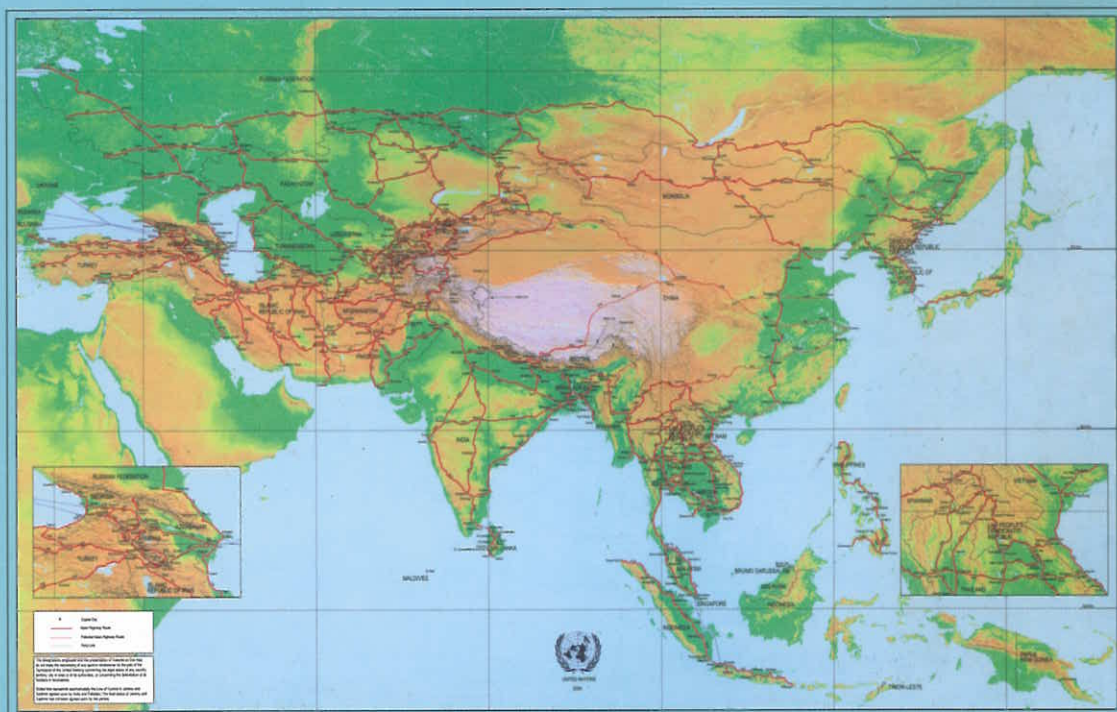


ASIAN HIGHWAY

ASIAN HIGHWAY HANDBOOK



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Corrigendum

Page 111, paragraph 4

First sentence: for the existing text substitute: "Turkey is a large middle-income country; major contributors to the GDP are the services (63.6 per cent), industry (24.7 per cent) and agriculture (11.7 per cent) sectors."

Page 114, paragraph 4 (numbered 11)

Line 3: After "Byzantine churches," insert "some of which were"

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

ASIAN HIGHWAY HANDBOOK



UNITED NATIONS
New York, 2003

ST/ESCAP/2303

UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATION
Sales No. E.03.II.F.31
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ISBN: 92-1-120170-5

The *Asian Highway Handbook* was prepared under the direction of the Transport and Tourism Division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. The team of staff members of the Transport and Tourism Division who prepared the *Handbook* comprised: Fuyo Jenny Yamamoto, Tetsuo Miyairi, Madan B. Regmi, John R. Moon and Barry Cable. Inputs for the tourism-related parts were provided by an external consultant: Imtiaz Muqbil.

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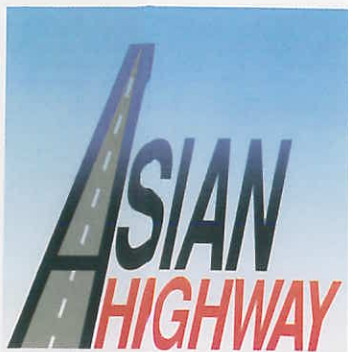
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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE ASIAN HIGHWAY



In centuries past, great explorers embarked by land and sea in search of new worlds and riches. Like today, the purpose of travel was to explore new horizons, learn from different cultures, trade, or simply to secure food, shelter and means of subsistence for families and communities. They returned with tales of exotic lands, strange animals and fascinating customs of peoples living in these lands. Today's modern explorers do not need to sit riveted to their chairs listening to the tales and marvelling at the richness of the cultures. The Asian Highway allows them to experience at first hand the accounts that were relayed by great explorers.

In 1959, the Asian Highway project was conceived partially to resurrect those dreams, of trade and travel and to bring the world closer together. In doing so the Asian Highway promotes social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom as laid down in the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations.

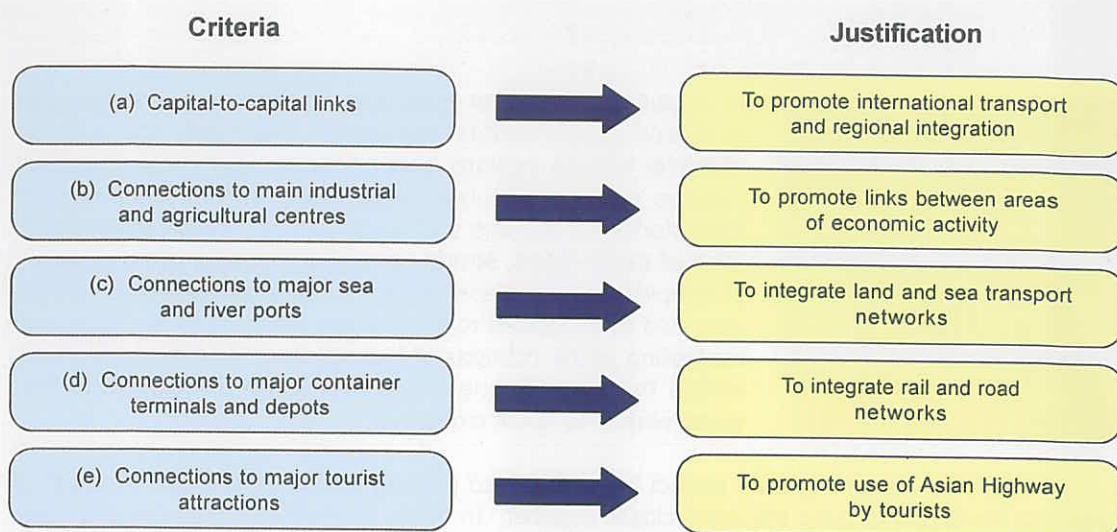
In the 1960s and 1970s, considerable progress was achieved in identifying a regional road network with active cooperation of member countries. In the late 1980s, the Asia-Pacific region as a whole emerged as a dynamic arena of economic growth. Demand increased for reliable and efficient road transport, which proved to be a versatile and cost-effective mode for moving large numbers of people and goods across borders.

In 1992, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) endorsed the Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID) project comprising of the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway network as well as facilitation of land transport. The Asian Highway project is one of the cornerstones of ALTID. The formalization of the Asian Highway, through the Intergovernmental Agreement on Asian Highway Network adopted in November 2003, has brought the project to a new turning point in its history.

1. Concept of the Asian Highway Network

Developing an international highway network is a hugely expensive and time-consuming exercise. It involves building roads of common standards through vastly different kinds of terrain, ranging from mountains to deserts, crossing rivers and traversing forests. Because many ESCAP member countries cannot afford the high costs of building such a comprehensive network, it was agreed that the basic thrust of the Asian Highway project would be ***to coordinate the development and upgrading of existing regional highways among member countries.***

In this regard, participating countries agreed that the basic underlying principles for the Asian Highway network would be to include only major national roads in the network and to make the maximum use of existing roads, avoiding the construction of new highways except in cases where deemed necessary to complete "missing links". Furthermore, the criteria used to select the road, rail and road-cum-rail routes should provide for:



2. Identifying the Network

The process of identifying the roads to be included in the Asian Highway network began in the late 1950s, but it was mainly after 1992, when the ALTID project was endorsed by ESCAP, that the network formulation process was taken up in earnest. The ESCAP secretariat was tasked with the complex task of coordinating the development of the Asian Highway network by facilitating discussion among member countries. With the financial assistance from the Government of Japan, it conducted a series of studies, the first of which was published in 1995. This study identified 29 Asian Highway routes, totaling 69,000 kilometres.

In 1996, a second study was completed on the Asian Highway network in Central Asia and the South Caucasus, leading to the inclusion of a further 13 routes totalling 21,000 kilometres. In 1999, the Asian Highway routes in Turkey were agreed upon, adding a further 3,200 kilometres to the network.

The ALTID implementation strategy stressed the importance of the formulation of the Asian Highway network to cover all of Asia. Building on this momentum, a third study was completed in 2001 and identified the Asian Highway routes in China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, the Russian Federation and the Korean peninsula. These routes formed the Northern Corridor of the Asian Highway, effectively linking North-East Asia with Central Asia, the Caucasus and Europe. About 40,000 kilometres of road network were included in the network.

In 2001 and 2002, Asian Highway routes were identified in Georgia and Bhutan respectively. An Expert Group Meeting held in May 2002 amongst 30 member countries reviewed the entire network and extended it to towns and cities in 31 countries, covering a total of 140,000 kilometres. In November 2003, Japan joined the Asian Highway project by including the Tokyo-Fukuoka section in the network. Brunei Darussalam has also expressed a keen interest to join the network.

3. Current Status of the Asian Highway

The Asian Highway Map (figure 1) shows the current network across all 32 member countries, as well as linkages to the European Road Network (E-road).

Further information on the current status of the Asian Highway network, by country and by route number, is summarized in tables 1 and 2.

Figure 1. The Asian Highway Network



Table 1. Status of Asian Highway by country (as of 2002)

Country	Length	Paved		Unpaved	Ferry	Missing link	Unknown	Common Section
		2 Lanes or more	1 Lane					
Afghanistan	4,247	2,330	10	1,906	1	0	0	472
Armenia	958	958	0	0	0	0	0	10
Azerbaijan	1,442	1,442	0	0	0	0	0	184
Bangladesh	1,804	1,188	584	2	9	21	0	487
Bhutan	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cambodia	1,339	1,337	0	0	2	0	0	0
China	25,579	25,047	0	532	0	0	0	1,692
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	1,320	0	0	0	0	0	1,320	0
Georgia	1,154	1,154	0	0	0	0	0	206
India	11,432	11,389	43	0	0	0	0	1,174
Indonesia	3,989	3,955	0	0	34	0	0	0
Islamic Republic of Iran	11,152	11,152	0	0	0	0	0	566
Japan	1,200	1,200	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kazakhstan	13,189	12,080	214	895	0	0	0	2,075
Kyrgyzstan	1,695	1,317	0	378	0	0	0	34
Lao People's Democratic Republic	2,297	1,873	0	249	3	45	127	106
Malaysia	1,595	1,595	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mongolia	4,286	800	0	3,486	0	0	0	37
Myanmar	3,003	1,472	1,013	518	0	0	0	771
Nepal	1,321	1,304	0	17	0	0	0	107
Pakistan	5,377	5,377	0	0	0	0	0	1,275
Philippines	3,517	2,979	0	388	150	0	0	0
Republic of Korea	907	907	0	0	0	0	0	68
Russian Federation	16,869	14,945	0	1,924	0	0	0	422
Singapore	19	19	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sri Lanka	650	537	113	0	0	0	0	0
Tajikistan	1,925	1,671	0	220	1	33	0	0
Thailand	5,112	4,553	0	0	2	0	557	363
Turkey	5,254	5,254	0	0	0	0	0	538
Turkmenistan	2,204	2,180	0	24	0	0	0	358
Uzbekistan	2,966	2,722	0	244	0	0	0	379
Viet Nam	2,678	2,343	335	0	0	0	0	0
Total	140,479	125,081	2,312	10,783	200	99	2,004	11,324

Note: The length of route in Japan is estimated by ESCAP.

