North Korea

Location

North Korea is located in Eastern Asia, northern half of the Korean Peninsula bordering the Korea Bay and the Sea of Japan, between China and South Korea. North Korea lies between 40 00 °N, and 127 00 °E. latitude measuring 1,673 km long.

Geography

The land is formed by the Korean Peninsula and the 4,198 islands that surrounding it. North Korea is bordered on the north with China and Russia through the rivers Amrok and Duman. East, West, and South Korea is surrounded by sea. The mountains encompass approximately 80% of the land, and the medium height is 440m above the sea level. From the north to the South Korean sea, there are more than 100 mountains with a height bigger than 2000m.

Climate

Korea has a typical mild climate with the different seasons of the year. The year’s middle temperature is between 8°C and 12°C. The middle year’s rainfall is 1.123 mm. Summer is the season when it rains the most. This season helps the cultivation of rice and other crops. Sunshine total in the year is between 2.280 and 2.680 hours, much higher than most other regions in the same latitude.

History

Following World War II, Korea was split, with the northern half coming under Communist domination and the southern portion becoming Western-oriented. KIM Chong-il has ruled North Korea since his father and the country's founder, President KIM II-Song, died in 1994. After decades of mismanagement, the North relies heavily on international food aide to feed its population while continuing to expend resources to maintain an army of about 1 million. North Korea's long-range missile development and research into nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and massive conventional armed forces are of major concern to the international community. In December 2002, North Korea repudiated a 1994 agreement that shut down its nuclear reactors and expelled UN monitors, further raising fears it would produce nuclear weapons.
Important Dates

National Holidays

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>New Year (1.1)</td>
<td>First Full Moon (Lunar 1.15)</td>
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<td>Jeongil Kim’s Birthday (2.16)</td>
<td>Founding of the Korean People’s Army (4.25)</td>
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<td>National Labor Day (5.1)</td>
<td>Independence War Victory Day (7.27)</td>
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<td>Independence Day (8.15)</td>
<td>Founding of the DPRK (9.9)</td>
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<td>Founding of the Korean Worker’s Party (10.10)</td>
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Population

The population of North Korea in 2002 was approximately 22,600,000. The population density is pretty well distributed to all major cities. Most North Koreans are racially homogeneous. There is a small Chinese community and a few ethnic Japanese in North Korea.

Currency

The official currency of North Korea is “won”, 1 won equals 0.01 US dollars. There is no coin type of currency in North Korea, everything is paper money. The denominations are 1, 5, 10, 50, 100 won.

Education

Education in North Korea can be characterized by its thorough indoctrination programs designed to nurture the students into communist revolutionaries who are equipped with Juche-oriented thought and creativity. It provides the ideological and pedagogical basis of education, and North Korea tries to materialize the guiding principle of the great Juche Ideology in all sectors.

Language
The national or official language of North Korea is Korean. They use the same character as South Korea uses which is the “Hangul”. However, they have a different accent and intonations compared to South Korea. The literacy rate is around 91% to 99%.

Religion

There used to be traditionally Buddhist and Confucianist, some Christian and synergetic Chondogyo (Religion of the Heavenly Way). Autonomous religious activities now are almost nonexistent; government-sponsored religious groups exist to provide illusion of religious freedom.

Agriculture

The recent food shortages in North Korea are the result of climatic disasters, some problems with collective farming, and the economic difficulties which began in the early 1990s. As economic difficulties resulted in a shortage of energy, and of raw materials such as fertilizer and agricultural chemicals agricultural productivity decreased. The situation was made even worse by the cold weather, floods, and droughts which have occurred frequently since 1993. Thus, the food situation in North Korea is now in a state of difficulty.

Trade

Since North Korea has the most centrally planned and isolated economy, their trade rate is really low, also there is limited countries which they can trade with. Preliminary figures estimate that North Korea's total trade amount for the first half of 2000 balances at US$849.72 million – 27.6% up from the same period of the previous year. Of the total trade amount, exports increased by 16.5% up from the same period of the previous year to reach a balance of US$268.82 million, while imports showed at 33.5% increase at US$580.91 million.

Food

The basic food in North Korean cuisine are the “bap” (cooked rice), “kuksu”(noodle with soup), “juk”(porridge), “jijum”(fried omelette), etc. “Tok”(rice cake) is one of the most famous preferred plates in North Korea. It has more than 50 kinds of taste and materials.

Landmarks
Pyongyang is a superb example of the regime's determination to project its image of progress, discipline and the well-being of its citizens. The city is built around the banks of the Taedong River. The most amazing thing about the river is the two mid-river fountains that rise to a height of 150m, reputedly the highest in the world. Also, Kaesong and Haeju, are famous cities in North Korea. Also Mt.Baekdu, with a peak at 2,744m, Mt. Baekdusan is the highest mountain in the Korean peninsula. It is surrounded by peaks on all sides, and harbors many marine life forms. Cultural artifacts in Mt. Baekdusan area include the Mt. Baekdusan Jeonggyebi Memorial, raised in 1712 to mark the boundary between Joseon and China.

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