T Tom Roberts · J Jamini Roy · U U Ba Nyan · L Lim Cheng Hoe · C Chuah Thean Teng · A Awang Sitai

To find out more about these artists, refer to "Six Artists' Lives and Legacies."

EVENTS OF EMPIRE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

1577

Sir Francis Drake is the first Englishman to make contact with the Spice Islands during his circumnavigation of the globe.

1580

1591

Sir James Lancaster and George Raymond embark upon a voyage to the East Indies with the approval of Queen Elizabeth I. Lancaster reaches Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula but is marooned on his way home, eventually returning to England in 1594. Raymond and his ship are lost at sea.

1600

Queen Elizabeth I grants a royal charter to the newly founded **East India Company** (EIC) to pursue trade in the East Indies. The Dutch Vereenidge Oost-Indische Compagnie, or United East India Company, is founded in 1602. When the EIC reaches Maluku two years later, years of intense rivalry and conflict with the Dutch for control of the spice trade begin. The French East India Company, founded in 1664, also battles with the EIC for influence in the Indian subcontinent.

1716

Mughal emperor Farrukhsiyar establishes a decree giving the EIC rights to **duty-free trade** in India. The EIC had earlier set up factories there and been trading since the early 1600s.

1757

The EIC defeats Siraj-ud-daula, the ruling Nawab of Bengal, and his French allies at the **Battle of Plassey**. Puppet rulers are installed in Bengal by the EIC, making Siraj-ud-daula the last independent Nawab of Bengal. Earlier, the EIC recaptured Calcutta, which had been forcefully taken by Siraj-ud-daula in 1756, and stormed the French trading post at Chandernagore near Calcutta.

1764

The EIC defeats allied Mughal, Bengal and Oudh forces at the **Battle of Buxar**. The Mughal emperor later grants the EIC rights to collect revenue in Bengal.

1767

1769

In the **First Anglo-Mysore War,** Mysorean forces defeat the combined armies of the EIC, the Marathas and the Nizam of Hyderabad.

1770

James Cook, an English naval lieutenant, sails and maps the eastern coast of Australia during his first expedition to the Pacific. He names it **New South Wales** and claims possession in the name of King George III.

1773

The EIC's administration of Madras and Bombay becomes subordinate to Calcutta, the capital of British India. Warren Hastings, a British colonial administrator, becomes the first **Governor-General of India** in 1774.

1774

1775

1780

1782

In the **First Anglo-Maratha War** against the Maratha Empire, the British fail to retain any significant territorial gains in the Indian subcontinent.

The EIC's forces are defeated in the **Second Anglo-Mysore War**.

With the loss of its Thirteen Colonies in North America as a result of the **War of American Independence**, Britain needs a new place to transport its convicts. Botany Bay in New South Wales is chosen.

1783

1784

1786

In exchange for British military assistance against Siam, the Sultan of Kedah cedes the island of **Penang** in the Malay Peninsula to the EIC. The British establish Penang as a trading port and naval base.

1788

The **First Fleet** arrives at Botany Bay in New South Wales from England on 18 January 1788 and reaches Port Jackson eight days later. Arthur Phillip, commander of the expedition, assumes government and takes formal possession of the new colony. The Second Fleet arrives in 1790 and the Third, the year after. Most of the convicts who arrive during these early years are English.

1790

1792

The **Third Anglo-Mysore War** erupts when the kingdom of Mysore invades Travancore, a British ally at the southern tip of the Indian subcontinent. The Mysorean troops are heavily outnumbered and their ruler, Tipu Sultan, has to surrender half of his territories to the EIC and its allies. Humiliated by his defeat, Tipu strengthens his alliance with France.

1799

During the **Fourth Anglo-Mysore War,** the EIC and its allies storm Srirangapatnam, the capital of Mysore, killing Tipu and ending Mysore's resistance to the expansion of the EIC's influence in the subcontinent.

1800

1802

Matthew Flinders of the Royal Navy encounters a French expedition group on the south coast of Australia during his circumnavigation of the continent. In response, Captain Philip Gidley King, Governor of New South Wales, sends a party of British officers from Sydney to occupy **Van Diemen's Land**, later renamed Tasmania in 1856.

