Country Profile

Vietnam

Official Name: Socialist Republic of Vietnam

▶ Geography
Area: 329,560 sq. km. (127,243 sq. mi.); larger than Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina combined.
Cities: Capital—Hanoi (3.5 million). Other cities—Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon, 5 million); Haiphong (1.5 million).
Terrain: Varies from mountainous to coastal delta.
Climate: Tropical monsoon.

▶ People
Nationality: Noun and adjective—Vietnamese (sing. and pl.). Population: 74 million. Annual growth rate: 2.4%.
Ethnic groups: Vietnamese (85-90%), Chinese, Muong, Thai, Khmer, Cham, mountain groups.
Religions: Buddhism, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, Christian (predominantly Roman Catholic, some Protestant), animism, Islam.
Languages: Vietnamese, English (increasingly favored as a second language), some French, Chinese, Khmer, mountain area languages.
Literacy: 88%.
Health: Infant mortality rate—36/1,000. Life expectancy—65 yrs. male, 67 yrs. female.

▶ Government
Type: Communist people's republic.
Reunification: July 2, 1976.
Branches: Executive—president (head of state and chair of national Defense and Security council) and prime minister (heads cabinet of ministries and commissions); "People's Committees" govern in local jurisdictions. Legislative—National Assembly; locally, People's Councils. Judicial—Supreme People's Court.
Administrative subdivisions: 60 provinces, 3 municipalities under central government control, one special zone; urban quarters and rural districts; urban precincts and rural communes.
Suffrage: Universal over 18.

▶ Economy
GDP (1995 est.): $16.9 billion.
Real growth rate (1995 est.): 9.5%.
Per capita income: $220.
Inflation rate (1995 est.): 12.7%.
Natural resources: Phosphates, coal, manganese, bauxite, chromate, offshore oil deposits, forests, rubber, marine products.
Agriculture (36% of GDP; 38% of export earnings): Products—rice, rubber, fruit, vegetables, manioc, sugar cane, coffee, fish.
Industry (26% of GDP; 34% of total exports): Food processing, textiles, cement, chemical fertilizers, steel, electric power.

▶ Principal Government Officials
General Secretary of the Communist Party—Do Muoi
Chairman, National Assembly—Nong Duc Manh
President—Le Duc Anh
Vice President—Nguyen Thi Binh
Prime Minister—Vo Van Kiet
Foreign Minister—Nguyen Manh Cam

July 11, 1996