

Tianmen 天门

Tianmen ('Heavenly Gate') City is home to approximately 1.8 million people in a densely-populated area of central Hubei Province in central China.

Tianmen lies on the banks of the Tianmen River, 115 km (71 miles) west of the provincial capital Wuhan, and near the important Han Shui River.

Tianmen's population almost completely consists of Han Chinese people. The only minority groups with any significant representation among the city's population are the 630 Tujia people and 330 Hui Muslims.

Tianmen was formerly known as Jinling and was part of Fuzhou Prefecture. The city's history goes back a very long way. Archaeologists, in fact, claim a castle they have excavated in Tianmen dates back to 4000 BC.

One of the most famous people to come from Tianmen was Lu Yu, known as "the sage of tea." Born in 728 AD, Lu grew up as an abandoned child and his life was full of frustrations. He was adopted by a Buddhist monk named Zhi Ji. Later in life Lu dedicated himself to tea cultivation and production. He traveled widely, learning all he could about the art. Based on his accumulated knowledge, he wrote the "Tea Classics" - believed

Population:

1,506,568 (1990)
1,741,878 (2000)
2,013,900 (2010)

Province:

Hubei

Major Ethnic Groups:

Han 99.6%
Tujia 0.1%
Hui 0.1%
Mongol 0.1%

Christians:

30,000 (1.7%)

to be the first book on tea in the world.

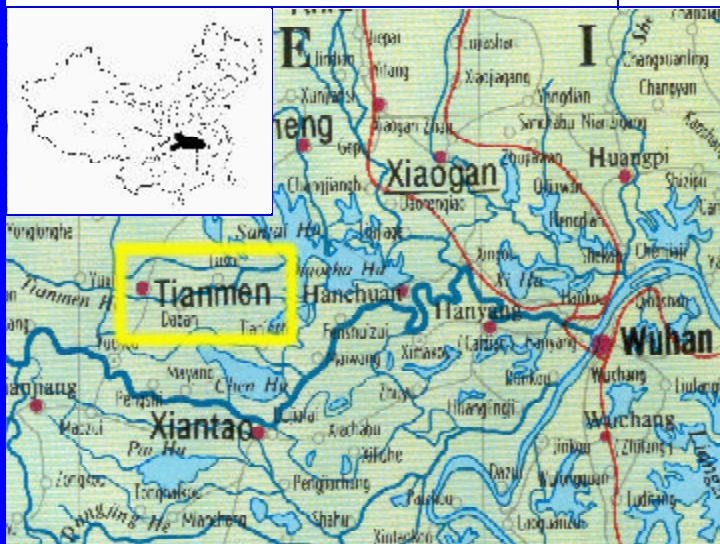
There is a wide discrepancy in Tianmen between those men and women who are unable to read. In 1990, only 8.8% of men were found to be illiterate, while the figure for women was 30.7%. Because Tianmen is still primarily an agriculture and fishing based economy, gaining a sound education was until recently considered a luxury few could afford to pursue.

Statistics show that 81.8% of all jobs in Tianmen belong to the agriculture and fishing industries. The city is also famous for producing

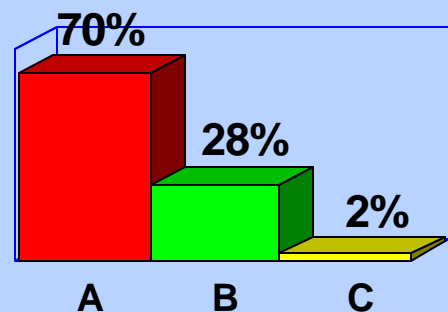
cotton, textile and traditional printed cloth.

The Chinese have a saying that "Falling leaves should settle beside the root." Adhering to this principle, some 200,000 overseas Chinese people who call Tianmen their ancestral home have actively invested in the development of the city. These days, more than 1,000 young men and women from Tianmen are sent to attend university each year. Many of these future leaders receive scholarships from overseas Chinese organizations or directly from well-to-do family members.

Tianmen is also renowned throughout China for its acrobats. Their city has produced many of the nation's best acrobats for centuries.



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 = Adherants to any form of Christianity



Acrobatics has a long history in China. Yi Liao, a subject of the Chu State during the Zhou Dynasty (1100 - 221 BC) was the first known acrobat. The ancient book *Zhuang Zi* reports that he could juggle nine balls at once.

In the past few years many Falungong practitioners in Tianmen have experienced a severe police crackdown. Armed police arrested hundreds of people across the city as the government announced, "The evil cult must be completely eliminated!" Han Fengwei, the Deputy Mayor of Tianmen City, was imprisoned for 17 years in 2001 for not persecuting the Falungong strongly enough! Even though Han and his police force arrested 470 Falungong members in one swoop in July 2001, he was charged with accepting bribes totalling 400,000 Yuan (US\$ 49,000) from the cult members to prevent further arrests.

Unfortunately Christians have also been caught up in the local efforts to crack down against all illegal religious groups. A number of the leaders of the South China house church network who were arrested and tortured in 2001 were residents of Tianmen. Today less than two percent of people in Tianmen confess Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

Pray for Tianmen

- 1** Pray Tianmen would truly be a heavenly gate for revival. Pray knowledge of the Lord would saturate the city.
- 2** Ask God to glorify His holy name in every street and suburb of Tianmen.
- 3** Pray Tianmen will soon experience a massive turning to Christ.

Overview of Tianmen (based on 1990 census)

Pronunciation : "Tee-an-men"
Old Spelling : Tien-men
Location : central Hubei Province, central China
Population : 1,506,568 (1990 census)
Males : 765,600 (50.82%)
Females : 740,968 (49.18%)
Households : 354,696
Average Household : 4.2 people
Divorced People : 2,423
% divorced of Population : 0.16
Centurions (1990) : 0 people aged 100 or more
Immigrants to City : 8,323
From same province : 5,853 (70.3%)
From other provinces : 2,465 (29.7%)

Employed People : 909,597 (60.4% of total population)
Main Industries : Agriculture 81.8%, Industrial 7.1%
Education (highest level attended): University: 1.2%
 High School: 34.4%
 Primary school: 47.6%
 Never attended any school: 16.8%
Population under 15: 445,559 (29.6%)
Adult Illiteracy : 19.8% (men 8.8%; women 30.7%)
Major Nationalities : Han 1,505,525
 Tujia 634
 Hui 326
 Mongol 23
 Others 60 (15 groups)
Christians (2003) : 30,000 (1.7%)