

Jilin Province

Jílín Shěng 吉林省

27.3 million est. 2007 pop. 187,000 square km

Jilin Province in northeast China is both an important industry base and a rich source of the country's commodity grains. Ethnic Koreans make up a relatively large part of its population. Jilin is about the size of the state of North Dakota with roughly forty-three times the population.

Jilin Province is located in the northeastern region of China. Bordering Russia on the east and North Korea on the southeast, Jilin also shares borders with Liaoning Province on the south, Heilongjiang Province on the north, and the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region on the west. It has an area of about 187,000 square kilometers. About forty minority groups live in Jilin Province, including Koreans, Mans, Huis, and Mongolians.

The eastern part of the province is close to the Yellow Sea and the Sea of Japan, where the atmosphere is moist, often with much rain. The climate of its western part, which is far from the sea and approaches the arid Mongolian Plateau, is dry. As a whole, Jilin has a temperate continental monsoon climate with a clear-cut change of seasons. The yearly average temperature of most of the province is 3–5° C. With hot and rainy days occurring in the same season, the climate is good for farming. The frost period begins in the last ten days of September and lasts until the end of April or early May.

Jilin is rich in natural resources. Major minerals are coal, iron, copper, zinc, and gold. Coal is mined in the southeast. The major hydroelectric power installation, the Fengman station on the Sungari River southeast of

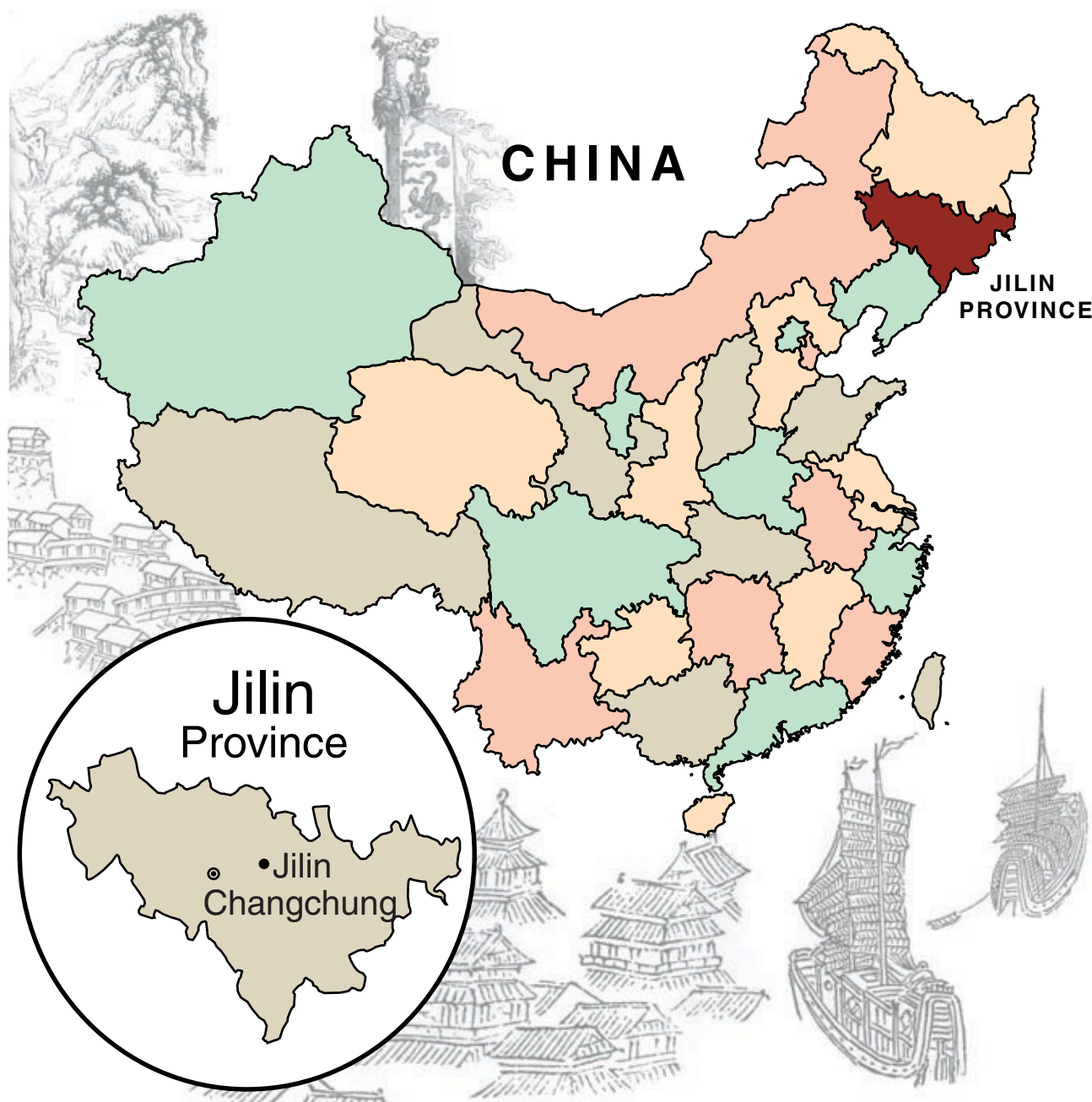
Jilin, provides much of the energy needs for the northeast region. Jilin also has abundant forest resources. One of the major forests in China, Changbai Mountain Area, produces top-grade pine trees and is the source of precious traditional Chinese herbs such as ginseng and pilose antler. Changbai Mountain Area's mushrooms and fungi are regarded as of best in the country.

Jilin is one of the important commodity grain bases in China. It abounds with soybean, corn, sorghum, millet, rice, small red bean, wheat, tuber, sunflower seeds, beets, and tobacco. About 2.96 million hectares of prairie in the province's northwest make Jilin Province an ideal place for animal husbandry; it has abundant pasture land for sheep and is a major production base of commercial cattle.

Jilin Province has a solid industrial infrastructure, with more than fourteen thousand industrial enterprises and six dominant industries: engineering, petrochemical, pharmaceutical, food, metallurgical, and forestry. With Changchun-based First Automobile Works, one of China's most important automobile manufacturers, Jilin leads the country in its production of automobiles, railway cars, and tractors.

Changchun, the provincial capital with an estimated 2007 population of 7.46 million, is the economic, cultural, and education center of the province. It became the capital of Japanese-controlled Manchukuo in the 1930s. Today's Changchun is a beautiful city shaded by trees. The Changchun Film Studio is the first film production factory built after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. It is regarded as the cradle of modern Chinese cinema.

Di BAI



Further Reading

China Handbook Editorial Committee. (1992). *Geography, China handbook series* (Liangxing Liang, Trans.). Beijing: Foreign Language Press.

Hsieh, Chiao-Min & Luu, Max. (Eds.). (2001). *Changing China: A geographical appraisal*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Kirk, M. (Ed.). (2009). *China by numbers 2009*. Hong Kong: China Economic Review Publishing.

People's Daily. (n.d.). Jilin Province. Retrieved July 26, 2008, from <http://english.people.com.cn/data/province/jilin.html>