Table 2. Status of Asian Highway by route number (as of 2002)

Route No.	Length	Paved		Unpaved	Ferry	Missing link	Unknown	Common Section
		2 Lanes or more	1 Lane					
AH1	20,557	19,138	768	216	9	21	405	0
AH2	13,177	9,623	767	216	8	0	0	2,563
AH3	7,331	4,655	5	978	1	0	0	1,692
AH4	6,024	4,097	0	714	0	0	0	1,213
AH5	10,380	9,842	0	0	0	0	0	538
AH6	10,475	9,285	0	267	0	0	855	68
AH7	5,868	5,160	0	145	1	0	0	562
AH8	4,718	4,244	0	126	0	0	0	348
AH11	1,588	1,541	0	46	1	0	0	0
AH12	1,195	1,170	0	25	0	0	0	0
AH13	730	0	0	0	1	45	684	0
AH14	2,077	1,891	186	0	0	0	0	0
AH15	566	394	65	0	1	0	0	106
AH16	1,032	947	84	0	1	0	0	0
AH18	1,042	1,042	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH19	459	459	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH25	2,549	2,523	0	0	26	0	0	0
AH26	3,517	2,979	0	388	150	0	0	0
AH30	2,739	1,231	0	1,508	0	0	0	0
AH31	1,595	1,595	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH32	3,748	1,534	0	2,117	0	0	60	37
AH33	575	575	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH34	1,033	1,033	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH41	948	675	110	0	2	0	0	161
AH42	3,754	3,155	0	492	0	0	0	107
AH43	3,024	2,911	113	0	0	0	0	0
AH44	107	107	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH45	2,030	1,937	0	0	0	0	0	93
AH46	1,513	1,513	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH47	2,057	2,057	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH48	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH51	862	837	0	0	0	0	0	25
AH60	2,151	2,136	0	0	0	0	0	15
AH61	4,158	3,744	189	191	0	0	0	34
AH62	2,722	1,489	0	375	0	0	0	858
AH63	2,434	1,996	0	438	0	0	0	0

Table 2. (continued)

Route No.	Length	Paved		Unpaved	Ferry	Missing link	Unknown	Common Section
		2 Lanes or more	1 Lane					
AH64	1,666	1,311	0	23	0	0	0	332
AH65	1,250	1,023	0	227	0	0	0	0
AH66	995	854	0	108	0	33	0	0
AH67	2,288	1,534	0	0	0	0	0	754
AH68	278	278	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH70	4,832	3,042	25	277	0	0	0	1,488
AH71	426	162	0	264	0	0	0	0
AH72	1,147	1,147	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH75	1,871	1,871	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH76	986	327	0	659	0	0	0	0
AH77	1,298	315	0	983	0	0	0	0
AH78	1,076	1,076	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH81	1,143	1,003	0	0	0	0	0	140
AH82	1,261	1,071	0	0	0	0	0	190
AH83	172	172	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH84	1,188	1,188	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH85	338	338	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH86	247	247	0	0	0	0	0	0
AH87	606	606	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	151,803	125,081	2,312	10,783	200	99	2,004	11,324

4. Formalization of the Asian Highway Network

As the final step in the formalization of the Asian Highway Network, an Intergovernmental Agreement was adopted in November 2003. The main obligations of the Contracting Parties within the Agreement are to adopt the Asian Highway network as a coordinated plan for the development of highway routes of international importance; bring the network in conformity with the Asian Highway classification and design standards; and facilitate navigation along the routes through the placement of adequate signage along the Asian Highway routes.

The Agreement was prepared by a Working Group on Asian Highway set up by the fifty-eighth session of ESCAP on the recommendation of the Ministerial Conference on Infrastructure held in Seoul in 2001. It is based on the European Agreement of Main International Traffic Arteries.

A formal signing ceremony of the Agreement is scheduled to be held during the sixtieth session of the Commission in Shanghai, China, in April 2004.

(i) The Asian Highway routes

The formal definition of the Asian Highway routes is included as an annex to the Inter-governmental Agreement. These routes are reproduced in table 3. Provisions exist within the Agreement to convene a Working Group, one of the functions of which is to periodically review the routes.

(ii) Asian Highway Classification and Design Standards

Asian Highway routes are required to conform to minimum standards of classification and design in terms of construction, improvement and maintenance. This is intended to uphold quality standards and enhance recognition among users. Member countries have agreed to make every possible effort to conform to these provisions both in the construction of new routes and in modernizing existing ones. The provisions of these classification and design standards are summarized in table 4.

(iii) Numbering and signage

Like airline flights, Asian Highway routes have been assigned numbers to help make them easy to identify on maps as well as via signage along the routes themselves. The principles for assigning route numbers is as follows:

1. Route numbers begin with "AH", which stands for "Asian Highway", followed by one, two or three digits.
2. Single-digit route numbers from 1 to 9 are assigned to Asian Highway routes which substantially cross more than one subregion.
3. Sets of two- and three-digit route numbers are assigned to indicate the routes within subregions, including those connecting to a neighbouring subregion, and highway routes within member States as indicated below:
 - (a) Route numbers 10-29 and 100-299 are allocated to South-East Asia which includes Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam;
 - (b) Route numbers 30-39 and 300-399 are allocated to East and North-East Asia which includes China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation (Far East);¹
 - (c) Route numbers 40-59 and 400-599 are allocated to South Asia which includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka;
 - (d) Route numbers 60-89 and 600-899 are allocated to North, Central and South-West Asia which includes Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation,¹ Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

This numbering system is illustrated in figure 2.

The Asian Highway signage is rectangular in shape and consists of the letters AH followed by the route number in Arabic numerals with a white or black inscription affixed to or combined with other signs which can be easily identified and understood by drivers.



¹ The Russian Federation is included in two subregions for the purpose of assigning route numbers because of its geographic extent.

Table 3. List of Asian Highway Routes (as of November 2003)

AH route number	Itinerary
AH1	Tokyo – Fukuoka – ferry – Pusan – Kyongju – Taegu – Taejon – Seoul – Munsan – Gaesung – Pyongyang – Sinuiju – Dandong – <u>Shenyang</u> – <u>Beijing</u> – Shijiazhuang – Zhengzhou – Xinyang – Wuhan – Changsha – Xiangtan – <u>Guangzhou</u> (– Shenzhen) – <u>Nanning</u> – Youyiguan – Huu Nghi – Dong Dang – Ha Noi – Vinh – Dong Ha – Hue – Da Nang – Hoi An – Nha Trang – Bien Hoa (– Vung Tau) – Ho Chi Minh City – Moc Bai – Bavet – Phnom Penh – Poipet – Aranyaprathet – Kabin Buri – Hin Kong – Bang Pa-in (– Bangkok) – Nakhon Sawan – Tak – Mae Sot – Myawadi – Payagyi (– Yangon) – Meiktila – Mandalay – Tamu – Moreh – Imphal – Kohima – Dimapur – Nagaon – Jorabat (– Guwahati) – Shillong – Dawki – Tamabil – Sylhet – Katchpur – Dhaka – Jessore – Benapol – Bongaon – Kolkata – Barhi – Kanpur – Agra – New Delhi – Attari – Wahgah – Lahore – Rawalpindi (– Islamabad) – Hassanabdal – Peshawar – Torkham – Kabul – Kandahar – Dilaram – Herat – Islam Qala – Dogharun – Mashhad – Sabzevar – Damghan – Semnan – Tehran – Qazvin – Tabriz – Eyvoghli – Bazargan – Gurbulak – Dogubayazit – Askale – Refahiye – Sivas – Ankara – Gerede – Istanbul – Kapikule – Border of Bulgaria
AH2	Denpasar – Surabaya – Surakarta – Semarang – Cikampek (– Bandung) – Jakarta (– Merak) – ferry – Singapore – Senai Utara – Seremban – Kuala Lumpur – Butterworth – Bukit Kayu Hitam – Sa Dao – Hat Yai – Bangkok – Bang Pa-in – Nakhon Sawan – Tak – Chiang Rai – Mae Sai – Tachilek – Kyaing Tong – Meiktila – Mandalay – Tamu – Moreh – Imphal – Kohima – Dimapur – Nagaon – Jorabat (– Guwahati) – Shillong – Dawki – Tamabil – Sylhet – Katchpur – Dhaka – Hatikamrul – Banglabandha – Siliguri – Kakarbhitta – Pathlariya – Narayanghat – Kohalpur – Mahendranagar – Bramhadev Mandi – Banbasa – Rampur – New Delhi – Attari – Wahgah – Lahore – Multan – Rohri – Quetta – Taftan – Mirjaveh – Zahedan – Kerman – Anar – Yazd – Salafchegan (– Tehran) – Saveh – Hamadan – Khosravi
AH3	Ulan-Ude – Kyahta – Altanbulag – Darkhan – Ulaanbaatar – Nalayh – Choir – Saynshand – Zamin-Uud – Erenhot – Beijing – Tanggu <u>Shanghai</u> – Hangzhou – Nanchang – Xiangtan – Guiyang – Kunming – Jinghong (– Daluo – Mongla – Kyaing Tong) – Mohan – Boten – Nateuy – Houayxay – Chiang Khong – Chiang Rai
AH4	Novosibirsk – Barnaul – Tashanta – Ulaanbaishint – Hovd – Yarantai Urumqi – Kashi – Honqiraf – Khunjerab – Hassanabdal – Rawalpindi (– Islamabad) – Lahore – Multan – Rohri – Hyderabad – Karachi
AH5	<u>Shanghai</u> – <u>Nanjing</u> – Xinyang – Xi'an – Lanzhou – Tulfan – Urumqi – Kuitun – Jinghe – Horgos – Almaty – Kaskelen – Kordai – Georgievka – Bishkek – Kara Balta – Chaldovar – Merke – Shymkent – Zhibek Zholy – Chernyavka – Tashkent – Syrdaria – Samarkand – Navoi – Bukhara – Alat – Farap – Turkmenabat – Mary – Tejen – Ashgabat – Serdar – Turkemenbashi – ferry – Baku – Alat – Gazi Mammed – Ganja – Kazakh – Red Bridge – Tbilisi – Mtskheta – Khashuri – Senaki – Poti (– ferry to Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine) – Batumi (– ferry to Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine) – Sarpi – Sarp – Trabzon – Samsun – Merzifon – Gerede – Istanbul – Kapikule – Border of Bulgaria
AH6	Pusan – Kyongju – Kangnung – Kansong – Kosong – Wonsan (– Pyongyang) – Chongjin – Sonbong – Khasan – Hasan – Razdolnoe (– Vladivostok – Nahodka) – Ussuriysk – Pogranichny – Suifenhe – Harbin – Qiqihar – Manzhouli – Zabaykalsk – Chita – Ulan-Ude – Irkutsk – Krasnoyarsk – Novosibirsk – Omsk – Isilkul – Karakuga – Petropavlovsk – Chistoe – Petuhovo – Chelyabinsk – Ufa – Samara – Moscow – Krasnoe – Border of Belarus
AH7	Yekaterinburg – Chelyabinsk – Troisk – Kaerak – Kostanai – Astana – Karaganda – Burubaital – Merke – Chaldovar – Kara Balta – Osh – Andijon – Tashkent – Syrdaria – Khavast – Khujand – Dushanbe – Nizhniy Panj – Shirkhan – Polekhumi – Djibulsarj – Kabul – Kandahar – Speenboldak – Chaman – Quetta – Kalat – Karachi
AH8	Border of Finland – Torpynovka – Vyborg – St. Petersburg – Moscow – Tambov – Borysgolebsk – Volgograd – Astrakhan – Hasavjurt – Mahachkala – Kazmalyarskiy – Samur – Sumgayit – Baku – Alat – Bilasuvar – Astara – Rasht – Qazvin – Tehran – Saveh – Ahvaz – Bandar Emam

Table 3. (continued)