Pemulwuy, an Aboriginal man from the Eora nation at Botany Bay, mounts a sustained resistance against British invasion and settlement. He is shot down in 1802.

1803

During the **Castle Hill Rebellion**, Irish convicts in Sydney attempt to challenge penal rule and seize power from British colonial authority.

1804

1805

The British are victorious in the **Second Anglo-Maratha War**, gaining control over northern and central India and expanding their frontiers.

1809

The **Treaty of Amritsar** formalises the Satlej, a river in Panjab, as the Anglo-Sikh frontier. Sikh leader Ranjit Singh establishes friendly relations with the British and secures their recognition of his sovereignty.

1811

The British attack and take possession of **Java**; Sir Stamford Raffles is installed as the Lieutenant-Governor. Despite Raffles' objections, Java is handed back to the Dutch in 1816.

1815

1817

Britain is at war with France, which is under the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte. After the French emperor is defeated at the **Battle of Waterloo** in 1815, Britain seeks to create a self-sustaining economy instead of continuing to protect its trade monopolies through high military expenditure.

1818

1819

In the **Third Anglo-Maratha War**, British victory brings an end to the Maratha Empire. This leaves the EIC with control over almost the entirety of India, including the princely states which were ruled indirectly through local chiefs.

1824

1826

The **Straits Settlements**, comprising of Penang, Malacca and Singapore, is formed, further consolidating Britain's position in the Malay Peninsula. The cultivation and trade of cash crops such as gambier, nutmeg, sugar and pepper generate considerable revenue for the Straits Settlements in the 1800s.

The EIC declares war against the Burmese Konbaung kingdom in 1824. The **First Anglo-Burmese War** ends in 1826 with the signing of the Treaty of Yandabo, which gives the British the territories of Assam, Manipur, Arakan and Tenasserim. The Burmese have to make a large indemnity payment.

1828

1832

The **Black War**, a period of violent conflict and hostilities between Aboriginal Australians and white colonists on Van Diemen's Land, is ongoing. The governor declares **martial law** in November 1828.

1835

With the enactment of the **English Education Act**, English becomes the language of government administration and educational instruction in British India.

1836

The **British and Foreign Aborigines' Protection Society** is established in London by evangelical Christians. Two years later, a branch in Sydney is established.

1838

As a result of the **Myall Creek massacre** in New South Wales, seven white settlers are convicted and executed for murdering indigenous people, causing outrage among many British colonisers.

1842

The Sultan of Brunei awards **Sarawak** to James Brooke, an English adventurer, for helping quell a local rebellion.

1850

Gold is discovered in Australia; the gold rushes transform the Australian colonies. The 1850s, for instance, see the first railways being built, the first telegraphs beginning to operate and the colony of Victoria contributing more than a third of the world's gold output.

1851

The ***Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations*** is held in London. The very first world's fair, it is a celebration of the diversity and richness of the British Empire.

1852

During the **Second Anglo-Burmese War**, British forces annex Lower Burma which comprises territories such as Rangoon, Bassein, Martaban and Pegu.

1853

The **transportation of convicts** to Van Diemen's Land ends.

1854

The **Eureka Rebellion** against British colonial authority occurs on the outskirts of Ballarat, a gold mining town in Victoria.

1856 (T)

The **Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act** is enacted in India by British authorities. This opposes the established Hindu practice of disallowing widows to remarry.

Tom Roberts is born.

1857

1858

Known as the **First War of Indian Independence** to the Indians and the **Indian Mutiny** to the British, the rebellion by Indian soldiers from the EIC's Bengal army, which begins in Meerut and spreads to other parts of India, brings an end to Company rule. India consequently comes under the rule of the **British Crown**.

1859

The **Victorian Board of Protection** is established. It seeks to protect and confine the Aboriginal peoples.

1874 (T)

The Malay States of **Perak**, **Selangor** and **Sungai Ujong** are brought under British control, and the residential system of government is installed and subsequently resisted by the Malays. Perak's first Resident, James W.W. Birch, is assassinated the year after. This system of government is extended to the rest of **Negeri Sembilan** in 1887 and **Pahang** in 1888, where it encounters similar bouts of resistance.

1877

Rubber is first introduced to Malaya when the Singapore Botanic Gardens receives and cultivates seedlings from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England. It later becomes one of Malaya's key exports. In that same year, the British establish the **Chinese Protectorate** in the Straits Settlements.

