

# **History of Arkhangai aimag**

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## **Khalkh Sain Noyon Khan aimag (1725-1923)**

Sain Noyon Khan aimag was established in 1775. At that time the aimag included 24 khoshuus (small administrative units). Manchu named Sain Noyon Khan aimag with the main road for Manchu soldiers in Khalkh and they set up many military settlements and forts.

The first temple of ‘Zayayn Khuree’ was established in 1576 in the aimag and later it was a big monastery extended with 5 datsans (college in a monastery) and 200 lams in 1679.

As of 1918 the aimag was registered with 57 monasteries that hold standing Khural or religious service, 96 datsans (a college in a monastery) 239 temples, 28672 monks (lams) and 680 jas.

As of 1918 the aimag had 60.996 camels, 307.912 horse, 327.890 cattle, 194.225 sheep and goat and totally 563.053 livestock.

## **Tsetserleg Mandal Uul aimag (1923-1931)**

After the ‘People’s Revolution’ won in 1921 throughout Mongolia reforms in administrative unit were made and the ‘Tsetserleg Mandal Uul’ aimag was established on the foundation of ‘Sain Noyon Khan’ aimag. At the time occurred 722 bags (rural subdistrict) or smallest administrative unit in rural district), 250 sums (territorial administrative unit subordinate to a province) and 26 khoshuus (ancient provinces like aimag) in the aimag.

As of 1924, the ‘Tsetserleg Mandal Uul’ aimag had a population of 168 234 from 30882 families.

In 1924 the aimag had 2 492 688 livestock and 1 830 500 from them were sheep and goats.

## **Arkhangai aimag (1931-)**

When the conference in Peoples Republic of Mongolia was held in 1931, and made resolution to change the administration of ‘Tsetserleg Mandal Uul’ aimag that had 71 sums and 16 khoshuus into ‘Arkhangai’ aimag including 35 sums. The aimag center is Thetserleg town which was established on the foundation of ‘Zaya Khuree’ monastery where the first Buddhist temple was founded in 1586.

In accordance with the population census of December, 1931, Arkhangai aimag had 35 sums, 22285 families, 65333 population and 1 800 000 cattles.

Nowadays the Arkhangai aimag (province) is situated in the Central part of Mongolia occupying 55.2 thousands square kilometer territory where 96.4 thousand citizens live and including 19 sums / administrative secondary unit/ and 99 baggs / the smallest unit of administration.

The aimag's territory comprises the Khangai mountainous range which is one of biggest (largest) high altitude mountain ranges of Mongolia with forest and forest steppe landscape.

The highest point is Kharlagtai peak clad in eternal snow at 3529 b. above sea level while the lowest point is the area on the confluence of the Orkhon and Tamir rivers at 1290 meters above sea level.

### **Climate**

Variable. In winter mean temperature is  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $38^{\circ}\text{C}$  and in summer the highest temperature is between  $25^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $36^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

### **Economy**

Main field of economy in the aimag is agriculture. Animal husbandry is dominated in the agriculture.

According to a final data of 2002, in the aimag have been registered 1.748 million domestic animals (sheep, cattle, yak, horse, goat and camel). Five kind of livestock are bred throughout aimag. Yaks and hybrids are herded in the northwest sums, while a few camels are in the southeast sums.

Sheep and goats play a main utility role in rural population's life. Horses are especially used for riding and other utilities but also southern sums of aimag are famous for delicious fermented mare's milk called "Airag" over the country. Horse racing is being develop in many sums of aimag day by day and we can meet a lot of State distinguished horse trainers here.

### **Nature**

In the Arkhangai aimag there are a lot of famous natural beautiful places so as natural reserved place "Khorgo", Taikhar Chuluu, Chuluut cliff and freshwater lakes and rivers: Terkhiin Tsagaan Nuur and Ugi Nuur lakes and Kahui, Khuii, Tamir, Orkhon rivers which are very reach freshwater fishes.

### **Archaeological Sites**

In the aimag there are many archaeological sites belonging to different historical periods of Mongolia (Paleolithic, Neolithic period, Bronze and Iron age, Xiongnu, Xian-bi, Turkic, Uigur, Kidan, and Mongolian period).

**Khar Balgas** is city ruin from Uigur period (VIII-IX c. AD). Khar Balgas is located at 30 km. to east from Khoton sum and in Orkhon river valley. The Uigur city's ruin was discovered by Russian traveler in 1889. Since that time many researchers investigated the ruin, but never excavated the Khar Balgas.

**Khushuu Tsaidam** (Turkic period). The archaeological site is situated in Khashaat sum and at 45 km to northwest from Erdene-Zuu. In the site there is group of archaeological monuments: runic inscription, turtle stones, stone men or human statues. The runic inscription related to Kul-Tegin who was a military leader of the Turkic empire. The flat stone inscription stood on end, measuring 3.33 meters in height, 1.32 meters in width and 0.46 m. thick. Another Turkic monument belonged to king Bilge of Turkic empire, is located at one kilometer from the Kul-Tegin monuments.

**Khar Khul Khani Balgas** (Turkic period). The city's ruin from Turkic period is located at around 5 km. to northwest from Erdene-Mandal sum's center.

**Gol Mod 1 and 2.** Archaeological sites (around 400 graves in one site) from Xiongnu period. In the 60-s, last century, the site was discovered and partly excavated by Mongolian archaeologist Ts. Dorjsuren. According to his conclusion the Gol-Mod 1 and 2 belong to aristocratic and common people from Xiongnu period. Since 2001 Mongolian-American archaeological expedition excavates Gol Mod-2 site and Mongolian-French archaeological team excavates Gol-Mod-1 site. Besides above mentioned archaeological sites, in the Arkhangai aimag there are numbers of sites with rock art, graves and deer stone monuments.

**Rock art sites.** Examples include Olgoit, Avdrant sites at Under-Ulaan sum, Suman Gol and Bayanbulag sites – at Tariat sum, Bugat, Khuruugin Uzuur and Khukh-Khur sites at Ikh Tamir sum.

**Main grave sites.** Examples include Altansandal site- Xiongnu and Mongolian period, Ikh Tamir sum, Delen Tolgoi, Naimaa Tolgoi, Khana mountain sites at the Erdene Mandal sum, Solvi mountain, Khudgiin Tolgoi and Emeel Tolgoi sites at Battsengel sum and Tamiriin Ulaan Khusuu site at Ugii-Nuur sum belong to Xiongnu Period.

**Deer Stone sites.** Examples include Altan Sandal Uul mountain, Bayantsagaan valley, Khavtsalin Am, Tsatsin Ereg sites at Ikh Tamir sum, Bumbuger Uul, Ikh Jargalant Uul, Khanui river canyon at Erdene Mandal sum.

**The Ugii-Nuur sum** is situated on the confluence Tamir and Orkhon rivers region, southeast part of the aimag. On the Sum's territory there is located one of the biggest fresh water lake Ugii-Nuur which is truly wonderful place of birdlife cranes and ducks, to name just a few, migrate to the area around late April. The lake is also renowned for its fishing.



Taikhar chuluu, where are runic, Tibetan and old Mongolian inscriptions