AH route number	Itinerary
South-East Asia	
AH11	Vientiane – Ban Lao – Thakhek – Seno – Pakse – Veunkham – Tranpeangkreal – Stung Treng – Kratie – Phnom Penh – Sihanoukville
AH12	Nateuy – Oudomxai – Pakmang – Louang Phrabang – Vientiane – Thanaleng – Nong Khai – Udon Thani – Khon Kaen – Nakhon Ratchasima – Hin Kong
AH13	Oudomxai – Muang Ngeun – Huai Kon – Uttaradit – Phitsanulok – Nakhon Sawan
AH14	Hai Phong – Ha Noi – Viet Tri – Lao Cai – Hekou – Kunming – Ruili – Muse – Lashio – Mandalay
AH15	Vinh – Cau Treo – Keoneau – Ban Lao – Thakhek – Nakhon Phanom – Udon Thani
AH16	Dong Ha – Lao Bao – Densavanh – Seno – Savannakhet – Mukdahan – Khon Kaen – Phitsanulok – Tak
AH18	Hat Yai – Sungai Kolok – Rantau Panjang – Kota Bharu – Kuantan – Johor Bahru – Johor Bahru Causeway
AH19	Nakhon Ratchasima – Kabin Buri – Laem Chabang – Chonburi – Bangkok
AH25	Banda Aceh – Medan – Tebingtinggi – Dumai – Pekanbaru – Jambi – Palembang – Tanjung Karang – Bakauheni – ferry – Merak
AH26	Laoag – Manila – Legazpi – Matnog – ferry – Allen – Tacloban (– Ormoc – ferry – Cebu) – Liloan – ferry – Surigao – Davao (– Cagayan de Oro) – General Santos – Zamboanga
East and North-East Asia	
AH30	Ussuriysk – Khabarovsk – Belogorsk – Chita
AH31	Belogorsk – Blagoveshchensk – Heihe – Harbin – Changchun – Shenyang – Dalian
AH32	Sonbong – Wonjong – Quanne – Hunchun – Changchun – Arshan – Numrug – Sumber – Choybalsan – Ondorhaan – Nalayh – Ulaanbaatar – Uliastay – Hovd
AH33	Harbin – Tongjiang
AH34	Lianyungang – Zhengzhou – Xi'an
South Asia	
AH41	Border of Myanmar – Teknaf – Cox's Bazar – Chittagong – Katchpur – Dhaka – Hatikamrul – Jessore – Mongla
AH42	Lanzhou – Xining – Golmud – Lhasa – Zhangmu – Kodari – Kathmandu – Narayanghat – Pathlaiya – Birgunj – Raxaul – Piprakothi – Muzaffarpur – Barauni – Barhi
AH43	Agra – Gwalior – Nagpur – Hyderabad – Bangalore – Krishnagiri – Madurai – Dhanushkodi – ferry – Tallaimannar – Anuradhapura – Dambulla – Kurunegala (– Kandy) – Colombo – Galle – Matara
AH44	Dambulla – Trinconmalee
AH45	Kolkata – Kharagpur – Balasore – Bhubaneswar – Visakhapatnam – Vijayawada – Chennai – Krishnagiri – Bangalore
AH46	Kharagpur – Nagpur – Dhule
AH47	Gwalior – Dhule – Thane (– Mumbai) – Bangalore
AH48	Phuentsholing – Border of India
AH51	Peshawar – Dera Ismail Khan – Quetta

Table 3. (continued)

AH route number	Itinerary
North, Central and South-West Asia	
AH60	Omsk – Cherlak – Pnirtyshskoe – Pavlodar – Semipalatinsk – Georgievka – Taskesken – Ucharal – Almaty – Kaskelen – Burubaital
AH61	Kashi – Turugart – Torougart – Naryn – Bishkek – Georgievka – Kordai – Merke – Shymkent – Kyzylorda – Aralsk – Karabutak – Aktyubinsk – Ural'sk – Kamenka – Ozinki – Saratov – Borysglebsk – Voronezh – Kursk – Krupets – Border of Ukraine
AH62	Petropavlovsk – Arkalyk – Zhezkazgan – Kyzylorda – Shymkent – Zhibek Zholy – Chernyavka – Tashkent – Syrdaria – Samarkand – Guzar – Termez – Hairatan – Mazar-i-Sharif
AH63	Samara – Kurlin – Pogodaev – Ural'sk – Atyrau – Beyneu – Oasis – Nukus – Bukhara – Guzar
AH64	Barnaul – Veseloyarskyj – Krasny Aul – Semipalatinsk – Pavlodar – Shiderty – Astana – Kokshetau – Petropavlovsk
AH65	Kashi – Arkaxtam – Irkeshtam – Sary-Tash (– Osh) – Karamyk – Vakhdat – Dushanbe – Tursunzade – Uzun – Termez
AH66	Border of China – Kulma Pass – Khorugh – Kulob – Vakhdat – Dushanbe
AH67	Kuitun – Baketu – Bakhty – Taskesken – Semipalatinsk – Pavlodar – Shiderty – Karaganda – Zhezkazgan
AH68	Jinghe – Alatawshankou – Dostyk – Ucharal
AH70	Border of Ukraine – Donetsk – Volgograd – Astrakhan – Kotyaevka – Atyrau – Beyneu – Zhetybai (– Aktau) – Bekdash – Turkmenbashi – Serdar – Gudurovum – Inche Boroun – Gorgan – Sari – Semnan – Damghan – Yazd – Anar – Bandar Abbas
AH71	Dilaram – Zarang – Milak – Zabol – Dashtak
AH72	Tehran – Qom – Esfahan – Shiraz – Bushehr
AH75	Tejen – Sarahs – Sarakhs – Mashhad – Birjand – Nehbandan – Dashtak – Zahedan – Chabahar
AH76	Polekhumri – Mazar-i-Sharif – Herat
AH77	Djibulsarj – Bamiyan – Herat – Tourghondi – Serkhetabat – Mary
AH78	Ashgabat – Chovdan Pass – Bajgiran – Qucham – Sabzevar – Kerman
AH81	Larsi – Mtskheta – Tbilisi – Sadakhlo – Bagratashen – Vanadjor – Ashtarak – Yerevan – Eraskh – Sadarak – Nakhchivan – Julfa (– Jolfa) – Ordubad – Agarak – Meghri Aghband – Goradiz – Gazi Mammed – Alat – Baku – ferry – Aktau
AH82	Border of the Russian Federation – Leselidze – Sukhumi – Senaki – Khashuri – Akhaltsikhe (– Vale) – Zdanov – Bavra – Gumri (– Akurik) – Ashtarak – Yerevan – Eraskh – Goris – Kapan – Meghri – Agarak – Nour Douz – Jolfa – Iveoqlu
AH83	Kazakh – Uzungala – Paravakar – Yerevan
AH84	Dogubayazit – Diyarbakir – Gaziantep – Toprakkale (– Iskenderun) – Adana – Icel
AH85	Refahiye – Amasya – Merzifon
AH86	Askale – Bayburt – Trabzon
AH87	Ankara – Afyon – Usak – Izmir

Notes: Routes in parentheses identify branches from the place indicated immediately before the parentheses.

Underlined sections indicate potential Asian Highway routes.

The word "ferry" shall not be construed so as to impose any obligation on the Parties.

Table 4. Asian Highway design standards

Highway classification		Primary (4 or more lanes)					Class I (4 or more lanes)					Class II (2 lanes)					Class III (2 lanes)				
Terrain classification		L	R	M	S		L	R	M	S		L	R	M	S		L	R	M	S	
Design speed (km/h)		120	100	80	60		100	80		50		80	60	50	40		60	50	40	30	
Width (m)		(50)					(40)					(40)					(30)				
Lane		3.50					3.50					3.50					3.00 (3.25)				
Shoulder		3.00		2.50			3.00		2.50			2.50		2.00			1.5 (2.0)		0.75 (1.5)		
Median strip		4.00		3.00			3.00		2.50			N/A		N/A			N/A		N/A		
Min. radii of horizontal curve (m)		520	350	210	115		350	210	80			210	115	80	50		115	80	50	30	
Pavement slope (%)		2					2					2					2-5				
Shoulder slope (%)		3-6					3-6					3-6					3-6				
Type of pavement		Asphalt/cement concrete					Asphalt/cement concrete					Asphalt/cement concrete					Dbl. bituminous treatment				
Max. superelevation (%)		10					10					10					10				
Max. vertical grade (%)		4	5	6	7		4	5	6	7		4	5	6	7		4	5	6	7	
Structure loading (minimum)		HS20-44					HS20-44					HS20-44					HS20-44				

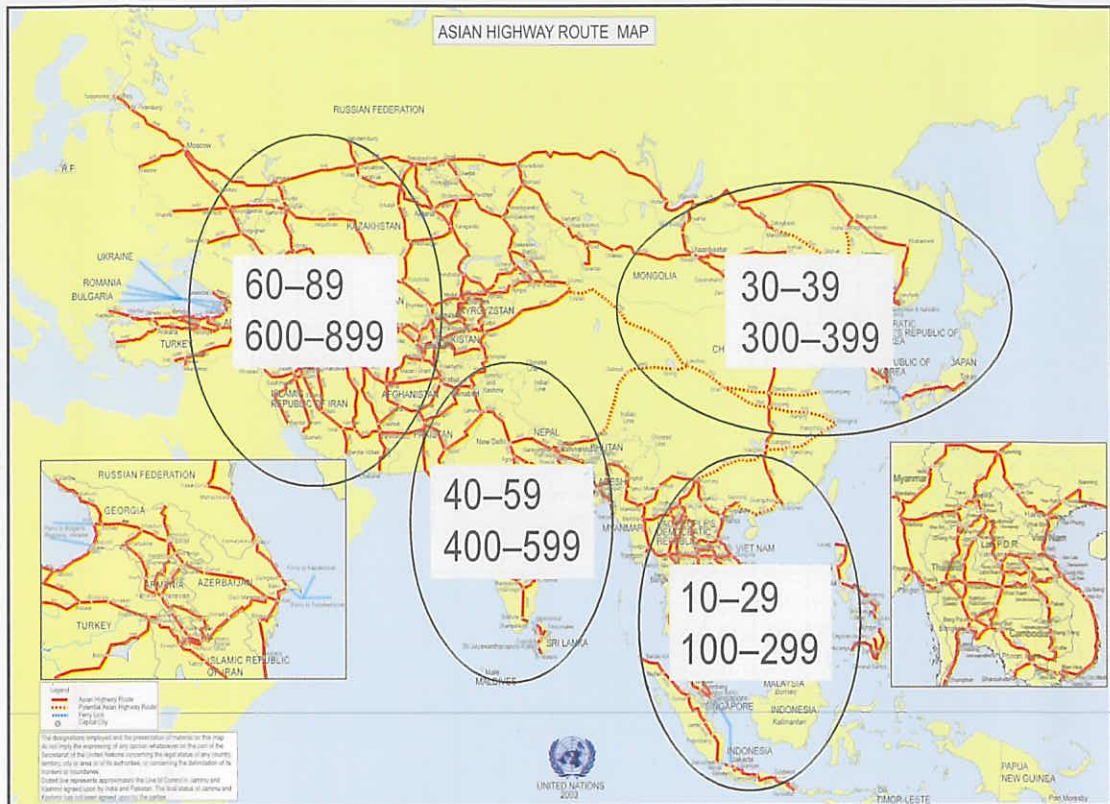
Notes: Figures in parentheses are desirable values.

Minimum radii of horizontal curve should be determined in conjunction with superelevation.

The recommended width of the median can be reduced with the proper type of guard fence.

The Parties should apply their national standards when constructing structures such as bridges, culverts and tunnels along the Asian Highway.

Figure 2. Numbering system of the Asian Highway routes



5. Promotion of the Asian Highway

ESCAP member countries have been working to develop and upgrade AH routes within their national plans and policies. Much still remains to be done in terms of constructing missing links such as bridges, upgrading of substandard sections and allocating adequate funding for maintenance of the AH routes.

It is now critical to promote a greater awareness amongst policy-makers and the general public of the contribution of the Asian Highway to regional economic and social progress. The ESCAP secretariat has been providing information to highway administrations, road developers, financing institutions, road users, tourists, the private sector and the general public to increase visibility and raise public awareness of the importance of the Asian Highway. Some past activities have included:

(a) Events

Several expert group meetings, seminars, a symposium and workshops for participating member countries, subregional and international organizations have been held to exchange ideas, share experiences and consider policy options and best practices. These activities generated a number of important suggestions for the development of the Asian Highway. For example, the ESCAP-Japan Symposium on the Asian Highway Development, held in Tokyo in 1996 ended with a strong recommendation to strengthen regional cooperation through development, formalization and promotion of the Asian Highway.

(b) Asian Highway Route Map

A series of maps entitled "A Practical Guide to Motorists - Asian Highway Route Map" were published between 1976 and 1988, sponsored by a tyre manufacturer. These publications were reprinted several times and enjoyed wide recognition amongst travelers.

(c) Asian Highway Database

An Asian Highway database, initiated in 1995, now encompasses details of the network within 31 countries. Some basic information has been posted on the Asian Highway web page. The database is currently being updated, with additional features being added using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software.

(d) Asian Highway web page

The Asian Highway web page (<http://www.unescap.org/tctd/ah/index.htm>) contains some key information on the Asian Highway and the database. Internet users have increasingly visited it to access the database and download Asian Highway-related publications. Among the most frequently visited pages are those containing files related to the Highway, country data, tourism prospects and the Asian Highway study on the Northern Corridor.