1881 (T)

The **British North Borneo Company** is incorporated and administers North Borneo (now Sabah).

1884

The **Imperial Federation League** is founded in London as part of the movement that promotes a consolidation of the Empire.

1885 (T)

The first **Indian National Congress** (INC) convenes in Bombay to call for greater Indian involvement in administration and decision-making.

1886 (T)

Upper Burma is annexed by the British and King Thibaw is exiled to India as a result of the **Third Anglo-Burmese War**. Burma becomes a province of British India.

1887 (J)

Queen Victoria's **Golden Jubilee** is celebrated. The First **Colonial Conference** is held in London.

Jamini Roy is born.

1888 (T)

Brunei, **Sarawak** and **North Borneo** are proclaimed as British protectorates.

1890

By 1890, all six colonies in Australia achieve **self-government**. Britain retains control over external affairs.

1892 (T)

Enacted by the British parliament due to the INC's demands, the **Indian Councils Act of 1892** implements an increase in the size of Legislative Councils in British India, ensuring more Indian representation at the constitutional level.

1896

Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang are brought together to form the **Federated Malay States**, with **Frank Swettenham** appointed its first Resident-General.

1897 (U)

Queen Victoria's **Diamond Jubilee** is celebrated.

The **Legislative Council of Burma** is established. All legislative matters are, however, subject to veto by the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma, the Governor-General of India and the Secretary of State of India.

U Ba Nyan is born.

1901 (T)

The **Commonwealth of Australia** is formed with the federation of the six British colonies: New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia. As part of the **White Australia Policy**, the new government passes the **Immigration Restriction Act**, to keep out non-European immigrants, and the **Pacific Island Labourers Act**, to facilitate the mass deportation of Pacific Islanders, many of whom are working on sugar plantations in Queensland.

Edward VII ascends the British throne after Queen Victoria's death. The **Delhi Durbar** is held in India in 1903 to celebrate his coronation and proclaim him as Emperor of India.

1904

1905

The **Malay College** is established in Perak; it follows the English public school system. The sons of Malay aristocrats attend this school in preparation for becoming administrative leaders.

The **Partition of Bengal**, which divides Bengal into Hindu and Muslim provinces for ease of administration, sparks the first nationwide protest movement in India. The ***swadeshi*** movement involves the boycott of British products in favour of "home-produced" goods. Its principle of self-reliance is later extended to, for instance, educational reform and labour organisation. The Partition is reversed in 1911.

Japan's victory in the **Russo-Japanese War** debunks the myth of Western invincibility. While this triumph stirs the imagination of revolutionary leaders in colonies across Asia, it confirms Australia's suspicions of a rising Asian threat. This leads the Australian prime minister to invite the American **"Great White Fleet"** to visit Australia.

1906 (J)

Modelled after the Young Men's Christian Association founded in London, the **Young Men's Buddhist Association** (YMBA) is formed by Western-educated Burmese students who seek to forge new identities whilst preserving Burmese cultural forms.

1907

At a colonial conference in London, **"dominion"** is adopted as the new designation for self-governing British colonies. Henceforth, such gatherings are known as imperial conferences.

1909

With the signing of the **Bangkok Treaty**, the Siamese kingdom transfers control of the northern Malay states of **Kedah**, **Kelantan**, **Perlis** and **Terengganu** to the British. Together with **Johor**, these territories are referred to as the **Unfederated Malay States** in the early 1900s.

The **Indian Councils Act of 1909** allows for even greater Indian representation in the Legislative Councils, but hinders the development of Hindu-Muslim unity by separating Hindu and Muslim electorates.

1911

The **Delhi Durbar** is held in India to celebrate the coronation of **George V**.

1912 (U L C)

Lim Cheng Hoe is born.
Chuah Thean Teng is born.

1913

Rubber plantations in Malaya occupy 322,000 hectares of land—triple the size occupied in 1908.

