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Salem Press Announces the Second Volume in the Brand-New Series *Countries, Peoples & Cultures: Central, South, & Southeast Asia*

Countries, Peoples & Cultures: Central, South, & Southeast Asia is the second volume of a new nine-volume series from Salem Press. *Countries, Peoples & Cultures* offers valuable insight into the social, cultural, economic, historical, and religious practices and beliefs of nearly every country around the globe. With nine comprehensive, up-to-date volumes spanning every major world region, this in-depth reference source is one of the most thorough compilations of its kind on the market today.

Central Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, occupy a vast expanse of land ranging from Iran and the Caspian Sea at the western edge to Australia and the Pacific at the eastern edge. Politically, Central Asia consists of five nations (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan)-all former republics of the soviet union, while South Asia denotes the Indian subcontinent and adjacent areas which contains Pakistan and Bangladesh at the flanks, Nepal and Bhutan in the Himalayas to the northeast, and the island nations of Sri Lanka and the Maldives (in the Indian Ocean) to the south. Afghanistan is usually included in Central and South Asia. Southeast Asia is a combination of mainland countries and islands which countries include Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, the Philippines, and East Timor.

Significant geographical, cultural, and historical differences separate the three regions-and yet there are notable similarities and linkages among them as well. The famed Silk Road passed through “greater” Central Asia, and for a time in the 19th century the region was considered politically pivotal, connecting East and West. South Asia remains culturally and historically complex, over a hundred languages are regularly spoken in India alone, and the distribution of languages does not always correspond with the distribution of ethnicities, religions, and other markers of cultural identity. Despite its diversity, size, and complexity, South Asia is widely recognized as a distinct region with its own unique character. Like South Asia, Southeast Asia is substantially populated and characterized by ethnic, religious, and linguistic pluralism. Southeast Asia is also culturally and historically complex, falling into five major periods: the ancient era; the classical Hindu-Buddhist era; the pre-modern “middle” period; the colonial era; and the modern, postcolonial era of the 20th and 21st centuries.

About the Series

Every volume in the *Countries, Peoples & Cultures* series contains **Country Profiles** that explore each nation’s background, practices, beliefs, laws, peoples, and more, ensuring users receive a complete, three-dimensional understanding of the countries they research. Every profile

contains a picture of the country's flag and two large colored maps—one highlighting the country's location in its region of the world and the other detailing the capital, major cities, and major natural landmarks. An Introduction provides general information about each country, such as its Population, Official Language(s), Physical Size, Climate, Currency, and National Motto/Anthem. Subsequent sections dive deep into a diverse array of topics, including: Environment & Geography (Topography, Plants & Animals); Customs & Courtesies (Greetings, Gestures & Etiquette, Eating/Meals, Visiting); Lifestyle (Family, Housing, Food, Life's Milestones); Cultural History (Art, Architecture, Music, Drama, Literature); Culture (Arts & Entertainment, Cultural Sites & Landmarks, Libraries & Museums, Holidays, Youth Culture); Society (Transportation, Transportation Infrastructure, Media & Communications); Social Development (Standard of Living, Water Consumption, Education, Women's Rights, Health Care); Government (Structure, Political Parties, Local Government, Judicial System, Taxation, Armed Forces, Foreign Policy, Dependencies, Human Rights Profile); and Economy (Industry, Labor, Energy/Power/Natural Resources, Fishing, Forestry, Mining/Metals, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Tourism). Each profile also includes full color photographs, valuable tables of information—such as “Do You Know?” facts—and a comprehensive Bibliography.

Additionally, two helpful appendixes are included. Appendix One contains information about **World Governments**, focusing on 21 different types of governments found around the world today, from Commonwealth to Treaty System. Every profile includes sections detailing the government's Guiding Premise, Typical Structure, Role of the Citizen, and Modern-Day Examples. Appendix Two profiles **World Religions**, concentrating on 10 of the world's major religions, from African Religious Traditions to Sikhism. Each profile in this appendix includes information on the religion's Number of Adherents, Basic Tenets, Major Deities, Sacred Texts, Major Figures, Major Holy Sites, Major Rites & Celebrations, Origins, and more.

Finally, a scholarly **Introduction** by the Editor and an alphabetical **Index** are also provided for the reader's convenience.

The following titles make up the entire *Countries, Peoples & Cultures* series:

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| • <i>Central & South America</i> | • <i>East & Southern Africa</i> |
| • <i>Central & Southeast Asia</i> | • <i>West & Central Africa</i> |
| • <i>Western Europe</i> | • <i>North America & the Caribbean</i> |
| • <i>Eastern Europe</i> | • <i>East Asia & the Pacific</i> |
| • <i>Middle East & North Africa</i> | |

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