(e) Asian Highway Brochures

An Asian Highway brochure was published in English and Japanese. Another brochure has been published on the database as a useful handout for distribution to interested users in the Asian Highway member countries.

(f) Asian Highway Auto-Venture

From 1978 to 1998 the "Asian Highway Auto-Venture", an auto-rally was jointly organized by the Automobile Association of Singapore and the Tourism Authority of Thailand, under ESCAP sponsorship. This event took place annually along the Asian Highway Route Nos. 1 and 2 through Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. Participants included families and ranged from children to grandparents, all of whom enjoyed the event and opportunity to explore major tourism attractions along the routes.

6. A Vision of the Future

The unanimous of adoption of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network by 32 member countries was a landmark event and the Asian Highway project has entered into a new phase. It will enhance the regional network by boosting the priority given by member countries to its development in accordance with the uniform design standards. More Asian Highway route signage will be installed to guide international travellers.

The flow of international traffic is steadily increasing through the Asian Highway network, and will grow further with improved infrastructure, as in Europe. Ways to ensure the sustained growth in cross-border flow of peoples and goods will continue to be discussed in the Working Group on the Asian Highway. At present, the Asian Highway network includes primarily trunk routes of international and domestic importance, but in the future, it is envisaged that secondary roads linking to the Asian Highway will become part of the network, providing important additional links to domestic and international networks.

It is envisaged that a day will soon come when products from Singapore, Shanghai or Bandar Abbas will be delivered to buyers in Central Asia or tourists and adventurers may drive to Europe from Tokyo or Bali. The benefits of this for the peoples of the ESCAP region are immense and unparalleled.

II. ASIAN HIGHWAY ROUTES IN MEMBER COUNTRIES

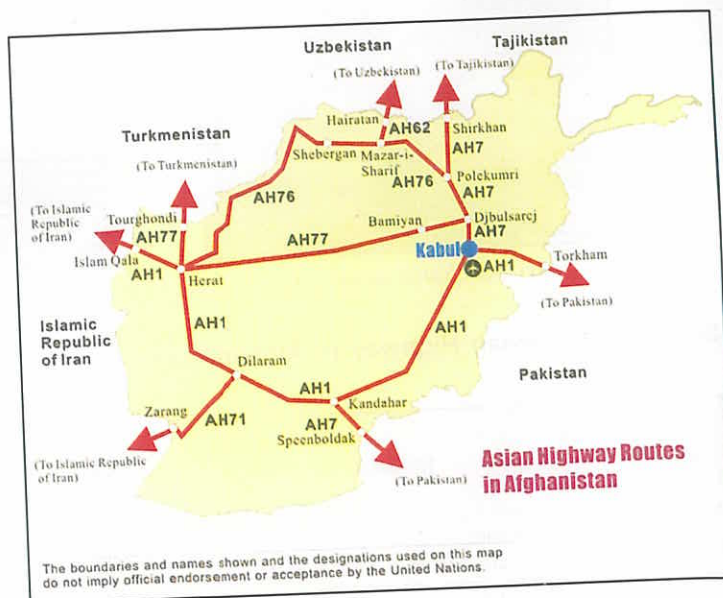
1. Afghanistan



A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Afghanistan to the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Asian Highway routes in Afghanistan have tremendous potential to play an important part in transit transport from Central Asia to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

The Asian Highway routes and national roads have identical route numbers. Due to various periods of conflict, roads and bridges were seriously damaged and neglected. Comprehensive upgrading and rehabilitation is required to meet the Asian Highway classification and design standards. Many funding agencies are supporting the reconstruction of major highways in Afghanistan.



Most of Afghanistan is mountainous. The fertile valleys and plains are home to most of the population. The land is mainly dry. Less than 10 per cent of the land is cultivated and much arable land was damaged by war in the 1980s. The country has considerable potential for natural gas. The population is diverse, including Afghans and Pathans, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, and nomadic Turkmen. Pushtu (Afghan), Dari (Persian), Tajik, and Uzbek are the principal languages.

Country Profile	
Capital	Kabul
Area	647,500 sq km
Population	23,897,000 (2003)
Urban Population	23 per cent
GDP	US\$ 21 billion (2000 est.)
GDP per capita	US\$ 800 (2000 est.)
Currency	Afghani (AFA)
Length of Road	21,400 km (2000)
Asian Highway route length	4,247 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	56,000 (1996)

Located on the land route to India through the famed Khyber Pass, Afghanistan has witnessed many conquering armies through the ages.

B. Asian Highway in Afghanistan



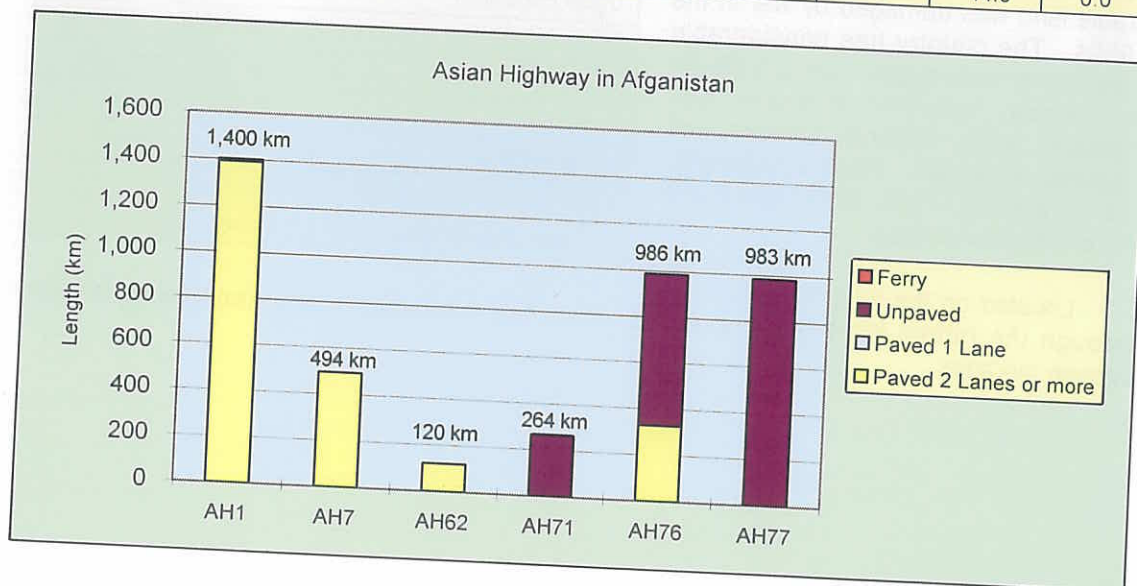
AH1 from Kabul to Kandahar



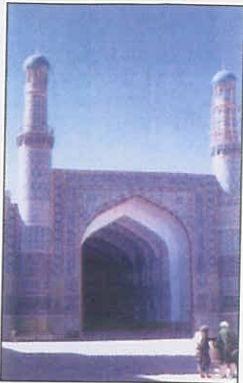
AH1 in Kabul

Status of the Asian Highway in Afghanistan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)	Ferry (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane		
AH1	Torkham – Kabul – Kandahar – Dilaram – Herat – Islam Qala	1,400	1,390	10		
AH7	Shirkhan – Polekhumri – Djbul sarcj – Kabul – Kandahar – Speenboldak	494	493			1
AH62	Hairatan – Mazar-i-Sharif	120	120			
AH71	Dilaram – Zarang	264			264	
AH76	Polekhumri – Mazar-i-Sharif – Herat	986	327		659	
AH77	Djbul sarcj – Bamiyan – Herat – Tourghondi	983			983	
Total		4,247	2,330	10	1,906	1
Percentage		100	54.9	0.2	44.9	0.0



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway



Herat (AH1/AH76/AH77)

The Masjid-e-Jami, in the centre of Herat's has been a place of worship since the time of Zoroaster. Rebuilt several times, the mosque stands in perfect splendour since its most recent restoration which is nearing completion.

Kabul Museum, Kabul (AH1/AH7)

The Kabul Museum once had one of the finest collections of antiquities in Asia. Though many items were stolen, damaged or destroyed over the last decade, it is still possible to see some artifacts.

D. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Ministry of Public Works, Microrayan-e-Awal, Kabul, Afghanistan.

E. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Transitional Islamic Government of Afghanistan, Opposite Italian Embassy, Charahi, Ariana, Kabul. Tel: Satellite (873) 7630 90611; Fax: (873-76) 252 3846.

2. Armenia

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Armenia to Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Roads are the predominant mode of transport. The railway is not well developed because of difficult mountainous terrain. The World Bank is assisting the country with road rehabilitation and upgrading.

Major cities include Yerevan, Gumri (Leninakan), Vanadzor (Kirovakan), and St. Etchmiadzin. Major bodies of water are Lake Sevan and the Araks and Razdan rivers.

Country Profile	
Capital	Yerevan
Area	29,800 sq km
Population	3,799,000 (2003)
Urban Population	67 per cent
GDP	US\$ 2.51 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 662 (2003)
Currency	Dram (AMD)
Total Length of Roads	15,918 (2000)
Asian Highway route length	958 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	5,760 (1996)

In addition to the Armenian majority, there are Azeri, Russian, and Kurdish minorities. The official language is Armenian.

B. Asian Highway in Armenia



AH81 Near Yerevan



AH81 Ashtarak to the North



Industrial products include chemicals, metals, electrical equipment and machinery. Grapes, cotton, and tobacco are major agricultural products, and food-processing, wine-making, fishing and mining of copper, molybdenum, zinc, lead, iron, and other ores are important to the economy.

Status of the Asian Highway in Armenia

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH81	Bagratashen – Vanadjor – Ashtarak – Yerevan – Eraskh Agarak – Meghri – Border of Azerbaijan	337	337	
AH82	Bavra – Gumri (– Akurik) – Ashtarak – Yerevan – Eraskh – Meghri – Goris – Kaspan – Agarak – Border of Iran	463	463	
AH83	Paravakar – Yerevan	158	158	
Total		958	958	
Percentage		100	100	

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Lake Sevan (AH83)

Lake Sevan is the world's largest alpine lake and the biggest water reservoir in Armenia. The fresh mountain air makes it an ideal place for rest and travel. Two historic churches, founded in 874, are located on islands in the lake.



Gumri (AH82)

Gumri, located 126 km from Yerevan on the bank of Akhourian River, is claimed to be one of the oldest cities in the world. Acacia, maple, ash and other trees grow in the surrounding valleys. There are numerous volcanic springs in the area.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Yerevan.
2. Tour Erebuni Museum to see fine artifacts from the fortress Erebuni, and Tsitsernakaberd, with its eternal flame. Visit Garni, Geghard and Vernisage, the open market of souvenirs.
3. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH81) to Ashtarak to see wonderful churches and monasteries dating back to the 15th and 16th centuries. Also visit the village of Oshagan.
4. Travel the *Asian Highway* (AH83) to Lake Sevan and Noraduz, visiting churches along the way.
5. Drive back to Yerevan.
6. Depart Yerevan.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Planning and Economic Analysis, Department of "Armenian Highways" SSCC, 28 Nalbandyan Street, Yerevan, Armenia. Tel: (374-1) 582 104; Fax: (374-1) 560 715/151 446.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Armenia Information, 3 Nalbandyan St., Yerevan, Armenia. Tel: (374-1) 54-23-03/04; E-mail: help@armeniainfo.am; Web: www.armeniainfo.am.

3. Azerbaijan

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Azerbaijan to Armenia, Georgia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan (by ferry) from Baku. The Asian Highway linkage through Baku port on the Caspian Sea is important for providing transit transport between Central Asia and Europe. Freight transport mostly relies on road transport. Multilateral and bilateral donors are supporting government efforts to improve and reconstruct the road network.

The country is rich in oil, natural gas, iron, copper, lead, zinc, and other ores. Manufactured products include machinery, electrical and oil drilling equipment, cement, and steel. Grains, fruit, grapes, cotton, silk, and tobacco are the major crops.

Overlooking the Caspian Sea, Baku is fast becoming a boomtown. Once a major stopover on the Great Silk Route, there are many captivating sights in this ancient country – Bronze Age petroglyphs, medieval minarets and mosques and Azerbaijan's famous carpets.

In addition to the Turkic-speaking Azeri (Azerbaijani) majority, there are Russian, Armenian and other minorities.



