



# The Governments of East Asia

## TERMS & NAMES

Deng Xiaoping  
human rights  
Tiananmen Square  
Diet

### MAIN IDEA

The nations of China and North Korea have Communist governments. The other nations of East Asia are republics.

### WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Many people in China and North Korea would like to see change in their governments and are turning to other nations for help.

## DATELINE

**SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA, DECEMBER 10, 2000—** South Koreans are throwing a huge party today. President Kim Dae Jung has received the Nobel Peace Prize, a prize that is given annually to honor someone who has worked for peace.

Since 1947, when North and South Korea officially proclaimed themselves as separate nations, the relationship between the two countries has been tense. Just this year, for the first time, the presidents of North and South Korea met to discuss ways to reunite their divided countries. President Kim said that his goal was "to realize peace on the Korean peninsula, and to develop exchange [and] cooperation between both Koreas."



**Culture** • President Kim Dae Jung (on the right) received his Nobel Prize today in Oslo, Norway. ▲

## Working Toward Change

North Korea and China are Communist nations, and both have seen war and conflict in the past 50 years. Through efforts from within and from organizations and nations around the world, both nations are working to improve the lives of their people. They are also gradually becoming a part of the world market.



## China's Government Today

When Mao Zedong died in 1976, the Cultural Revolution ended. Moderates who wanted to restore order and economic growth took power in 1977. Their leader was **Deng Xiaoping** (duhng show•pihng).

Under Deng, the Chinese government established diplomatic relations with the United States and increased trade with other countries. It also made reforms, such as allowing farmers to own land. It released many political prisoners and reduced the police force's power. However, the government was not willing to give up any of its basic control.

**The Chinese Communist Party** Officially, China's highest government authority is the National People's Congress. In practice, the Chinese Communist Party holds the real power. It controls what happens locally. The government allows only churches and temples that are closely linked to this party to operate.



**Place • The Chinese Communist Party** sponsors activities for children, such as playing in a marching band. ▲

### Reading Social Studies

**A. Making Inferences** What other rights would you include on a list of human rights?

## The Fight for Human Rights

China's Communist government has a history of repressing criticism of its policies. Such actions often lead to the violation of **human rights**, which are rights to which every person is entitled. They include the freedom to say or write what you think, to worship as you believe, to be safe from physical harm and political persecution, and to have enough to eat.

**Tiananmen Square** In 1989, the Chinese military denied citizens a basic human right—freedom of speech—when it attacked protesters calling for democracy in **Tiananmen Square** (tyahn•ahn•mehn). For weeks, protesters occupied this 100-acre square in Beijing. Demonstrations soon occurred in other Chinese cities. The military killed hundreds and wounded thousands in their attempts to end the protests. As the events of 1989 unfolded, people around the world spoke up against the Chinese government. Since then, efforts have been made to help the people of China in their struggle for human rights.



**Culture •** The protesters in Tiananmen Square included students, workers, and government employees. ▲

## China's Neighbors

China's neighbors have different kinds of governments. Some are republics, while others are Communist.

**Japan** The United States occupied Japan after it was defeated in World War II. U.S. general Douglas MacArthur helped set up a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary government and a separate judiciary. The parliament is called the **Diet**, and the House of Representatives holds most of the power. The Diet chooses the country's prime minister, who is then officially appointed by the emperor.

The constitution states that the emperor's position is symbolic. Thus the emperor has had limited power, though many people regard the emperor as partly divine. The constitution also gives the Japanese people rights and responsibilities similar to those of Americans.

**North and South Korea** Korea used to be one country, but it was divided after World War II. The Soviet Union helped set up a Communist dictatorship in the north, and the United States helped set up a democratic republic in the south. Each government thought it should govern the whole of the Korean Peninsula.

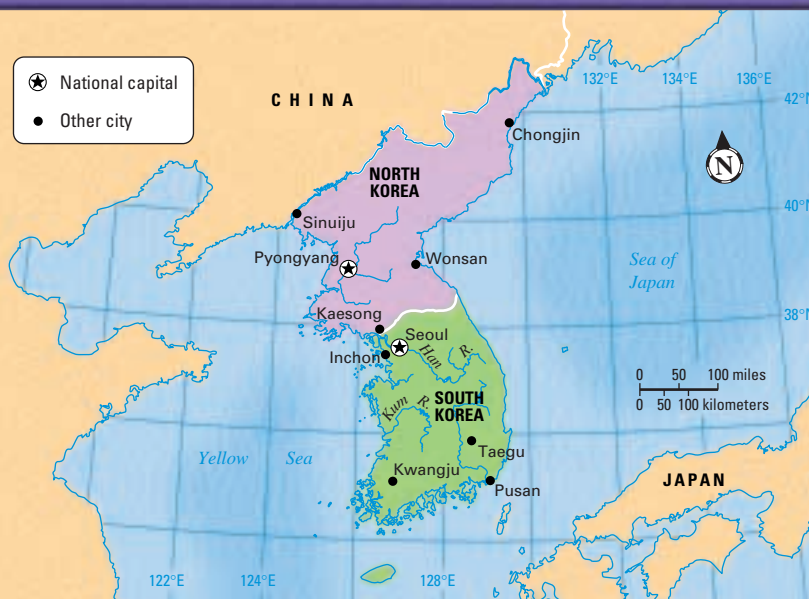
### Reading Social Studies

**B. Hypothesizing**  
Why do you think Japan has an emperor, if the position is only symbolic?

### North and South Korea, 2001

#### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting a Map

- Location •** Why do you think the capitals of North and South Korea are located on rivers?
- Movement •** Measure the distance between South Korea and Japan. What can you conclude about trade between these two nations?







In 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea. For three years the two fought the Korean War, but the borders did not change. In June of 2000, the two nations started talking about reuniting.

North Korea, or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is still a Communist state. Although there is a president and a cabinet, the Korean Workers' Party holds power. The people have little freedom, and the legislature—the Supreme People's Assembly—has little power.

South Korea, or the Republic of Korea, is a republic with a government similar to that of the United States. Power is divided among legislative, executive, and judiciary branches. People vote for the president as well as the legislature—the National Assembly. The government guarantees its citizens freedom of the press and of religion.

**Mongolia** One of the world's oldest countries, Mongolia was under either Chinese or Russian domination for years. It has been an independent republic since 1991 and has a constitution that guarantees its citizens certain basic rights. However, there is still a strong element of Communist party control in the government.

**Taiwan** Also a republic, Taiwan has a multiparty democratic system. For years it was a Chinese colony, but since 1949, the Chinese Nationalist government has been based there. The question of whether Taiwan and China will unify under one government has long caused conflict.

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

### Terms & Names

1. Identify: (a) Deng Xiaoping (b) human rights (c) Tiananmen Square (d) Diet

### Taking Notes

2. Use a chart like this one to list and compare the major characteristics of East Asia's governments.

Country	Characteristics of Government
China	
Japan	
North Korea	
South Korea	
Mongolia	
Taiwan	

### Main Ideas

3. (a) Who holds the power in China's government?  
 (b) Which East Asian countries have governments similar to China's?  
 (c) How do the governments of North Korea and South Korea differ?

### Critical Thinking

#### 4. Hypothesizing

Why do you think the Chinese government has taken actions that repress human rights?

#### Think About

- China's political stance
- the goals of China's dissidents

### ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Write a **news story** that describes the events that helped establish the government of Japan, North Korea, or South Korea.