN FACTOIDS

asia's economic Woes an update

By Autumn 1998, Asia's total of bad loans was estimated to be \$1 trillion. In little more than a year since the beginning of the economic crisis, Asia's currencies lost 30–70 percent of their value.

In 1996, some \$96 billion in capital flowed into just five countries: South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. By the end of 1997, there had been a net outflow of \$100 billion from East Asia.

Indonesia's per capita GNP shrank from \$3,038 to an estimated \$600.

According to the International Labor Organization, some 10 million Asians have lost their jobs because of the upheaval.

Source: *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 13, 1998 and January 7, 1999.

origins of the Word: indonesia

The name "Indonesia" is derived from classical Greek: India and *nesos*, meaning "islands." Before the Dutch colonized it, there was no country encompassing the more than 14,000 culturally diverse islands now comprising Indonesia.

Source: *Government Policies and Ethnic Relations in Asia and the Pacific*, edited by Michael E. Brown and Sumit Ganguli. MIT Press, August 1997.

troubled indian universities

Classrooms at the University of Delhi, one of India's most prestigious and oldest campuses, are overflowing with students studying outdated courses. Libraries are poorly stocked. The teaching faculty often goes on strike—once or twice a year—demanding better work conditions and higher pay. Starting salary for a university instructor is about \$280 per month.

New Delhi allocates only about 3.8 percent of GDP to education. This is one of the lowest rates in the region. Less than half of education spending goes to higher education.

India's version of affirmative action reserves up to 45 percent of university places for economically disadvantaged castes. At the University of Delhi, 22.5 percent of the seats go to such students. As affirmative action plans have done elsewhere, the program in India has created tension. "Local students often feel frustrated and angry as they have to fight over a limited number of seats in colleges," says Ritu Verma, secretary of the university's student union.

Source: *Far East Economic Review*, January 21, 1999.

largest u.s. military Presence in asia

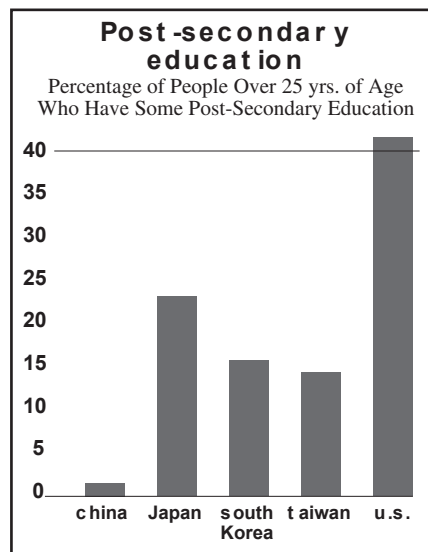
The 47,000 U.S. troops currently stationed in Japan comprise the largest American force in Asia.

Source: *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Summer 1998.

engineers rule china?

President Jiang Zemin is an engineer by training. Six of seven recently selected Chinese Communist Party Politburo Standing Committee Members are engineers. The World Bank reports that 39 percent of all Chinese higher education enrollments are engineers.

Source: *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Summer 1998.



Source: 1995 Britannica Book of the Year (Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Chicago).

asia and Government corruption

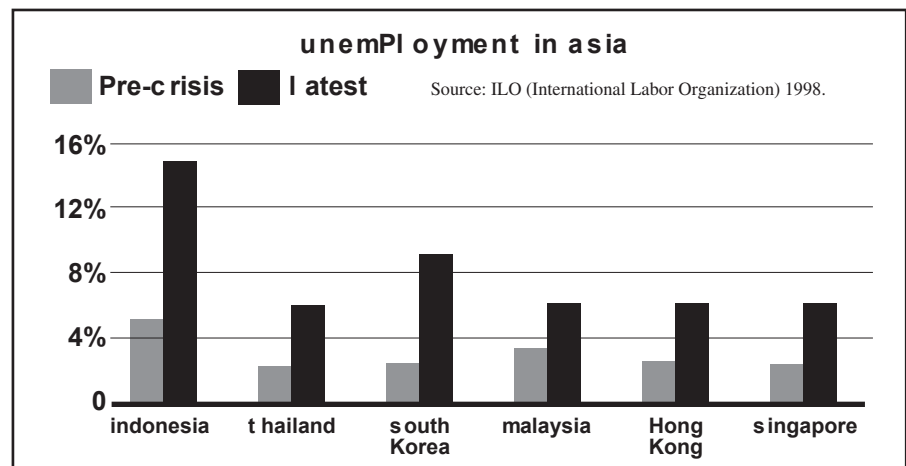
International business people see Indonesia as the most corrupt country in Asia, according to the latest Corruption Perceptions Index from Transparency International, an anti-graft, non-governmental agency in Berlin. The annual index ranks 85 countries on a scale of one (very corrupt) to 10 (not corrupt). Singapore is viewed as the least corrupt country in Southeast Asia, ranking seventh in the world with a grade of 9.1. Hong Kong scored 7.8, one ahead of the United States. China rated a 3.5 and Indonesia was the lowest-ranking Asian country in the 80th spot with a grade Corruption Perceptions Index of just 2. Transparency International Chairman Peter Eigen says that with more than 50 countries scoring less than five, "the new index illustrates just how serious the global cancer of corruption is."

Which country is the least corrupt?

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Denmark | 29. Malaysia (tie) |
| 4. New Zealand | 43. South Korea |
| 7. Singapore | 52. China |
| 11. Australia | 56. Philippines |
| 16. Hong Kong | 61. Thailand |
| 17. United States | 66. India |
| 25. Japan | 71. Pakistan |
| 29. Taiwan (tie) | 74. Vietnam |
| | 80. Indonesia |

Note: 85 countries were ranked in this index.

Source: *Transparency International*, 1998.



Editor's Note:

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