CHINA



- Land and Resources
- History
- Administrative Divisions and Cities
- Population and Ethnicity
- Political System and State Structure
- Foreign Relations
- Economy
- Environmental Protection
- Education and Science
- Life and Culture
- Appendix

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS

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Foreword

China is an ancient country possessing many world-class heritage sites such as the Great Wall, the Terracotta Warriors and Horses of Qin Shi Huang, the Palace Museum and the Suzhou gardens, as well as world-famous ancient luminaries including the great educator Confucius and the author of *Art of War*, Sun Wu, among many others.

Sixty-two years have passed since the founding ceremony of the People's Republic of China on the Tiananmen Square in 1949. The People's Republic has shown its resolute vitality to the whole world. In particular, bold endeavors through over 30 years of reform and opening up have helped China's economy realize steady and rapid growth. China has achieved a total transformation from silent isolation to a remarkable rise which has attracted the world's attention, focusing not only on China's ancient culture, but also toward its present and future.

China is a primer to help international readers acquire a better understanding of China. While maintaining certain basic historical facts and general information, it offers the latest facts and figures on every facet of China, including its international contacts, cultural exchanges, economic growth, environmental protection, developments in science and technology, social progress, and improvements of people's livelihood, with the aim of assisting readers toward a wider and deeper knowledge of China.

We hope you will find this book useful.

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Land Area / Mountain Ranges / Plateaus / Plains / Basins / Rivers / Lakes / Climate / Land / Mineral Resources / Plants and Animals

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The Chinese people have created a splendid civilization during a long process of historical evolution, from Da Yu's control of the floods to the "four great inventions," and from the legend of Chang'e flying to the moon to the successful flight of China's first manned spacecraft.

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China is divided into 23 provinces, five autonomous regions, four municipalities directly under the Central Government and two special administrative regions.

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Population and Ethnicity



Population / Population Increment / Addressing Population Aging / Ethnic Groups / Spoken and Written Languages / Traditional Festivals / Religion

China has the world's largest population, with 56 ethnic groups enjoying harmonious coexistence. They live together over vast areas, with some living in compact communities in small areas. *Hanyu* (Chinese language) is the most commonly used language in China, while most of the 55 minority peoples have their own languages.

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The Constitution / Political System / National People's Congress / Presidency / State Council / Central Military Commission / Local People's Congresses and Local People's Governments / People's Courts / People's Procuratorates / Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference / Political Parties and Other Organizations

China's political system basically consists of, under the unified leadership of the CPC, the people's congress system, the multiparty cooperation and political consultation system, and the regional ethnic autonomy system.

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Since 1949, the People's Republic of China has unswervingly pursued an independent foreign policy of peace. It is committed to developing friendship and cooperation with neighboring countries, developing countries and the major powers on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

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After more than 30 years of reform and opening up, a socialist market economy has been basically established in China, and an omni-directional pattern of opening up which is wide-ranging, multi-level with priorities has taken shape.

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Many places in China were densely wooded and had beautiful landscapes in the past, but due to such factors as large population and a backward economy, those places have seen vegetation deterioration, soil erosion and even desertification.

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Education and Science

Education System / Education Planning / International Exchanges / Science and Technology / Innovations in Science and Technology / International Cooperation / Social Sciences

Through unremitting efforts over the past 60 years, especially the past 30 years of reform and opening up, China, a developing country with a population of 1.3 billion, has established the largest education system in the world, including nine-year compulsory gratis education fast-growing vocational education.



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Social Life / Sports and Physical Fitness / Culture and Arts / Mass Media

China is the world's largest developing country, with a population of more than 1.3 billion. By the poverty standards defined by the World Bank, the Chinese government has lifted over 0.5 billion people out of poverty in 20 years. Great changes have taken place in the Chinese people's life, compared to what it was in the early period of the founding of New China over 60 years ago.



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Appendix I

Completion of the 11th Five-year Plan 2006-2010

Some 86.4% of the targets set in the 11th Five-year Plan (2006-2010) were fulfilled, remarkably higher than the 64.3% in the 10th Five-year Plan (2001-2005) and the 75% in the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1996-2000).

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Appendix II

Some Commonly Used Websites

Location of the People's Republic of China



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North America
South America



A bird's-eye-view of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau

Land Area / Mountain Ranges / Plateaus / Plains /
Basins / Rivers / Lakes / Climate / Land / Mineral Resources /
Plants and Animals

Land and Resources

Seen from above, the Chinese continent is shaped like four broad steps descending from the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau over 4,000 m above sea level on average in the west to the continental shelf zone less than 200 m deep in the east. The land area of China almost equals that of the whole of Europe. But the landform differs greatly from one place to another, as do resources.





Land Area

Located in the eastern part of the Asian continent, on the western shore of the Pacific, the People's Republic of China has a land area of 9.6 million sq km, and is the third largest country in the world, next only to Russia and Canada. From north to south, the territory of China stretches from the center of the Heilong River north of the town of Mohe to the Zengmu Reef at the southernmost tip of the Nansha Islands, a length of 5,500 km. From east to west, the country extends from the confluence of the Heilong and Wusuli rivers to the Pamir Mountains, spanning 5,200 km.

With land boundaries totaling about 22,800 km, China is bordered by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to the east; Mongolia to the north; Russia to the northeast; Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the northwest; Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal and Bhutan to the west and southwest; and Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam to the south. Across the seas to the east and southeast are the Republic of Korea (ROK), Japan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Indonesia.

China's mainland coastline measures approximately 18,000 km, with a flat topography and many excellent harbors, most of which are ice-free all year round. The Chinese mainland is flanked to the east and south by the Bohai, Yellow, East China and South China seas, with a total maritime area of about 4.7 million sq km. The Bohai Sea is China's continental sea, while the Yellow, East China and South China seas are marginal seas of the Pacific.

Map of the Territory of the People's Republic of China




Russia
Mongolia
Heilong River
Xingkai Lake
Beijing
D.P.R. Korea
Bohai Sea
The People's Republic of China
R.O. Korea
Yellow River
Yellow River
Yellow Sea
Japan
Yangtze River
Yangtze River
East China Sea
Chiwei Island
Diaoyu Island
Lancang River
Taiwan Strait
Taiwan Island
Penghu Islands
Myanmar
Pearl River
Vietnam
Dongsha Islands
Laos
Thailand
Hainan Island
South China Sea
The Philippines
Thailand

A total of 7,600 islands and islets dot China's territorial waters. The largest of these, with an area of about 36,000 sq km, is Taiwan, followed by Hainan with an area of 34,000 sq km. The Diaoyu and Chiwei islands, located to the northeast of Taiwan Island, are China's easternmost islands. The many islands, islets, reefs and shoals in the South China Sea, known collectively as the South China Sea Islands, are China's southernmost island group. They are called Dongsha, Xisha, Zhongsha or Nansha Islands, according to their geographical locations.

Mountain Ranges

China has nine mountain ranges with an average elevation of 6,000 m and above, and over 20 ranges with an average elevation of 4,000 m and above. The Himalayas, the highest mountain range, extending over the border of China with India, Nepal and other countries, contains over 30 peaks of 7,300 m or higher and 11 peaks of 8,000 m or higher in elevation. Soaring 8,844.43 m above sea level is Mount Qomolangma, the world's highest peak and the main peak of the Himalayas. The Kunlun mountain range, averaging 5,500 m to 6,000 m in elevation, runs from west to east across the Xinjiang Uyghur and Tibet autonomous regions, and Qinghai and Sichuan provinces. Some 2,500 km

Topography of China



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