1914

During **World War I**, the British Empire fights as one of the Allied Powers against the Central Powers. In addition to their deployment at the Western Front, soldiers from India, Australia and New Zealand are mobilised at the Middle Eastern and Mediterranean theatres of war. The Australian prime minister declares that "all our resources are in the Empire and for the Empire." Despite their defeat at Gallipoli, the **Australian and New Zealand Army Corps** become an enduring legend of valour and sacrifice. The world demand for **tin** decreases during and after the War, causing the economy of British Malaya to suffer. The rice industry in Lower Burma also suffers, whereas farmers in Upper Burma adapt to shifting wartime demands by producing other crops such as cotton, pepper and tobacco.

1916 (J)

The **All-India Muslim League** (AIML), led by **Muhammad Ali Jinnah** who would later play a major role in the founding of Pakistan, make the **Lucknow Pact** with the INC. This agreement establishes friendly relations and collaboration between the Hindu and Muslim communities with regard to the struggle for self-government.

1917

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi leads his first *satyagraha* (truth-force), opposing British colonial rule in a non-violent non-cooperation movement. The epithet "*mahatma*" (great soul) is first used by Rabindranath Tagore to describe Gandhi.

Emperor Nicholas II of Russia is overthrown and the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Lenin, come into power as a result of the **Russian Revolution**. The **Union of Soviet Socialist Republics** (USSR) is later established in 1922.

1918

1919 (T J L)

The **Montagu-Chelmsford reforms** promise "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire". The **Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act** is enacted to supress protestors who felt that the reforms did not satisfy their political demands; the protestors were eventually killed in the **Amritsar Massacre**. This tragedy further galvanises leaders like Gandhi and incites the masses to agitate for national reform and civil rights.

The **Government of India Act of 1919** is passed in the British parliament. It allows for the implementation of the **dyarchy** in India which grants certain executive powers to Indians, thereby expanding their participation in government. This system is only extended to British Burma in 1923.

1920 (J U)

The **Communist Party of Australia** (CPA) is formed.

Recognising the importance of Hindu-Muslim collaboration in the struggle for independence, Gandhi and Indian Muslims start the **Khilafat movement** of non-cooperation, pressuring the British government to preserve the authority of the Ottoman sultan as the Caliph of Islam after World War I causes the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Gandhi sees it as an opportunity to rally Muslim support for the nationalist cause. He also promises ***swaraj*** (self-rule or self-reliance) within one year, but fails to deliver on this promise.

The **General Council of Burmese Associations** (GCBA) succeeds YMBA and pushes for political reform. Education becomes a political issue when students protest against the new **University Act** which tightens entry requirements to Rangoon University, feeling this policy is designed to benefit only the elite.

1922

The **General Council of Sangha Sammeggi** is formed by a group of monks in Burma. They tour the countryside to raise awareness of and communicate political ideas and issues to the rural communities.

1924 (J U)

The ***British Empire Exhibition*** opens at Wembley in London. Aimed at fostering greater post-war economic cooperation and imperial unity, this massive exhibition includes national pavilions and the display of natural resources and agricultural products from the different dominions and colonies.

1925 (U)

Perceived as a subversive movement with communist elements, Malayan branches of the **Guomindang** (Chinese Nationalist Party) are outlawed by British authorities.

1926 (U)

The **Empire Marketing Board** is established to promote the trade and sale of goods grown and made in the Empire within the Empire itself. The **Balfour Declaration of 1926** is made at the Imperial Conference in London, defining the United Kingdom and its dominions as autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status to each other in all matters of domestic and external affairs, and united by a common allegiance to the Crown and as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

1928 (L)

Through the **Simon Commission**, which had no Indian representatives, assessments of the Indian constitutional situation and proposals for more reforms are made. Led by **Jawaharlal Nehru** who would later become India's first prime minister, the INC boycotts the Commission and demands ***purna swaraj*** (complete self-rule or independence) from the British Empire.

1929 (J)

The crash of the US stock market brings about the **Great Depression** of the 1930s which has worldwide consequences. In Australia, the **Unemployed Workers Movement** formed by the CPA organises demonstrations and marches, asking the government to better conditions and provide jobs. This turbulent decade also witnesses Burmese violence against the local Chinese and Indian communities, and massive labour strikes organised by the **Malayan Communist Party** (MCP) which is founded in 1930.