Country Profile	
Capital	Baku
Area	86,600 sq km
Population	8,117,000 (2003)
Urban Population	52 per cent
GDP	US\$ 7.05 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 869 (2003)
Currency	Azerbaijani Manat (AZM)
Major Port	Baku
Total Length of Roads	25,013 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	1,442 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	451,000 (2001)

B. Asian Highway in Azerbaijan



AH5 in Baku



Baku port in Caspian Sea

Status of the Asian Highway in Azerbaijan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH5	Baku – Alat – Gazi Mammed – Ganja – Kazakh – Red Bridge	515	515	
AH8	Samur – Sumgayit – Baku – Alat – Bilasuvar – Astara	451	451	
AH81	Sadarak – Nakhchivan – Julfa – Ordubad Aghband – Goradiz – Gazi Mammed	462	462	
AH83	Kazakh – Uzungala	14	14	
Total		1,442	1,442	
Percentage		100	100	

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway



Baku (AH5)

Located on the western shore of the Caspian Sea, Baku is one of Azerbaijan's largest cities. Its old town has a picturesque maze of narrow alleys and ancient buildings. A major cultural and educational center, Baku also has a flourishing industry related to the production of oil-industry equipment.

Ganja (AH5)

Ganja is one of the most ancient towns of Azerbaijan and its second most important city. It is dotted with a number of historic monuments such as the Imamzada tomb and complex, mosque of Albanians, Ganja Gates, Dar-us-Soltan Palace, bath-houses and caravanserais. To the south of city is the azure Blue Lake.



D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Baku.
2. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH8) city of Guva, a major flower and carpet production centre with 18th and 19th century mosques and ancient covered baths, or hammans. En route, stop off at the Chirag Fortress, built 1600 years ago.
3. Walk to the inviting village of Qashresch, known for its suspension bridge and "shashlik houses" (brochette restaurants). The region is a natural reserve full of gushing streams and remote villages. Continue to the Nabran seaside resort on the Caspian shores. Back to Baku.
4. Tour Baku, including its medieval walled city with its mosques, caravanserais, narrow alleyways, the Shirvansha's Palace and the mysterious Maiden's Tower.
5. Depart Baku.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

"Road Trans Service" Department, Ministry of Transport, 72/4 Uzeyir Hajibeyov, Baku, Azerbaijan 370010. Tel: (994-12) 9388083, 930130; Fax: (994-12) 985586.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Azerbaijan Ministry of Youth, Sport and Tourism, Baku-370072, Olimpiya Str. 4. Tel: 906442; Fax: 906438; E-mail: myst@myst.gov.az; Web: www.mys.azeri.com.

4. Bangladesh

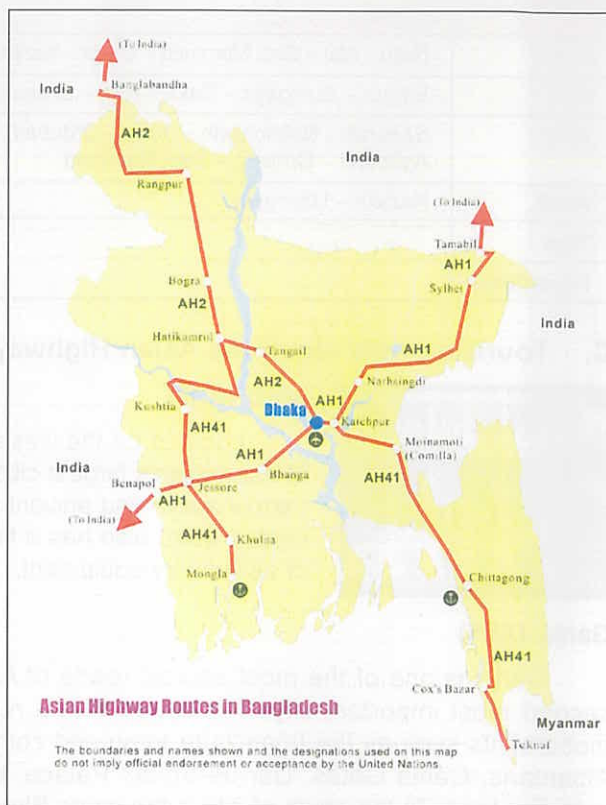
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Bangladesh to India and Myanmar and link the major seaports of Chittagong and Mongla with the capital, Dhaka. The construction of the Bangabandhu (Jamuna) Bridge, access roads to the bridge, Dhaka eastern bypass and other toll roads are major initiatives to improve road transport. Along AH1, the Government is planning the Padma Bridge, which will remove another missing link in the network.

Although road development is hampered by regular floods and seasonal cyclones, the Government is working to complete the priority highways, develop five arterial corridors linking the ports to the major cities, and formulate the legal and policy framework to attract the private sector.

Bangladesh is composed mainly of the combined delta of the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna rivers. The economy is largely agricultural; jute (of which Bangladesh produces over 50 per cent of the world supply), rice, sugarcane, and tea are the principal crops. Principal manufactured products include jute products, textiles, paper, processed food, and fertilizers.

Bangladesh has the world's highest population density. Most of the people are Bengalis. The official language is Bengali, but English is also spoken.



Country Profile	
Capital	Dhaka
Area	144,000 sq km
Population	135,678,000 (2003)
Urban Population	23 per cent
GDP	US\$ 50.54 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 373 (2003)
Currency	Taka
Major Ports	Chittagong and Mongla
Total Length of Roads	207,486 km (1999)
Asian Highway route length	1,806 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	138,451 (1999)

B. Asian Highway in Bangladesh



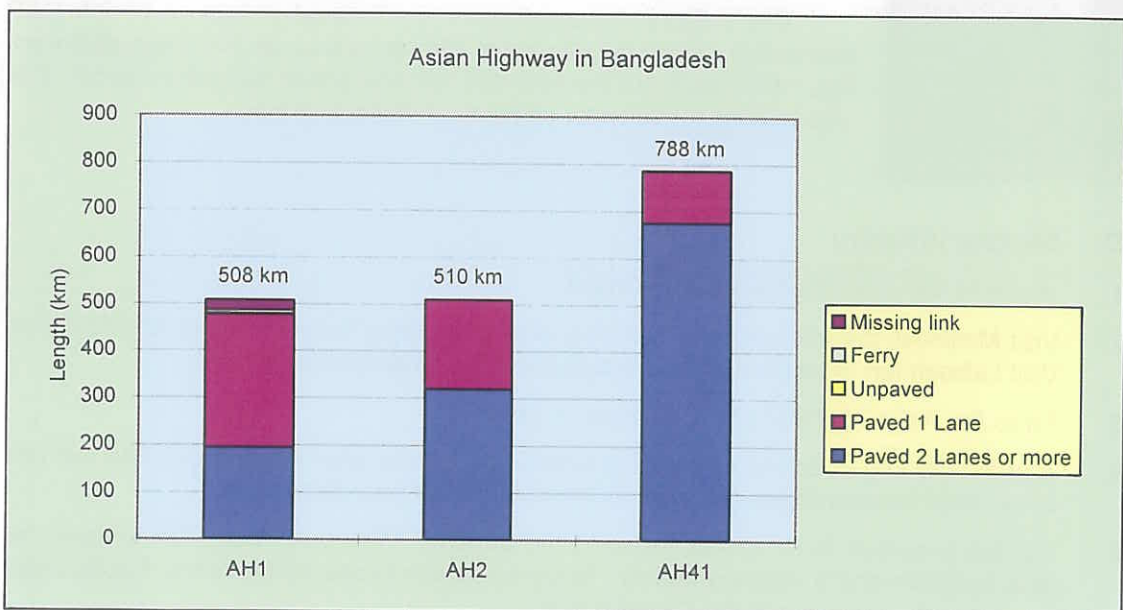
AH1 near Sylhet



AH2 Jamuna Bridge

Status of the Asian Highway in Bangladesh

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)	Ferry (km)	Missing Link (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane			
AH1	Tamabil – Sylhet – Katchpur – Dhaka – Jessore – Benapol	508	194	283	2	8	21
AH2	Tamabil – Sylhet – Katchpur – Dhaka – Hatikamrul – Banglabandha	510	319	191			
AH41	Teknaf – Cox's Bazar – Chittagong – Katchpur – Dhaka – Hatikamrul – Jessore – Mongla	788	675	110		3	
Total		1,806	1,188	584	2	11	21
Percentage		100	65.8	32.3	0.1	0.6	1.2



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Dhaka (AH1)

Dhaka is a blend of old and new architecture, and the centre of industrial, commercial, cultural, educational and political activities. Motijheel is the main commercial area. The major waterfront, Sadarghat, on the bank of the river Buriganga bustles with country boats, motor launches, fishing boats and paddle-steamers.



Chittagong (AH41)

Chittagong is a major port and country's second largest city. Major attractions include the panoramic Foe's Lake, religious shrines of Bayazid Bostami and Shah Amanat Shah, an ethnological museum, and a World War II cemetery. The beach on the Bay of Bengal and the Temple of Chandranath on the Sitakunda Hills are worth visiting.

Sylhet (AH1)

Lying between the Khasia and the Jaintia hills in the north, and the Tripura hills in the south, Sylhet is rich with terraced tea gardens, rolling countryside and exotic flora and fauna. Thick tropical forests are home to many species of wildlife, scented orange groves and luxuriant pineapple plantations.



Cox's Bazar (AH41)

Cox's Bazar boasts the world's longest unbroken beach (120 kilometres). Along the beach are attractions such as the conch shell market, tribal handicraft markets and salt and prawn cultivation farms. It is also famous for colourful pagodas, temples and tribes.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Dhaka.
2. Visit Motijheel, the main commercial area, and the bustling waterfront area of Sadarghat. Visit Lalbagh fort, the seven-domed mosque and the Dhakeshwari Temple.
3. Fly to the *Asian Highway* city of Chittagong (AH41).
4. Tour the city and its environs, including Sittakunda, named after the goddess Sita and one of the most famous pilgrimage sites for Hindus from all over South Asia.
5. Full-day excursion to Rangmati, including the Chakma Tribal belt. Visit tribal villages, the local museum and a weaving factory. Enjoy a sampan cruise of the scenic Kaptai Lake, formed by the damming of the Karnafuli river.

6. Drive 152 kilometres along the *Asian Highway* (AH41) to the city of Cox's Bazar.
7. Explore Cox's Bazar, the tourist capital of Bangladesh. Visit Adinath Temple on the peak of Moinak hill.
8. Proceed on an excursion to Moheshkali Island. Visit old temples and the Rakhinee tribal village. Afternoon drive by jeep along the *Asian Highway* (AH41) to Himchari-Teknaf, the southernmost spot of Bangladesh.
9. Drive back to Chittagong. Fly back to Dhaka.
10. Depart Dhaka.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of Roads and Highways, Ministry of Communications, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
Tel: (880-2) 9551343; Fax: (880-2) 9562798; E-mail: routine@citechco.net.

F. Useful contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Main Building, Bhaban 6, Civil Secretariat Dhaka 2, Bangladesh. Tel: (880-2) 861 8070; Fax: (880-2) 861 6896; Web1: www.bdtradeinfo.com/travel/index.asp; Web2: www.parijatan.org.

5. Bhutan

A. Introduction

Bhutan has only recently joined the Asian Highway. Talks are underway to link Phuentsholing, a southern border town, with the Asian Highway AH48 link from India. There is an existing national highway from Phuentsholing to the capital, Thimphu. An Asian Highway link to Phuentsholing will facilitate international transport and access to sea-ports for landlocked Bhutan.

Bhutan is a land of great mountain ranges and intensively cultivated valleys. The terrain and fragile topography pose challenges to the development of the road network in Bhutan. Bhutan is working to develop and maintain the road network to improve internal access to various parts of the country and to economic centres.

Rice and other grains and potatoes are the main crops. Metal, wood and leather goods, paper-making and weaving are also important. The country exports some fruit as well as coal, stone, and cement. Tourism is a significant source of income.

Bhutan's people are mostly Bhutias, or Drukpas, ethnically related to Tibetans. The national language of Bhutan is Dzongkha. English is the other means of communication and all the instructions and signboards, menus and books are in English.

