

MONGOLIA



Country Dialing Code (Tel/Fax): ++976

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Capital: Ulaanbaatar Time: GMT + 8

Background: Long a province of China, Mongolia won its independence in 1921 with Soviet backing. A communist regime was installed in 1924. During the early 1990s, the ex-communist Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) gradually yielded its monopoly on power. In 1996, the Democratic Union Coalition (DUC) defeated the MPRP in a national election and has attempted to establish a number of reforms to modernize the economy. However, many former communists retain key posts and implementation has been difficult.

Location: Northern Asia, between China and Russia

Map References: Asia

Area: total: 1.565 million sq km land: 1.565 million sq km water: 0 sq km

Climate: desert; continental (large daily and seasonal temperature ranges)

Terrain: vast semidesert and desert plains; mountains in west and southwest; Gobi Desert in southeast

Natural Resources: oil, coal, copper, molybdenum, tungsten, phosphates, tin, nickel, zinc, wolfram, fluorspar, gold

Population: 2,650,952 (July 2000 est.)

Nationality: noun: Mongolian(s) adjective: Mongolian

Ethnic Groups: Mongol 90%, Kazakh 4%, other 6%

Religions: predominantly Tibetan Buddhist, Muslim 4%

Languages: Khalkha Mongol 90%, Turkic, Russian

Economy: Economic activity traditionally has been based on agriculture and breeding of livestock. Mongolia also has extensive mineral deposits: copper, coal, molybdenum, tin, tungsten, and gold account for a large part of industrial production. Soviet assistance, at its height one-third of GDP, disappeared almost overnight in 1990-91, at the time of the dismantlement of the USSR. Mongolia was driven into deep recession, which was prolonged by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party's (MPRP) reluctance to undertake serious economic reform. The Democratic Union Coalition (DUC) government has embraced free-market economics, easing price controls, liberalizing domestic and international trade, and attempting to restructure the banking system and the energy sector. Major domestic privatization programs have been undertaken, as well as fostering of foreign investment through international tender of the oil distribution company, a leading cashmere company, and banks. Reform has been held back by the ex-communist MPRP opposition and by the political instability brought about through four successive governments under the DUC. Economic growth picked up in 1997-99 after stalling in 1996 due to a series of natural disasters and declines in world prices of copper and cashmere. Public revenues and exports collapsed in 1998 and 1999 due to the repercussions of the Asian financial crisis. In August and September 1999, the economy suffered from a temporary Russian ban on exports of oil and oil products. Mongolia joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1997. The international donor community pledged over \$300 million per year at the last Consultative Group Meeting, held in Ulaanbaatar in June 1999.

Industries: construction materials, mining (particularly coal and copper); food and beverages, processing of animal products

Currency: 1 tugrik (Tug) = 100 mongos

Railways: total: 1,928 km broad gauge: 1,928 km 1.524-m gauge (1994)

Highways: total: 49,250 km paved: 1,674 km unpaved: 47,576 km (1998 est.) note: much of the unpaved rural road system consists of rough cross-country tracks

Waterways: 400 km of principal routes (1999)

Ports and Harbors: none

Airports: 34 (1994 est.) Airports - with paved runways: total: 8 2,438 to 3,047 m: 7 under 914 m: 1 (1994 est.) Airports - with unpaved runways: total: 26 over 3,047 m: 3 2,438 to 3,047 m: 5 1,524 to 2,437 m: 10 914 to 1,523 m: 3 under 914 m: 5 (1994 est.)

Visa: required by all

Duty Free: goods permitted: 200 cigarettes, 250g of tobacco, 1 litre of spirits and 2 litres of wine and 3 litres of beer, a reasonable amount of perfume.

Health: all water should be regarded as potentially contaminated

HOTELS•MOTELS•INNS

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