

# QIQIHAR 齐齐哈尔

Almost two million people living in northeast China make their home in the city of Qiqihar (pronounced "Chee-chee-har"). Qiqihar is located on the Songnen Plain in the southwestern part of Heilongjiang ("Black Dragon River") Province. It is the second most populous city in Heilongjiang after the provincial capital, Harbin. Qiqihar Prefecture contains seven districts and nine counties, with a combined population of more than 5.5 million people.

Located near the border with Inner Mongolia, Qiqihar is a remarkably ethnically-mixed city. Although more than 93% of Qiqihar's people are Han Chinese, there are significant communities of 38,500 Manchu people, 22,000 Daur, 16,500 Hui Muslims, more than 10,000 Koreans, and 6,600 members of the Mongolian nationality also living in Qiqihar. In fact, 30 of China's official 55 minority groups have representatives living in Qiqihar according to the 1990 national census.

Qiqihar is the gateway city for the Daur minority, a Mongol-speaking group numbering more than 140,000. The majority of Daur live north and northeast of Qiqihar, especially in Morindawa County. Until a few years ago the Daur were a completely unreached people group. In 1996, after being shown the *Jesus* film in Mandarin,

**Population:**  
1,424,858 (1990)  
1,914,850 (2000)  
2,573,400 (2010)

**Province:**  
Heilongjiang

## Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 93.3%  
Manchu 2.7%  
Daur 1.5%  
Hui 1.2%

**Christians:**  
15,000 (0.8%)

approximately one thousand Daur followed Christ and have withstood persecution from the local authorities and discrimination from non-Christian members of their people group since. Soon, the Daur will have the *Jesus* film in available in their own language.

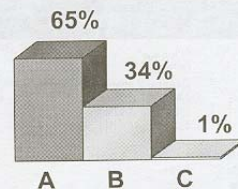
Qiqihar was founded in 1691. It is part of the area formerly known as Manchuria, which the Japanese annexed and renamed Manchukuo from 1931-45. For centuries the Manchus and the Great Wall kept the Han Chinese out of northeast China. The Manchus even erected a wooden stockade to keep the masses from migrating to the open plains of the north. Finally, in 1859, the Han Chinese were allowed to enter Manchuria. They did so in such great numbers that today the Manchus are a minority group in their former homeland.



The Central Square in Qiqihar City.



## Status of Evangelization (Awareness of Christ and the Gospel)



A = have never heard the Gospel or the name of Christ  
B = were evangelized but have not yet become Christians  
C = Adherents to any form of Christianity

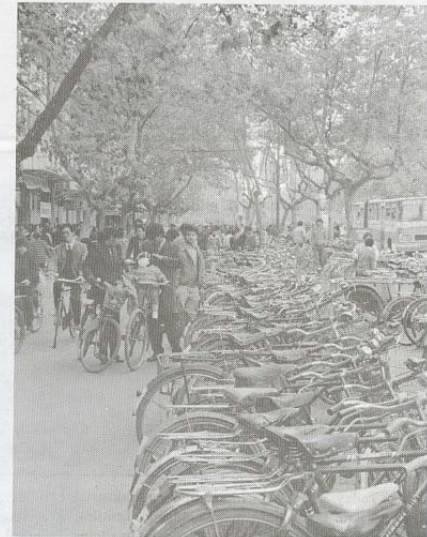
Today, Qiqihar is a highly industrialized city. There are more than 2,600 factories in the city, producing locomotives, steel, chemicals, textiles, tools and different kinds of vehicles. Qiqihar is also one of the leading grain production and animal husbandry bases in China. Rice, wheat, soybean, corn, potato, sunflower and sugar beet are some of the main crops grown in the region. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Qiqihar has greatly increased trade with Russia to the north.

From January to March, when the temperatures plummet to around minus 30° C (-22° F), an ice-carving festival is held in the city center. The Zhalong Nature Reserve is located 35 km (22 miles) southeast of Qiqihar. Some 180 different species of birds stop at Zhalong on their migration routes.

Catholic missionary work commenced in Manchuria in 1620, and by 1922 they had 56,000 converts. Protestant work in Manchuria began in 1867 when W. C. Burns of the English Presbyterian Mission arrived. He died soon after, but a Dr. Hunter of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland replaced him in 1869, followed by John Ross of the United Free Church of Scotland Mission in 1872.

Although the number of Christians in Heilongjiang Province is reported to have tripled in the past decade, Qiqihar has been less affected than many other parts of the province. Today, less than one percent of the city's population profess to follow Christ.

Few missionaries or Chinese church movements are known to be presently focusing on Qiqihar, even though it is a large and strategic city, and a gateway to several unreached people groups. The majority of people in Qiqihar have absolutely no knowledge of the Gospel or the claims of Jesus Christ.



A scene from the streets of Qiqihar.

## Pray for Qiqihar

- 1 Pray God would be glorified among the inhabitants of Qiqihar City. Pray the Gospel would soon spread like wild-fire among all sections of the community.
- 2 Ask God to make the believers in Qiqihar hungry for the souls of their lost neighbors. Pray the Holy Spirit would stir them to zealous and effective action.
- 3 Pray Christians from all over China would follow God's lead to pray for and plant churches in Qiqihar.

## Overview of Qiqihar

Pronunciation	"Chee-chee-har"	Employed people	748,654 (52.5% of total population)
Old Spelling	Hsi-bai-ha'erh	Main Industries	Industrial 42.6%; Agriculture 18.5%; Professional 14%
Location	Heilongjiang Province, northeast China	Educational	University: 1.6%
Population	1,424,858 (1990 census)	Attainment	High School: 61.2%
Males	722,678 (50.72%)	Primary School	26.0%
Females	702,180 (49.28%)	Never attended any level of school	11.2%
Households	394,604	Population under 15	22.4%
Average household	3.61 people	Adult Literacy	90% (men 94%; women 85%)
Divorced people	10,358	Major Nationalities	Han 1,330,168
% of population	0.73%		Manchu 38,489
Centurions (1990)	9 people aged 100 or more		Daur 21,748
Immigrants to City	14,198 per year		Hui 16,516
From same province	10,568 (74.4%)		Korean 10,149
From other provinces	3,630 (25.6%)		Others (26 groups): 7,788
		Christians	15,000 (0.8%)