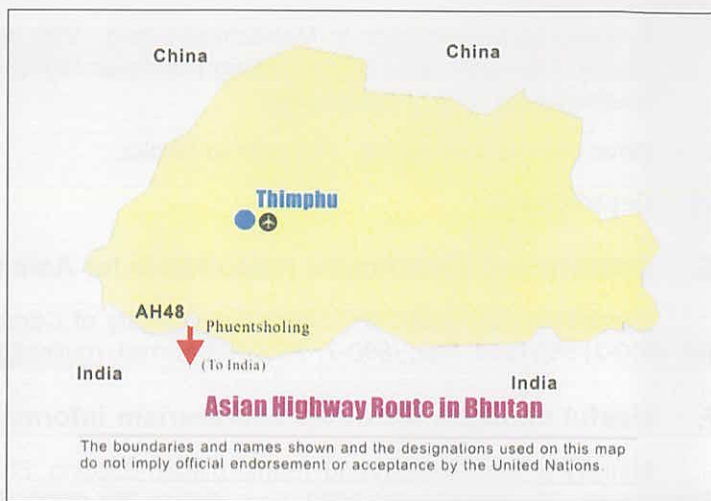
B. Asian Highway in Bhutan



Road section from Lhuentse to Dungalhar (eastern part of country)



National Highway from Thimphu to Phuentsholing near Tala



Country Profile	
Capital	Thimphu
Area	47,000 sq km
Population	2,257,000 (2003)
Urban Population	8 per cent
GDP	US\$ 0.62 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 276 (2003)
Currency	Ngultrum
Total Length of Roads	3,920 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	1 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	25,046 (2003)

Status of the Asian Highway in Bhutan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH48	Phuentsholing – Border of India	1	1		
Total		1	1		
Percentage		100	100		

C. Tourism spots

Thimphu

Situated at an elevation of 2,300 m, Thimphu is home to civil servants, expatriates and the monk body. It is also an ideal spot for day walks with a number of monasteries within a few hours trek. Thousands of prayer flags dot the view over Thimphu.



Phuentsholing (AH48)

The gateway town to the south of Bhutan, it is a thriving commercial centre on the northern edge of the Indian plains. From here, heading northwards, the road twists and turns up into the Himalayan foothills, passing through forests and villages to the valleys of Thimphu and Paro.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive at Paro Airport (2,120 m above sea level), drive through the valley of Paro and stroll around the town.
2. Drive to the ruins of Drugyel Dzong (fortress). Visit the National Museum housed in an ancient watchtower. Walk to the traditional wooden bridge.
3. Drive to Ramthongkha and then hike about 90 minutes to the viewpoint of Taktshang, the Tiger's Nest. This magical monastery is located on a vertical granite cliff 1,000 m above the valley floor.
4. Drive through the beautiful valleys of Paro and Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan. Visit monasteries, a painting school, folk studio, nunnery and a handicraft emporium.
5. Visit the Memorial Chorten to see gold and silversmiths at work.
6. After an early morning visit to the local market, depart Thimphu for the Asian Highway city of Phuentsholing, visiting a number of monasteries and the Chukha hydro power project along the way.
7. Explore Phuentsholing, the trade entry route for all material and supplies from India.
8. Depart Phuentsholing.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of Roads, Ministry of Works and Human Settlement, Thimphu, Bhutan.
Tel: (975-2) 322237; Fax: (975-2) 323122; Web1: www.dor.gov.bt; Web2: www.bhutan.gov.bt

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Department of Tourism, Post Box 126, Thimphu, Bhutan. Tel: (975) 2-323251, 2-323252; Fax: 2-323695; E-mail: tab@druknet.bt; Web: www.tourism.gov.bt

6. Cambodia

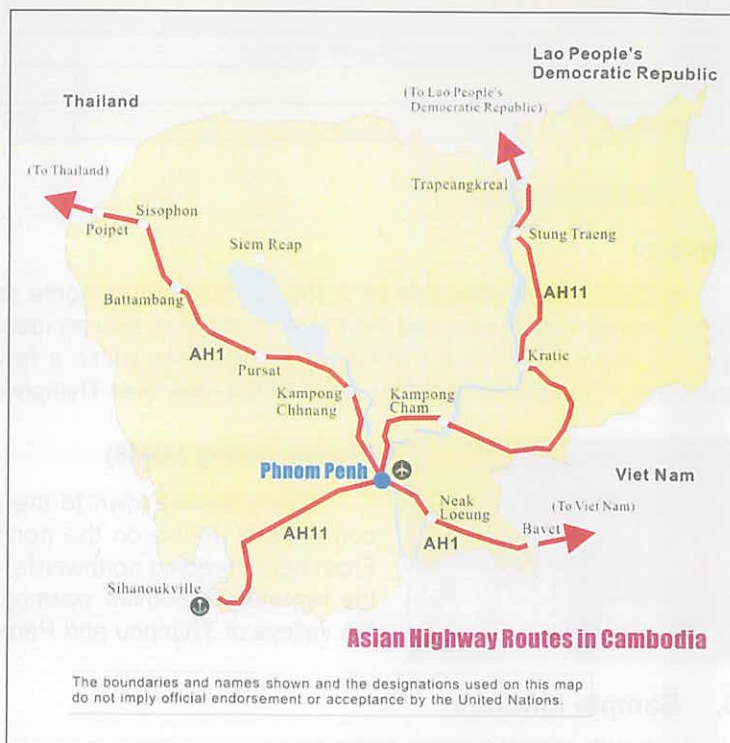
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Cambodia to Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand, and Viet Nam and provide access to the important port of Sihanoukville. Cambodia is improving its road network, the dominant mode of transport, to facilitate links with neighbouring countries, and to open up to trade and tourism.

The heart of the country consists of a large central alluvial plain, drained by the Mekong River and the Tônlé Sap (Great Lake). Mountains flank the plain in the north west and south west.

Cambodia has a tropical climate with monsoons, ideal for growing rice, the chief crop. Corn, vegetables, peanuts, tobacco, and sugar palm are also grown. The industrial sector centres on the processing of agricultural products. Both the industrial and agricultural sectors were devastated during the civil war and strife of the 1970s and 1980s.

About 90 per cent of the population is ethnic Khmer (Cambodian). Minorities include Chinese, Vietnamese, Cham-Malays, and a number of hill tribes. Khmer is the national language, but French is widely spoken.



Country Profile	
Capital	Phnom Penh
Area	181,040 sq km
Population	14,144,000 (2003)
Urban Population	19 per cent
GDP	US\$ 18.7 billion (2001 est.)
GDP per capita	US\$ 1,500 (2001 est.)
Currency	Riel
Major Ports	Sihanoukville
Length of Roads	12,323 km (2000)
Asian Highway route length	1,340 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	350,257 (2000)

B. Asian Highway in Cambodia



AH1 from Pursat to Battambang



AH11 near Kizuma Bridge

Status of the Asian Highway in Cambodia

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)	Ferry (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane		
AH1	Bavet – Phnom Penh – Poipet	575	573			2
AH11	Tranpeangreal – Stung Treng – Kratie – Phnom Penh – Sihanoukville	765	764			1
Total		1,340	1,337			3
Percentage		100	99.8			0.2

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Phnom Penh (AH1/AH11)

Phnom Penh is located at the confluence of three rivers – the Mekong, the Bassac and Tônlé Sap which feeds into the lake of the same name. Once known as the Pearl of Asia but heavily damaged by war in the 1970s, the city is experiencing a renaissance. It has an exotic blend of Asian and European influence.



The Temples of Angkor

Accessible from Siem Reap (off AH1), Angkor is one of the most important archaeological sites in South-East Asia. Stretching over some 400 sq kilometres, Angkor Archaeological Park contains the magnificent remains of the different capitals of the Khmer Empire, from the 9th to the 15th century. Angkor Wat became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1992.

Tônle Sap Lake

The largest lake in South-East Asia and one of Asia's largest freshwater fisheries. Captivating temples dot its shores. The streams and wetland vegetation support a rich biodiversity of species. Seasonal flooding sees the lake increase four times in area, from 2,500 sq kilometres in the dry season to about 10,000 sq kilometres in the wet season.



Sihanoukville (AH11)

Sihanoukville is Cambodia's only port and first "beach town". It is gradually being redeveloped as a tourist attraction, due to its superb coastal beaches. Constructed as a port city in the late 1950s, Sihanoukville is much newer, more urban and cosmopolitan than most Cambodian provincial cities.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in Siem Reap, gateway to the Temples of Angkor.
2. Visit the South Gate of Angkor Thom, Bayon, Baphuon, Terrace of Elephants and Terrace of the Leper King. Explore the main Angkor Wat and watch the sunset from Phnom Bakheng.
3. Depart for the *Asian Highway* city of Phnom Penh.
4. Tour Phnom Penh, including the Silver Pagoda, the Royal Palace and the National Museum of Khmer Arts. Afternoon, visit the Choeung Ek Killing Fields and the Toul Sleng Museum of Genocidal crime.
5. Drive to Takeo province, south of Phnom Penh on the *Asian Highway* (AH11) passing Tonle Bati, a picnic spot located on a small lake. The area also harbours Ta Phrom, the ruins of two unique 12th century temples. Visit Phnom Chisor mountain. On top of the 503 steps sit some very well preserved 10th/11th century temple ruins.
6. Take a speedboat to Phnom Da temple of the Funan era of early Khmer civilization. Drive to Kampot Province, visit Kep and spend the night in Kampot.
7. After a tour of Bokor Mountain Resort, drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH11) port of Sihanoukville.
8. Tour Kbal Chhay Waterfall, a short drive away from Sihanoukville, and return to the town. Enjoy a city tour including Buddhist temples, the seaport, Independence Square and Phsar Leu (Upper Market).
9. Depart Sihanoukville.

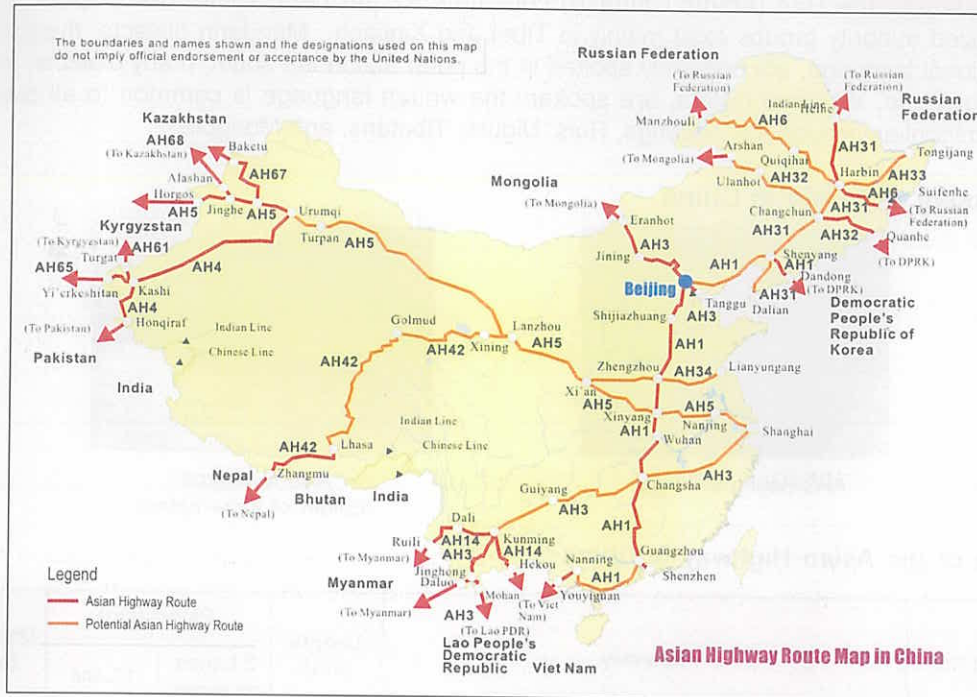
E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Road Infrastructure Department, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, #200, Norodom Boulevard, Phnom Penh. Tel: (855-12) 900729; Fax: (855-23) 723028.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

The Director General, Ministry of Tourism, #3 Movivong Blvd., Phnom Penh. Fax: (855-23) 426107, 215 292; Web: www.mot.gov.kh/mot.

7. China



A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link China to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Thailand and Viet Nam. The routes provide important access from landlocked Mongolia and Central Asian countries to seaports like Tianjin, Shanghai, Dalian, and Guangzhou. Road infrastructure has developed rapidly.

In the Tenth Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan, the goals are primarily to establish a national and international trunk network in order to spread economic benefits to the hinterlands.

