

## Summary: Vietnam Today

### A History of Struggle

China ruled Vietnam until 939 A.D. Then China invaded again in 1407, but the Vietnamese were able to force them out. In the 1500s and 1600s, Vietnam experienced civil wars.

In 1858, France invaded Vietnam. The French took natural resources out of Vietnam. They exported French goods to Vietnam and charged high prices. China's Ho Chi Minh, who studied Communism in China and the Soviet Union, was a leader in Vietnam's independence movement. He received support from China's Communist government. The United States, worried that Communism would spread to Vietnam, helped the French.

In 1954, Vietnam was divided into Communist North Vietnam and U.S.-supported South Vietnam. Soon the Vietminh tried to unite Vietnam as a Communist nation. The U.S. gave military support to South Vietnam and bombed North Vietnam. By 1973, opposition to the war by U.S. citizens led to a withdrawal of American troops. North Vietnam overwhelmed South Vietnam. The war ended in 1975. The country reunited in 1976 as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

### Vietnam Today

Vietnam is now a Communist nation and the government owns and runs industries and services. After the Vietnam War, in an effort to improve the economy, the government restricted trade with other nations.

In 1986, the government began a policy called *doi moi*, or "change for the new." Individuals gained more control of some industries. The state owned land, but farmers decided how to work it. Businesses controlled prices, which rose and fell according to supply and demand. A big boost to the Vietnam economy was when Vietnam opened trade with the rest of the world. In 1994, the United States and Vietnam reopened diplomatic relations and trade.

In large cities, people live in crowded apartment buildings. In the country, they live in stone houses in the north and in bamboo and wood houses in the south. Along the Mekong River, people live in houseboats or in houses built on stilts to be safe from floods. In the mountains, people live in longhouses, which hold 30 to 40 people.

### Before You Read

Find and circle the vocabulary word.

**supply and demand** *noun*, when the price of a good rises or falls depending on how many people want it (demand) and how much of that good is available (supply)

### After You Read

**REVIEW** Why did the Vietnamese want to be independent from France? Underline the sentences that tell why the Vietnamese wanted to be independent from France.

**REVIEW** Why might it have taken so long for diplomatic relations between Vietnam and the United States to be reopened? Highlight the sentences that would help you answer the question.