Domestic Security:
Separatism and Terrorism

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Outline of the lecture

- Term essay: a list of five essay topics
- Domestic security between ethnic politics and religious extremism
- Nationalist politics and ethnic minorities
- Islam as a political issue
- Separatist movement in Southeast Asia
- Terrorism in Southeast Asia
1. Please discuss the pre-colonial history of Southeast Asia, and explain how the historical legacy influences contemporary Southeast Asia.

2. International relations of Southeast Asia have been heavily influenced by outsiders. Please discuss how external forces shaped Southeast Asia during the colonial and Cold War periods.

3. Please focus on the East Asian financial crisis in 1997-98, and discuss its impacts on Southeast Asian economies.

4. Please discuss the security challenges facing Southeast Asia in the post-Cold War era.

5. Please focus on regional cooperation and integration, and discuss how regionalism has transformed Southeast Asia.
Domestic security between ethnic politics and religious extremism

- Defining domestic security
  - Stability of the social order
  - Legitimacy of political institutions/structure
  - Support for the incumbent government

- National identity and ethnic politics
  - Nation-building and state formation necessarily presume a common national identity
  - Potential tension between national identity and ethnic diversity

- Religion and domestic security
  - The influences of religion on political structure, social order, and government policies
Nationalist politics and ethnic minorities in Southeast Asia

- Ethnic diversity in Southeast Asia
  - Linguistic, religious, and racial diversity
  - National borders: a legacy of the colonial period
  - Immigration: extra-regional as well as intra-regional
  - Ethnic diversity: to be celebrated, but sometimes being contested…

- Constructing national identity in Southeast Asia
  - The influences of independence movement
  - Promoting the identity of the ethnic core
    - Historic kingdoms: Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam and Cambodia
    - Malay and Muslim in Malaysia, Buddhism in Thailand and Myanmar, Christian in the Philippines…
  - Forced assimilation of ethnic minorities
  - Attempts to build civic nationalism and multiculturalism
Nationalist politics and ethnic minorities in Southeast Asia

- The changing environments of ethnic minorities
  - ‘Development’ imperatives: capitalism and modernity
  - Globalization and cultural under-domination
  - Failed political and democratic promises
  - Rapid social changes, economic marginalization and disparity, cultural dislocation

- Mobilized ethnic politics in Southeast Asia
  - Moro rebellion in the Philippines
  - The Patani rebellion in Thailand
  - The Acehnese and Papuan rebellions in Indonesia
  - The Hmong insurgency in the Laos
Islam as a political issue in Southeast Asia

Muslim community in Southeast Asia
- Half of the population: about 231 million
  - Muslim dominated countries: Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei
  - Localized Muslim communities in Myanmar, Thailand, and the Philippines
- Islamic beliefs often blended with pre-existing Hindu, Buddhist and folk practices

Islam in domestic and foreign policy-making
- Indonesia
  - Political Islam has long been oppressed and marginalized in Indonesia
  - Since late 1980s, Muslims gained some recognition under Suharto
  - Islam was of secondary importance to Indonesian foreign policy
Islam as a political issue in Southeast Asia

- Islam in domestic and foreign policy-making (cont'd.)
  - Malaysia
    - The identity of dominant Malay community closely linked to Islam
    - After the 1969 riots, Muslim-favoured policies were implemented
    - Mahathir adopted pro-Islam policy agenda in 1980s
    - OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conferences) as a key diplomatic platform
  - Islam separatists in Southeast Asia
    - Thai Muslim, Moros in the Philippines, Aceh in Indonesia,
    - The Muslim-Buddhist clash in Myanmar: Rohingya refugees

- The influences of international factors
  - The *mujahidin* war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan
  - The terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York
  - Increasing pressures on Islamic radicalization
Separatist movements in Southeast Asia
Moros in the Philippines

- The Muslim minority in the Philippines
  - Concentrated in the south, 4.5 million (5% of total population)
  - Collectively called ‘Moro’ since the Spanish colonialism
  - Consisting of 10 ethnic-linguistic groups

- Separatist movements
  - Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)
  - Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)
  - Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)

- The struggles for recognition
  - MNLF revolted against Marcos in 1973
  - Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) offered autonomy in 1996, but failed…
  - MILF-Philippines ceasefire in 2001, 2003 → fragile
Separatist movements in Southeast Asia
Pattani in Thailand

- The Pattani Muslims
  - Part of the old Pattani Sultanate, which once paid tribute to the King of Siam, was annexed into Thailand in 1902
  - The locals are Thai Malay Muslims

- Major rebel groups
  - PULO, BRN-C, GMIP
  - United Front for Independent Pattani (Bersatu)

- Main contentions
  - 2004 raid on an Thai army barracks
  - Thaksin government poured troops into the region
  - Possible mediation by Malaysia
Separatist movements in Southeast Asia
Aceh and Papua in Indonesia

- Aceh and GAM (Free Aceh Movement)
  - The local people resented the exploitation of Aceh’s oil and natural gas resources $\rightarrow$ demand self-determination
  - After Suharto, laws on decentralization and various negotiation gradually eased the tension
  - The 2005 agreement: self-government and great autonomy
Separatist movements in Southeast Asia
Aceh and Papua in Indonesia

- The history of Papua
  - European imperialism partitioned the island of New Guinea between the west (the Netherlands) and the east (Germany)
  - After WWII, the east gained independence while the west was forced to integrate into Indonesia

- The OPM (Free Papua Movement)
  - Religious, racial and cultural differences
  - Economic and social marginalisation
  - Independence rally in 1999
  - New waves of protests in 2008
Terrorism in Southeast Asia
Jema’ah Islamiyyah (JI)

- The development of JI in Southeast Asia
- The failed Darul Islam revolt in the 1950s
  - Islamic boarding school (*pesantran*) under Abu Bakar Ba’asjir
  - JI was established in Malaysia in mid-1990s
  - Former Southeast Asian *mujahideen*: the al-Qaeda link

- The terrorist activities of JI
  - Christmas Eve bombings in 2000
  - Bali Bombings in 2002
  - Bomb attacks in 2003, 2004, 2005
  - Total death toll: about 300

- JI has been weakened; today, it is more a source of radical inspiration than a capable terrorist organization
  - Abu Bakar Ba’asjir was sentenced to 15 years in prison in 2011
Terrorism in Southeast Asia

Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)

- ASG as a radicalized separatist movement
  - The smallest and most violent Muslim insurgent groups in the Southern Philippines
  - Links with JI and al-Qaeda
  - Also penetrating the extremist wings of MNLF and MILF

- ASG’s terrorist activities
  - 1991 killing two American evangelists
  - Sinking Super-ferry 14 in Manila Bay in 2004
  - Kidnapping and killing foreigners and Filipinos

- Possible radicalization of the separatist movement in Southern Thailand
Questions and Discussions

- Why did Southeast Asian countries face a wide range of domestic security problems?

- What are the roles of religious beliefs in the separatist movement in Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia?

- How did the radicalization of Islam occur in Indonesia and the Philippines?