China is the world's third largest country (after the Russian Federation and Canada). The economy is the world's third largest. About 60 per cent of the work force is engaged in agriculture. Principal crops are food grains, including rice, wheat, corn, millet, barley, kaoliang (a form of sorghum), peanuts, sweet potatoes, soybeans, cotton, tobacco and tea. China is one of the world's major mineral-producing countries. Reserves of coal, its most abundant mineral and principal energy source, rank among the world's largest. The country's enormous hydro-electric potential is being rapidly developed.

Country Profile	
Capital	Beijing
Area	9,596,960 sq km
Population	1,319,767,000 (2003)
Urban Population	39 per cent
GDP	US\$ 1,332 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 1,009 (2003)
Currency	Yuan
Major Ports	Shanghai, Dalian, Lianyungang & Tianjin
Total Length of Roads	1,765,222 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	27,846 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	20,530,000 (2002)

China produces textiles, chemicals, agriculture-related products, such as farm machinery, as well as machine tools, processed foods, iron and steel, building materials, and electronic equipment.

Although the Han (ethnic Chinese) constitute 92 per cent of the total population, 56 recognized minority groups exist mainly in Tibet and Xinjiang. Mandarin dialects, the basis of the national language, are uniformly spoken in the north, but in the south, many dialects, including Cantonese, Wu, and Hakka, are spoken; the written language is common to all dialects. Other minorities include the Zhuangs, Huis, Uigurs, Tibetans, and Mongols.

B. Asian Highway in China



AH3 Beijing to Tanggu



AH5 to Kogros
(Border of Kazakhstan)

Status of the Asian Highway in China

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH1	Dandong – <u>Shenyang</u> – Beijing – Shijiazhuang – Zhengzhou – Xinyang – Wuhan – Changsha – <u>Guangzhou</u> – (Shenzhen) – <u>Nanning</u> – Youyiguan	4,283	4,283		
AH3	Erlanhot – Beijing – Tanggu Shanghai – Hangzhou – Nanchang – Changsha – Guiyang – Kunming – Jinghong (– Daluo) – Mohan	3,926	3,869		57
AH4	Urumqi – Kashi – Honqiraf	1,863	1,863		
AH5	Shanghai – Nanjing – Xinyang – Xi'an – Lanzhou – Urumqi – Kuitun – Jinghe – Horgos	4,815	4,815		
AH6	Suifenhe – Harbin – Qiqihar – Manzhouli	1,523	1,523		
AH14	Hekou – Kunming – Ruili	1,178	1,178		
AH31	Heihe – Harbin – Changchun – Shenyang – Dalian	1,471	1,471		
AH32	Quanne – Hunchun – Changchun – Arshan	1,131	1,131		
AH33	Harbin – Tongjiang	575	575		
AH34	Lianyungang – Zhengzhou – Xi'an	1,033	1,033		
AH42	Lanzhou – Xining – Golmud – Lhasa – Zhangmu	2,893	2,418		475
AH61	Kashi – Turgat	169			169
AH65	Kashi – Yierkeshitan	235	235		
AH67	Kuitun – Baketu	390	390		
AH68	Jinghe – Alashan	94	94		
Total		25,579	25,047		532
Percentage		100	97.9		2.1

Note: The underlined sections indicate potential Asian Highway routes.

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway



The Great Wall, Beijing (AH1/AH3)

In about 220 B.C., under Qin Shi Huang, sections of earlier fortifications were merged to form a united defence system against invasions from the north. Construction continued up to the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), when the Great Wall became the world's largest military structure. Its historic and strategic importance is matched only by its architectural significance.

Stone Forest, Kunming (AH14)

Located in Shilin County, 84 kilometres to the south east of Kunming, the stone peaks, stalagmites and stalactites of the "Stone Forest" are estimated to have been formed 200 to 230 million years ago. From a distance, they look like a vast expanse of forests, and are one of the most visited spots in Yunnan Province.

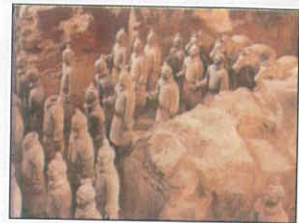


The Yufo (Jade Buddha) Temple, Shanghai (AH3)

Located in Shanghai, the Temple was built in 1882 but remains in perfect condition as a sanctuary of Zen Buddhism. The Temple derived its name from a jade statue of Sakyamuni from Myanmar. It contains a graceful image of the Buddha with a serene and calm look.

Xi'an (AH5)

The Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, was discovered in 1974. Qin, who died in 210 B.C., was the first unifier of China. He is buried at the site, surrounded by the famous terracotta warriors. The lifesized figures are all different; with their horses, chariots and weapons, they are masterpieces of realism and also of great historical interest.



D. Sample itineraries

North China

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Beijing.
2. Visit Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City's Imperial Palace, featuring the living quarters, museum and jewelry sections. Visit the Summer Palace and Lake Kunming.
3. Walk the ancient ramparts of the Great Wall. Stroll along the Sacred Way between statues of warriors and fantastic animals to visit the Ming Tombs and Chang Ling Exhibition Hall.
4. Fly to the *Asian Highway* city of Urumqi, once located on the route of the ancient Silk Road.
5. Visit Xinjiang Museum and take a boat ride on the Lake of Heaven (Tianchi). Visit a Kazakh family yurt in the surrounding grasslands and foothills of the Heavenly Mountains.

6. Drive along the *Asian Highway* to Turpan, site of the former Che Shi Kingdom. See the Astana Tombs, the Karez Well, the legendary Flaming Mountains, the Suliman Minaret, the ruins of Gao Chang City and Jiaohe City.
7. Drive back to Urumqi.
8. Fly to the *Asian Highway* city of Xi'an, site of amazing archeological discoveries. Visit the renowned Shaanxi Provincial Historical Museum.
9. Visit the Museum of Qin Terra Cotta Warriors and Horses where the life-size figures in battle-formation are the star features. See the Great Mosque, one of the oldest, largest and best-preserved mosques in China.
10. Fly to the *Asian Highway* city of Shanghai.
11. See the rich collections of the Shanghai Museum, Nanjing or Huai Hai Road, and the Jade Buddha Temple. Tour the Bund and see a performance at the Children's Palace.
12. Depart Shanghai.

South China

1. Arrive in the Asian Highway city of Kunming.
2. Visit the Botanical Gardens with its 4,000 species of tropical and subtropical plants. Tour Daguan Park known for being the longest antithetical couplet in China.
3. Tour the Stone Forest, including a visit to Wukeshu Village, local Sani minorities house or Qixin village to see the Yi minorities village.
4. Drive along the *Asian Highway* to Dali.
5. Visit the Three Pagodas, once part of the greatest temple complex on the Dali plain. Nearby, Erhai Lake has three main islands and several temples and villages.
6. Drive to Lijiang, the ancient capital of the Naxi kingdom, on the north west Yunnan Plateau. In the afternoon, visit the ancient Lijiang town, a World Heritage Site.
7. Visit the 800-year-old wall paintings which vividly reproduce scenes of dancing, weaving, fishing, felling trees and other aspects of everyday life through the Chinese history.
8. Drive to Zhongdian, a beautiful land known as "Shangri-La" with snow capped mountains, wide meadows and rivers. It is the home of many ethnic minorities with their colourful and fascinating cultures. See the Tiger's Leaping Gorge on the Yangtze River.
9. Fly back to and depart Kunming.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Communications, No. 11 Jianguomennei Avenue, Beijing 100736, China. Tel: (86-10) 6529 3109; Fax: (86-10) 6529 2261.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

China National Tourism Administration, A9 Jian Guo Men Nei Avenue, Beijing 100740, China. Tel: (86-10) 6512 2827; Fax: (86-10) 6512 2096. E-mail: xhzhang@cнта.gov.cn, Web: www.cnta.gov.cn/lyen/index.asp.

8. Democratic People's Republic of Korea

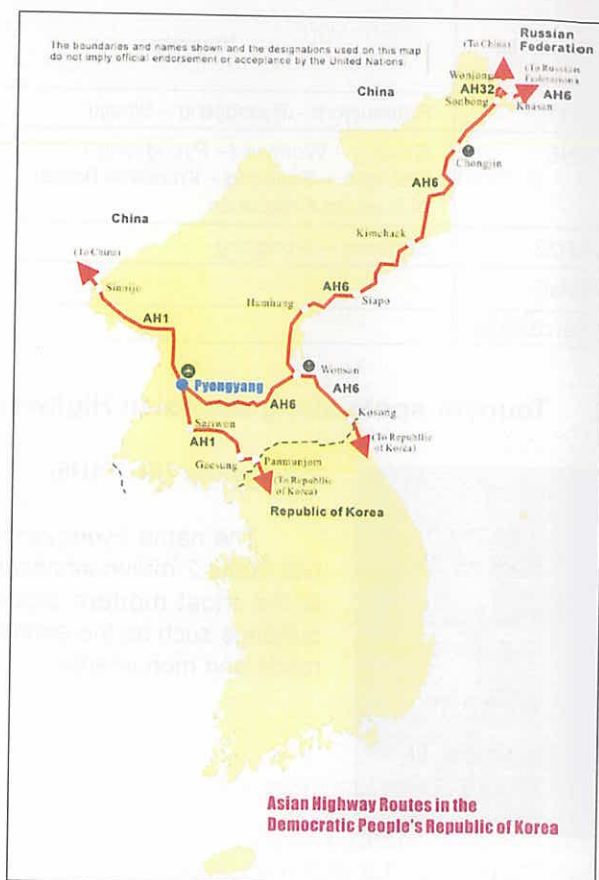


A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to China, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Korea and also to Rajin, Chongjin and Wonjong major seaports. Development of the Asian Highway routes in the Democratic People's of Korea is essential to connect the Korean Peninsula and mainland Asia.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is focusing on roads as an important mode of transport. Expressway and road construction programmes in the countryside are being implemented.

The mountainous interior is isolated and sparsely populated. The climate is temperate with rainfall concentrated in the summer. Its natural resources are coal, lead, tungsten, zinc, graphite, magnetite, iron ore, copper, gold, pyrites, salt, fluor spar, and hydropower. The official language is Korean.



Country Profile	
Capital	Pyongyang
Area	120,538 sq km
Population	22,664,000 (2003)
Urban Population	61 per cent
GDP	US\$ 22 billion (2002 est.)
GDP per capita	US\$ 1,000 (2002 est.)
Currency	Won (KPW)
Major Ports	Rajin, Chongjin, Wonjong
Total Length of Roads	31,210 km (2000)
Asian Highway route length	1,320 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	N.A.

B. Asian Highway in Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Status of the Asian Highway in Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unknown (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH1	Panmunjom – Pyongyang – Sinuiju	405			405
AH6	Kosong – Wonsan (– Pyongyang) – Chongjin – Sonbong – Khasan – Border of Russian Federation	855			855
AH32	Sonbong – Wongjong	60			60
Total		1,320			1,320
Percentage		100			100

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway



Pyongyang (AH1/AH6)

The name Pyongyang means “flat land” or “cozy place”. The city has about 2 million inhabitants. Situated on the Taedong River, the city is the most modern place in the country, with several prominent buildings such as the enormous Juche Tower and the Koryo Hotel, wide roads and monuments.

Pohyon Temple

A short drive from Pyongyang in the Myoyhang mountains, Pohyon Temple was built early in the 11th century. Besides the architectural wonders, it also houses a national treasure – 80,000 wooden blocks representing a complete collection of Buddhist scriptures.