1930 (U L)

Gandhi leads a month-long **salt march** from Ahmadabad to the Gujarat coast as part of the **Civil Disobedience Movement,** opposing the heavy salt tax and British monopoly over the local salt industry and instigating other non-violent marches and protests across India. Nearly 60,000 people, including Gandhi and INC leaders, are arrested. With the signing of the **Gandhi-Irwin Pact** in 1931, the detainees are released and concessions are made, including permission for Indians to collect and manufacture salt by the coast. This movement is revived in 1932 but fails to regain its full momentum.

Saya San, a member of the GCBA, organises a peasant rebellion in several districts throughout Burma. This involves attacks against district officers and village headmen who are deemed British collaborators, and the destruction of symbols of the colonial state such as railways and government buildings. He is executed in November 1931.

A group of student activists form **Dobama Asiayone** (We Burmans Society). They call themselves *thakins* (lords or masters), a term previously reserved for British rulers. Among this group are Thakin Aung San, who would later become a national hero for his important role in the nationalist struggle, and Thakin Nu, who would later become the first prime minister of an independent Burma. The *thakins* raise a **Burma Independence Army** (BIA) with Japanese aid. The BIA is later re-organised as the **Burma National Army** (BNA) during World War II.

1931 (T J)

Passed by the British parliament, the **Statute of Westminster** gives legal recognition to the independence of the dominions. While the statute is swiftly passed by the parliaments of Canada, South Africa and the Irish Free State, Australia and New Zealand only adopt and enact it in 1942 and 1947 respectively.

1935

The **Government of India Act of 1935** gives provincial autonomy through the introduction of direct elections and the abolishment of dyarchy; Nehru deems it "a new charter of slavery" since *purna swaraj* is still withheld. Provincial elections are held in 1937; the INC forms the government in seven out of eleven provinces while the AIML fails to form any. Burma also moves closer towards self-government with the enactment of the **Government of Burma Act of 1935** that separates it from India, implements a parliamentary system and allows for the creation of political parties. Dr Ba Maw becomes the first indigenous premier. Strongly anti-British, he is later jailed and charged with sedition for refusing to support Great Britain in World War II.

1936 (U L)

Edward VIII ascends the British throne in January and abdicates in December. His brother, **George VI**, becomes king.

1937

After Nehru's visit to Malaya where he speaks about the need for trade unions, the **Central Indian Association of Malaya** (CIAM) is formed by English-educated Indian intelligentsia who are increasingly conscious of British discriminatory policies that favour Malays in government posts and education. Aiming to boost the wages of Indians already working in Malaya, the CIAM successfully appeal to the Indian government to ban the migration of assisted labourers to Malaya in 1938.

1938 (C)

The **Aborigines' Progressive Association** observes a **Day of Mourning** during the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the British occupation of Australia, which re-enacts the arrival of the First Fleet.

1939

INC ministries resign from provincial governments as a result of strong objections to the British declaration, without prior consultation with Indians, that India is at war with Germany. This is celebrated by the AIML who had been anxious about Hindu dominance at the constitutional level. In 1940, the AIML adopts the **Pakistan Resolution** which intends to secure Muslim rights and political autonomy, and create a separate homeland for Muslims in British India based on shared aspirations, identity and history.

1942 (J L)

In exchange for Indian loyalty to the British cause during World War II, the **Cripps Mission** promises the nationalists dominion status for India as well as post-war elections. This mission fails as the nationalists reject the proposals. Later this year, Gandhi launches the **Quit India Movement** which, through civil disobedience, refuses to cooperate with Britain's war effort and demands British withdrawal from India.

1945 (U)

The **United Nations** is formed to promote international cooperation. A multiracial organisation which forms immediately after the War, the **Malayan Democratic Union** calls for a self-governing, united Malaya that includes Singapore.

After the British reoccupy Burma in May, the AFO is reorganised into a political front called the **Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League** (AFPFL), with Aung San as its president. Resisting the White Paper which unveils British plans to impose a three-year period of direct rule, the AFPFL tours inland, campaigning for independence.

The **Simla Conference** fails when talks of Indian self-government are stalled by Jinnah's insistence that all Muslim representatives in the Executive Council must be nominated by the AIML.

