

OFFICIAL NAME: People's Republic of China

CAPITAL: Beijing (Peking)

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Single Party Socialist Republic

AREA: 9,596,961 Sq Km (3,705,408 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 1,275,631,000



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY: China is located in Central and East Asia. It is bound by Mongolia, Russia and Kazakhstan to the north, North Korea, the Yellow Sea and the East China Sea to the east, the South China Sea, the Gulf of Tonkin, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, India, Bhutan and Nepal to the south as well as India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to the west. Over 66% of China is upland hill, mountains and plateaux while the highest mountains and plateaux are found to the west. To the north and east of the Tibetan Plateau the land decreases to the desert or semidesert areas of Sinkiang and Inner Mongolia. To the northeast the broad fertile Manchurian Plains are separated from North Korea by the densely forested uplands of Changpai Shan. East of the Tibetan Plateau and south of Inner Mongolia is the Sichuan Basin which is drained by the Yangtze River that flows east across the southern plains to the East China Sea. The southern plains along the east coast of China have rich, fertile soils and are protected from the north winds. Both Hong Kong and Macau are enclosed on the southeast coast. Major Cities (pop. est.); Shanghai 7,496,500, Beijing 5,769,600, Tientsen 4,574,700, Shen-yang 3,603,700, Wu-han 3,284,200, Canton 2,914,300, Harbin 2,443,400 (1990). Land Use; forested 14%, pastures 43%, agricultural-cultivated 10%, other 33% (1992).

CLIMATE: China has a varied climate that can be divided into seven climatic zones. (1.) North East China which has cold winters that are influenced by strong northerly continental winds while summers are warm and humid with unreliable rainfall. (2.) Central China which has warm humid summers with the coastal regions occasionally subject to cyclones and typhoons. (3.) South China where summers are hot and humid with heavy rainfalls between April to September. (4.) South West China which is mountainous with the summer temperatures moderated by altitude, while the wet winters are mild with little rain. (5.) The Tibetan region which is a high plateau where winters are severe with frequent light snow and frost, while summers are warm during the day but drop to extremes at night. Rainfall is also heaviest in summer. (6.) The western interior zone which has an arid desert climate with cold winters and rainfall is distributed evenly throughout the year. (7.) Inner Mongolia which comprises the mountain ranges and semi-desert lowlands has an extreme continental climate with cold winters and warm summers. Rainfall is vast while strong winds in winter and spring make the temperatures even colder. Average temperature ranges in Shanghai are from 1 to 8 degrees Celsius (34 to 36 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 23 to 32 degrees Celsius (73 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit) in July or August.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Han Chinese who account for 92% of the population. The remaining 8% include Chuang, Hui, Uigur, Yi, Miao, Mangchu, Tibetans, Mongols, Ruyi and Koreans. Also other numerous lesser nationalities account for 67 Million, of which there are 55 ethnic groups.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 120 persons per sq km (311 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 26.2% urban, 73.8% rural (1990). Sex Distribution; 51.6% male, 48.4% female (1990). Life Expectancy at Birth; 68.4 years male, 71.4 years female (1989). Age Breakdown; 28% under 15, 31% 15 to 29, 20% 30 to 44, 12% 45 to 59, 7% 60 to 74, 2% 75 and over (1989). Birth Rate; 21.0 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 6.3 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; 14.7 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 32.0 per 1,000 live births (1988).

RELIGIONS: Although officially an atheist state, the most important religious beliefs include Confucianism which accounts for 20% of the population while Taoism accounts for 2%, Buddhism for 6% with around 2% of the population Muslim and 1% Christian.

LANGUAGES: The official and national language is Putonghua or Mandarin which is based on the Beijing dialect with other principal dialects including Cantonese or Yue, Shanghainese or Wu, Fuzhou, Hokkien and Hakka as well as minority languages such as Tibetan and Mongolian.

EDUCATION: Aged 25 or over and having attained: no formal schooling or incomplete primary 44.5%, complete primary 32.7%, lower secondary 16.1%, upper secondary 5.6%, higher 1.1% (1982). Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 609,283,011 or 72.6% (1982).

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: In Jan. 1949 Chinese communists took control of Beijing and established the People's Republic of China on Oct. 1, 1949. In 1950 the army entered Tibet and completed its reannexation by 1951. On Feb. 14, 1951 China signed a 30 year Treaty of Friendship with the USSR and in 1953 China began its first 5 year plan for economic development. In 1958 the Communists launched the Great Leap Forward which severely weakened China's economy and resulted in widespread famine, disease and unrest. In the 1960's the friendly relations between China and the USSR ended. In 1959 a Tibetan uprising led to the flight of the Dalai Lama and thousands of his followers to India. In 1962 Chinese troops fought a border war with India after occupying disputed territories. From 1966 to 1969 the Cultural Revolution disrupted education, government and daily life. In 1972 US President Richard Nixon visited China. In 1979 China and US established normal diplomatic relations. In 1984 the Communist Party began economic reforms. In April 1989 Chinese