During **World War II**, the British Empire fights alongside the Allies against the Axis powers. The MCP denounces British imperialism after war breaks out in Europe and threatens the British government with labour strikes again, while the CIAM organises a series of strikes in the Klang rubber estates. The **fall of Singapore** on 15 February 1942 is a disaster for British defence strategy in the Far East. The Australians, who expected Britain to defend the naval base at Singapore, feel betrayed as their national security depends upon this strategy. They later look to the United States for protection, placing their forces under American command. The surrender of Malaya and Singapore also facilitates the Japanese capture of Burma and their advancement towards India. Apart from professing their vision of an "Asia for Asians," the Japanese also declare themselves liberators of those oppressed by Western colonialism. The **Indian Independence League** and **Indian National Army** seek to end British rule and secure independence by collaborating with the Japanese. Conversely, there are anti-Japanese movements such as the raids conducted by the **Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army** with the support of **Force 136**, a British covert unit. In Burma, Aung San forms the **Anti-Fascist Organisation** (AFO) with other Burmese nationalist forces, despite being the leader of the Japanese-sponsored BNA. The AFO secretly communicates with Force 136 and offers assistance to the Allies.

1946 (J C)

In January, a White Paper describes the plans for a **Malayan Union** (MU) consisting of Penang, Malacca and the nine Malay states, and the creation of a common citizenship. Since this scheme involves transferring Malay sovereignty to the British Crown and the political empowerment of non-Malays, it faces immediate and strong opposition from the newly established **United Malays National Organisation** (UMNO) led by Dato Onn Jaafar. The MU is nonetheless inaugurated in April. The **Malayan Indian Congress** (MIC) is established in August to safeguard Indian interests in light of Malay mobilisation.

British prime minister Winston Churchill announces that "[f]rom Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an **iron curtain** has descended across the Continent." With Great Britain's diminished status as a superpower due to economic devastation caused by the War, the United States and USSR emerge as post-war **superpowers**, dividing the world into two blocs. This period of tension between the blocs is known as the **Cold War**; it ends in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Sarawak and **North Borneo** become Crown colonies.

1947 (L C)

In January, a delegation of AFPFL members and British prime minister Clement Attlee meet in London for talks regarding Burmese independence. In February, Aung San makes the **Panglong Agreement** with leaders of the Shan, Kachin and Chin minority groups, which ensures their interests are represented in the Executive Council. The AFPFL wins almost all the seats in the April **general election** and the new government drafts a new constitution, calling for independence outside of the Commonwealth. Aung San and five Executive Council members are assassinated in July.

Attlee declares in February that British rule in India will end by June 1948. **Lord Louis Mountbatten**, who becomes the Viceroy of India in March 1947, opts for a quick transfer of power instead, bringing forward the deadline to 15 August 1947. Mountbatten also concedes to the AIML's demands for a separate state, leading to the creation of India and Pakistan as two successor states.

Pakistan and **India** win independence on 14 and 15 August respectively. The British also relinquish control over the princely states which are then given the choice of either joining India or Pakistan, or remaining outside them. In October, the **First Indo-Pakistani War** erupts over the princely state of **Jammu and Kashmir**. The state ultimately accedes to India.

1948

Strongly opposed to the division of the subcontinent into a Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan, Gandhi travels to promote cooperation between religious communities. In January, he is assassinated by a Hindu fanatic.

Burma achieves independence on 4 January.

The **Federation of Malaya** is inaugurated in January, displacing the Malayan Union. A few months later, a state of emergency is declared when the MCP lead an armed insurgency attacking plantations and mines and demanding national liberation. The **Malayan Emergency** ends in 1960 when the communists are defeated.

1949 (A)

The **Malayan Chinese Association** (MCA) is formed with the support of the British colonial administration in a bid to establish a non-Communist base within the Chinese community.

Awang Sitai is born.

1951

Dato Onn Jaafar resigns from UMNO and founds the **Independence of Malaya Party**, a non-communal organisation. He proposes that UMNO should be more inclusive by admitting non-Malays. This proposal is rejected by the Malays but supported by the British Commissioner-General of Southeast Asia, Malcolm MacDonald, who advocates intercommunal bonding among elites.

The **ANZUS Treaty** is signed by Australia, New Zealand and the United States to protect the security of the Pacific.

1952

George VI dies and **Elizabeth II** assumes the British throne. She is crowned the year after and embarks on a Royal Tour which includes stops at Australia and New Zealand.

1953 (J C)

Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin III declares his intention to establish a Bruneian constitution.

1954 (L)

Australia joins the **Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation** in the aftermath of French defeat by Vietnamese communist forces at the Battle of Điện Biên Phủ.

1955 (J C)

The **Alliance Party**, a coalition comprising of UMNO, the MIC and MCA, wins all but one seat in the Malayan **general election**. Its leader, Tunku Abdul Rahman, signals for an acceleration of pace towards Malayan independence. Later this year he meets with the MCP leader, Chin Peng, in Baling, Kedah, in an unsuccessful attempt to resolve the Malayan Emergency.

Singapore is granted limited self-government with David Marshall, leader of the **Labour Front**, as its Chief Minister. In the following year Marshall fails to negotiate for complete self-rule as Britain is concerned about Singapore's compromised internal security due to Communist-instigated unrest and strikes.

Organised by Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan, the **Bandung Conference** is convened in Indonesia among African and Asian states, aimed at promoting economic and cultural cooperation.

1957 (J C)

Reassured by the size of the Alliance Party's mandate and its leaders' anti-Communist stance, the British grant **Malaya** independence on 31 August.

1959 (C)

The residential system of government ends when Brunei is granted internal self-government.

Reassured by Lim Yew Hock's tough stance against the Communists, Britain grants Singapore complete self-government. Lim had replaced Marshall as the Chief Minister in 1956. Led by Lee Kuan Yew, the anti-colonial **People's Action Party** (PAP) achieves a landslide victory in the general election.

1960 (C)

During his speech to the South African parliament, British prime minister Harold Macmillan announces: "The **wind of change** is blowing through [Africa], and whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact."

1961 (L C)

The PAP lose the April and July by-elections in Singapore. Left-wing dissidents of the party establish the **Barisan Sosialis** (Socialist Front) and campaign against the proposed formation of the Federation of Malaysia, comprising Malaya, Singapore, Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak.

The **Non-Aligned Movement** is formed in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, at the First Conference of the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries which include Burma, India, Indonesia, Somalia and Tunisia. It is convened to discuss how peace can be achieved as the world transitions from an old order to a new one. The elimination of "the domination of colonialism-imperialism and neo-colonialism in all their manifestations" is declared to be a means of achieving peaceful co-existence.

1962

In the aftermath of the **December revolt** by local rebels who oppose the creation of Malaysia, Sultan Omar decides that Brunei should remain under British protection rather than join Malaysia.

With the amendment of the **Commonwealth Electoral Act**, indigenous Australians are given the right to vote.

1963 (C)

1965 (C)

1966 (L C)

Malaysia is established on 16 September 1963. Indonesia denounces Malaysia as a neo-colonial plot and embarks on **Konfrontasi**, a policy of confrontation which involves violent incursions and attacks, and ends in 1966. The Philippines also opposes the formation, laying claim over the territory of North Borneo.

Singapore leaves Malaysia in August and becomes a sovereign state. This separation is largely a result of communal tensions which had culminated in a series of **racial riots** in the preceding year.

The **Second Indo-Pakistani War** over Jammu and Kashmir occurs.

1969 (L)

Racial riots between the Chinese and Malay break out on **13 May** in Malaysia. A state of national emergency is declared and parliament is suspended until 1971. Efforts at fostering unity among the different races and creating a single, unifying national identity bring about the introduction of the Rukun Negara, the New Economic Policy and the National Cultural Policy by 1971.

1971 (A)

The **Third Indo-Pakistani War** takes place during the **Bangladesh Liberation War** which brings about the secession of East Pakistan and the subsequent creation of a new state, Bangladesh. India supports the Bengali nationalists of East Pakistan.

Brunei ceases to be a British protected state and gains control over its internal security, but Britain continues to oversee matters related to its defence and foreign relations.

1972 (J)

Gough Whitlam becomes the Australian prime minister. Under his government, Australia establishes diplomatic ties with China, grants independence to Papua New Guinea, which it had possessed since the early 1900s, and abandons assimilation, a policy officially adopted by the Commonwealth government in the 1950s, in recognition of cultural diversity. In 1975 he is dismissed by **Sir John Kerr**, Governor-General of Australia, as a result of a constitutional crisis.

1984

The last of Britain's territories in Southeast Asia, **Brunei**, becomes a fully independent, sovereign state on 1 January.