students began demanding increased freedom of speech and pro democracy demonstrations took place in a number of cities as well as Tiananmen Square. The government invoked Martial Law with the demonstrators ignoring the decree while the demonstrations intensified. The Chinese leaders believed that the uprising was a dangerous mixture of turmoil and rebellion, and on June 4, 1989 troops took control of Central Beijing including Tiananmen Square by force, killing and injuring hundreds of unarmed civilians. In Jan. 1990 Martial Law was lifted and in early 1991 more than 30 people were prosecuted and imprisoned on charges of incitement and subversion. In March 1991 Jiang Zemin (Chiang Tse-min) and Lu Peng (Li P'eng) reiterated to the National People's Congress, the country's commitment to the Dengist policies of reform and opening to the outside world. In July 1991 a speech by General Secretary Jiang Zemin marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC) reiterated China's commitment to building socialism with Chinese characteristics. In the summer of 1992 massive floods in eastern and southern China inundated some 20 million ha (50 million ac) of cultivated land and claimed around 20,000 lives. A nationwide relief campaign was established and for the first time China solicited relief contributions from foreign countries. The floods further enhanced plans to proceed with water controls measures such as the controversial Three Gorges project on the upper Yangtze River. In 1992 and after the disintegration of socialism throughout Eastern Europe and the USSR, China initiated the implementation of a socialist market economy and restored diplomatic relations with Vietnam, Japan and Western Europe while relations with the US worsened. In Jan. 1992 during an inspection tour of southern China, Deng urged the acceleration of China's market-orientated economic reforms and strongly defended his policy of opening to the world while in March his announcements were officially translated in policy during the CPC's Central Committee. In 1992 the CPC continued their campaign against political dissent, with Chinese courts publicly pronouncing sentences on dozens of pro-democracy activists for various "counterrevolutionary activities" while Amnesty International and Asia Watch denounced the continued systematic abuse of political prisoners. The CPC's aversion to political liberalization was further evident when Chris Patten, Hong Kong's new governor, further democratized the colony's Legislative Council which drew harsh denunciations from CPC officials with Beijing threatening to cancel the 1984 Sino-British agreement over the transfer of sovereignty in 1997 in which the maintenance of Hong Kong's distinct way of life was guaranteed. In Aug. 1992 a mass riot erupted in Shenzhen (Shen-chen) where a million people queued to buy stocks on the booming local exchange, which resulted in police using tear gas to disperse the rioters while a fever of capitalism continued to grip everyone from corrupt high officials to ordinary workers. Also during 1992 China intensified its interactions with the rest of the world in order to accelerate its domestic economic development while it also improved its strategic and diplomatic position in Asia. In Mar. 1993 Li Peng announced to the National People's Congress (NPC) a plan to restructure the State Council by cutting government staff by 25% over a three-year period and also reducing the number of ministries and commissions from 86 to 59. In May 1993 there were demonstrations Lhasa, Tibet by thousands of anti-Chinese, pro-democracy protesters which were silenced in a show of Chinese force. In Sept. 1993 China was unsuccessful in its bid to host the 2000 Olympics principally as a result of its human rights record. In Nov. 1993 a diplomatic initiative by the new US President Bill Clinton to reverse a downward spiral in Sino-American relation resulted in the meeting with Jiang

Zemin, who was seen as the main putative successor to Deng, to discuss the continued renewal of China's most-favored-nation status which depended on an improvement of its poor human rights record. As a result, well-known political prisoners were treated as a valuable commodity to be released in carefully planned quantities throughout 1993 to satisfy the Western demands for visible progress in human rights. Also in 1993 there was jostling for political position among the central party and government officials while ongoing devolution of power from the center to the provinces as a result of China's continuing economic and social transformations. At the end of 1993 the CPC unveiled an economic reform program aimed at accelerating China into a socialist market economy without threatening the local and central CPC elite.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Yuan (Y) divided into 10 Jiao and 100 Fen.

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$581,109,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$70,024,000,000 (1993). Imports; USD \$103,950,000,000 (1993). Exports; USD \$91,763,000,000 (1993). Tourism Receipts; USD \$7,323,000,000 (1994). Balance of Trade; Y 126,800,000,000 (1994). Economically Active Population; 584,569,200 or 54.7% of total population (1987). Unemployed; 2.0% (1987).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partners are the USA, Japan, Hong Kong, Germany, Canada, Australia and Singapore.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Aluminum, Antimony, Asbestos, Bauxite, Coal, Copper, Cotton, Fish, Iron Ore, Jute and Hemp, Lead, Livestock, Manganese, Mercury, Oil and Natural Gas, Phosphate Rock, Rice, Salt, Soya Beans, Sugar Beets, Sulfur, Tea, Timber, Tin Ore, Tobacco, Uranium, Wheat, Zinc.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, Cement, Fertilizers, Iron and Steel, Light Industry, Machinery, Mining, Ornaments, Petroleum Refining, Products, Textiles, Vehicles.

MAIN EXPORTS: Chemicals, Clothing, Crude Oil, Coal, Foodstuffs, Machinery, Minerals, Petroleum Products, Textiles Yarns and Fabrics.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 66,918 km (41,581 mi) (1990), passenger-km 261,600,000,000 (162,551,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 1,059,300,000,000 (725,515,000,000 short ton-mi) (1990). Roads; length 1,014,342 km (630,283 mi) (1990). Vehicles; cars and buses 1,464,297 (1989), trucks 3,463,735 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 1,948 (1990), deadweight tonnage 20,749,954 (1990). Air Transport; passenger-km 21,800,000,000 (13,546,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 800,000,000 (547,920,000 short ton-mi) (1990).

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 74 with a total circulation of 39,597,000 (1988). Radio; receivers 206,000,000 (1994). Television; receivers 227,880,000 (1994). Telephones; units 18,888,200 (1992).

MILITARY: 2,930,000 (1994) total active duty personnel with 75.1% army, 8.9% navy and 16.0% air force while military expenditure accounts for 2.7% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).