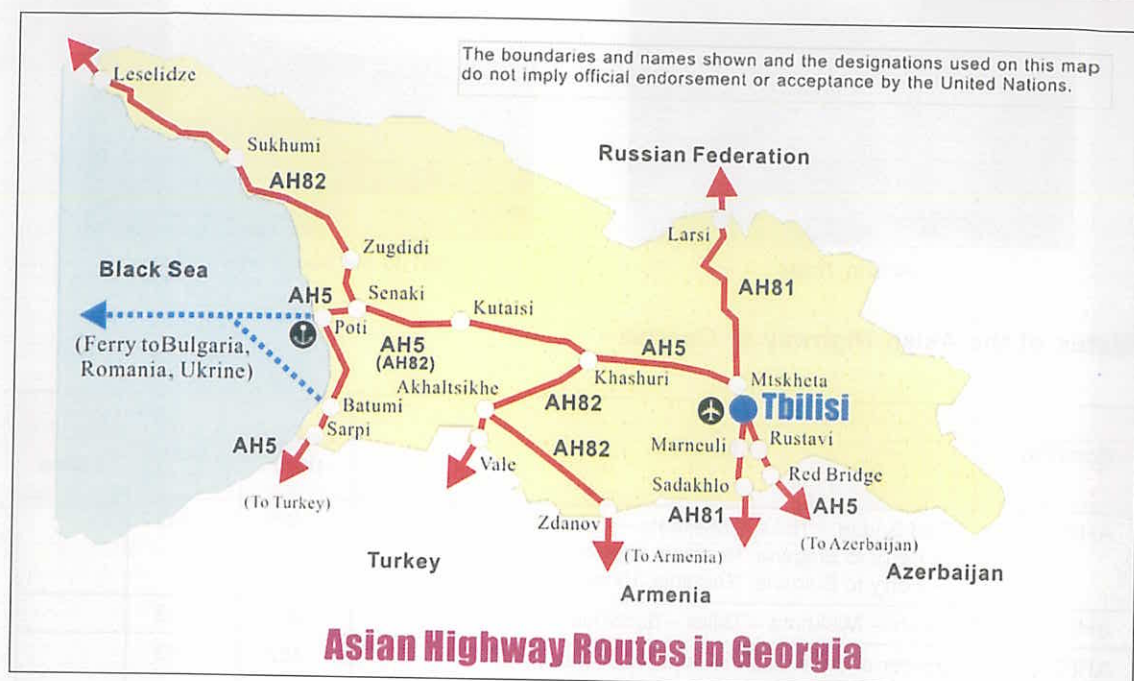
D. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Transport Management Department, Cabinet of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Pyongyang.

E. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

National Tourism Administration. Tel: (850-2) 18111 ext. 8901; Fax: (850-2) 381 3814547; E-mail: nta@silibank.com.

9. Georgia



A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Georgia with Armenia, Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation and Turkey and by sea ferry to Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine from Poti and Sarpi seaports in the Black Sea. Georgia is implementing a Presidential order to upgrade and rehabilitate the entire road network by 2010.

Described variously as part of Europe, Central Asia or the Middle East, Georgia has long been a meeting place of east and west. A mountainous country rich in minerals and coal, Georgia produces iron and steel, machinery, and chemicals. Agricultural products include tea, citrus fruits, and tobacco. The Black Sea coast is a popular resort area.

In addition to the Georgian majority, which comprises about 70 per cent of the population, there are Armenian, Russian, Ossetian and other minorities. Georgian, a Caucasian language, and Russian are spoken.

Country Profile	
Capital	Tbilisi
Area	69,700 sq km
Population	5,126,000 (2003)
Urban Population	57 per cent
GDP	US\$ 3.67 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 716 (2003)
Currency	Lari
Major ports	Poti and Batumi
Total Length of Roads	20,362 km (2000)
Asian Highway route length	1,154 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	311,577 (2000)

B. Asian Highway in Georgia



AH5 in Tbilisi



AH81 to the Border of Armenia

Status of the Asian Highway in Georgia

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH5	Red Bridge – Tbilisi – Mtskheta – Khashuri – Senaki – Poti (– Ferry to Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine) – Batumi (– Ferry to Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine) – Sarpi	489	489	
AH81	Larshi – Mtskheta – Tbilisi – Sadakhlo	203	203	
AH82	Border of the Russian Federation – Leselidze – Sukhumi – Senaki – Khashuri – Akhaltsikhe (– Vale) – Zhdanov	462	462	
Total		1,154	1,154	
Percentage		100	100	

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway



The Sioni Cathedral church, Tbilisi (AH5/AH81)

Located in Tbilisi, the Cathedral is one of the major landmarks, famous for its historical monuments and gorgeous architecture. Tbilisi is a major economic and cultural centre, which also includes the ancient Narikhala fortress and the Paliashvili Opera House, founded in 1851.

Poti (AH5)

Known as the Gateway port to the Caucasus and Central Asia, Poti is supposed to be the legendary city in the story of Jason and his Argonauts, who entered the territory of today's Georgia at Phazisi (Poti). Constructed under the Tsar Nikolai II, it is one of the region's most important ports.



D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Tbilisi.
2. Tour Tbilisi. Explore the basilica style Anchiskhati Church, Metekhi Temple and the Abanotubani, the area famous for the sulfur baths with Asian style buildings. Tour Georgia's ancient capital, Mtskheta.
3. Drive along the Aragvi River Valley and the Georgian Military Highway to the small town of Kazbegi in the Caucasus Mountains. Walk up to Gergeti Sameba Church to enjoy fascinating mountain views. Drive to Gudauri, ski resort on the south slopes of the Caucasian main range.
4. Visit Gori, a historical town known for its huge fortress and as the birthplace of Joseph Stalin. Continue to the ancient Uplistsikhe cave town and Borjomi, the most famous mountain spa resort in Georgia, known for its mineral water. Visit the Bakuriani ski resort.
5. Drive to Vardzia, site of the most famous cave city in Georgia.
6. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH5) from the mountains to the Black Sea coast. En route, stop in the *Asian Highway* city of Kutaisi, the capital of Western Georgia and visit the Bagrati Temple and Gelati Monastery. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Batumi.
7. Explore Batumi, an exotic subtropical city on the seacoast. Tour the Gonio Fortress and walk through Batumi's Old Town with its historical boulevards and buildings.
8. Depart for Tbilisi, visiting the 11th century Samtavisi Church on the way. Arrive in Tbilisi.
9. Explore Tbilisi, see the Museum of Fine Arts with its priceless masterpieces of Georgian ancient art. Experience the rich traditions of Georgian folk songs and dances.
10. Depart Tbilisi.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of International Relations, Ministry of Transport and Communications, 12, Rustaveli Stveh, Tbilisi, Georgia. Tel: (95-32) 77479717; Fax: (996-32) 999899.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

State Department of Tourism and Resorts, 80 Chavchavadze Ave, Tbilisi, 380062, Georgia. Tel: (99532) 294052; Fax: (99532) 294052; E-mail: synthesis@caucasus.net; Web: <http://georgia-gateway.org/DTR/index.php3>.

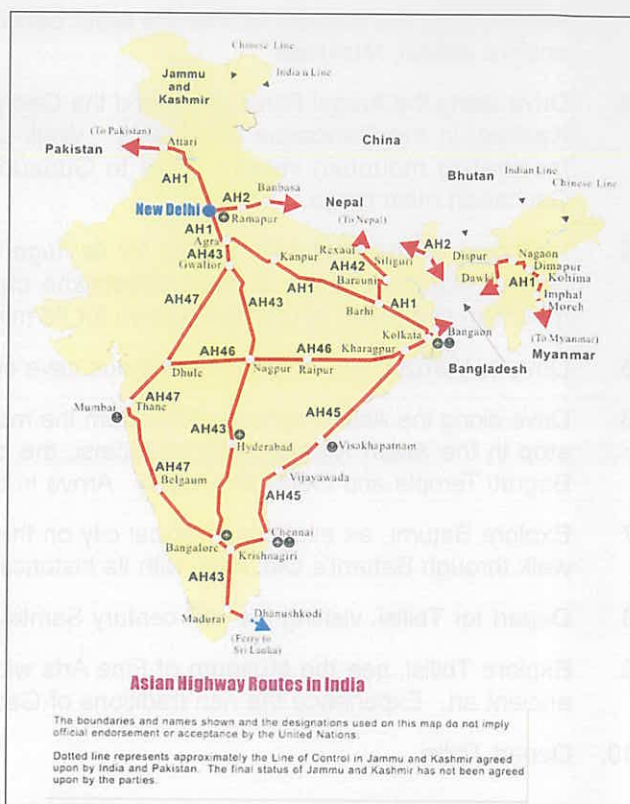
10. India

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link India to Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka (by ferry) and provide access to the ports of Kolkata, Chennai, Visakhapatnam and Mumbai. The routes are important in providing access to seaports for the landlocked countries of Bhutan and Nepal. India is upgrading the Golden Quadrilateral (Delhi-Mumbai-Chennai-Kolkata-Delhi), North-South Corridor (Srinagar – Kanyakumari with Salem-Cochin link) and East-West Corridor (Silchar-Porbandar), using resources from a special levy on fuel, government funding and assistance of multilateral agencies.

India is the world's second most populous country after China. The Ganges River flows through the heart of the nation. Economically, village India is supported by agriculture, while urban India is one of the most heavily industrialized areas in the world. The traditional textile industry is still important. Heavy industry produces iron and steel, machine tools, transportation equipment, and chemicals. Cut gems, jewelry, and, increasingly, computer software are important exports.

About 70 per cent of the work force is engaged in agriculture, growing rice, wheat, peanuts, corn, and millet; cash crops are sugarcane, tea, oilseeds, cotton, tobacco, and jute. Among rich mineral resources are coal, zinc, iron, manganese, mica, bauxite, and lead.



Country profile ²	
Capital	New Delhi
Area	3,287,590 sq km
Population	1,068,512,000 (2003)
Urban Population	28 per cent
GDP	US\$ 533 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 499 (2003)
Currency	Indian Rupee
Major ports	Kolkata, Chennai and JNPT Mumbai
Total Length of Roads	3,300,000 (2003)
Asian Highway route length	11,432 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	48,390,000 (2000)

² Including data for the Indian-held part of Jammu and Kashmir, the final status of which has not been determined.

More than 1,500 languages and dialects are spoken; Hindi (spoken throughout the north) is the official federal language, while 14 other languages are recognized by the constitution. English is widely used in politics and commerce.

B. Asian Highway in India



AH1 near New Delhi



AH1 from New Delhi to Agra

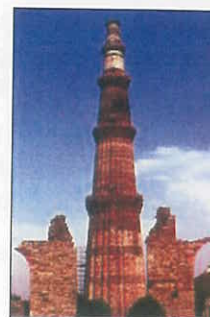
Status of the Asian Highway in India

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH1	Moreh – Imphal – Kohima – Dimapur – Nagaon – Jorabat (– Guwahati) – Shillong – Dawki Bongaon – Kolkata – Barhi – Kanpur – Agra – New Delhi – Attari	2,648	2,640	8
AH2	Moreh – Imphal – Kohima – Dimapur – Nagaon – Jorabat (– Guwahati) – Shillong – Dawki – Border of Bangladesh – Siliguri – Border of Nepal – Banbasa – Rampur – New Delhi – Attari	339	304	35
AH42	Raxaul – Piprakothi – Muzaffarpur – Barauni – Barhi	457	457	
AH43	Agra – Gwalior – Nagpur – Hyderabad – Bangalore – Krishnagiri – Madurai – Dhanushkodi	2,481	2,481	
AH45	Kolkata – Kharagpur – Visakhapatnam – Vijayawada – Chennai – Krishnagiri – Bangalore	1,937	1,937	
AH46	Kharagpur – Balasore – Bhuwaneswar – Visakhapatnam	1,513	1,513	
AH47	Gwalior – Dhule – Thane (– Mumbai) – Bangalore	2,057	2,057	
Total		11,432	11,389	43
Percentage		100	99.6	0.4

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Qutb Minar, New Delhi (AH1/AH2)

Built in the early 13th century, the red sandstone tower of Qutb Minar is located a few kilometres south of Delhi. It stands 72.5 m high. The surrounding area contains funerary buildings, notably the magnificent Alai-Darwaza Gate, a masterpiece of Indo-Muslim art and two mosques, including the Quwwatu'l-Islam, the oldest in northern India.





The Taj Mahal, Agra (AH1)

An immense mausoleum of white marble built between 1631 and 1648 by order of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his favourite wife, the Taj Mahal is one of the universally admired masterpieces of world heritage.

Ajanta Caves

The first Buddhist cave monuments at Ajanta date from the 1st and 2nd centuries B.C. During the Gupta period (5th and 6th centuries A.D.), many more richly decorated caves were added to the original group. The paintings and sculptures of Ajanta are considered stunning works of Buddhist art.



The Meenakshi Temple, Madurai (AH43)

The Meenakshi Temple is located in Madurai, about 480 km from Chennai. It is famous for the gigantic, profusely carved gateways, one of which is 49 metres in height. The temple has exquisite sculptures, ornate pillars and painted ceilings.

D. Sample itineraries

North India

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of New Delhi.
2. See the sights of old and New Delhi, visiting the Red Fort, Jama Masjid, cremation grounds of Mahatama Gandhi, Parliament House, Presidential Buildings, Humayun's Tomb, Qutub Minar, Birla Temple, Connaught Place, and downtown shopping area.
3. Drive from Delhi along the *Asian Highway* (AH43) to the historic city of Agra.
4. Visit Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and local markets. In the afternoon, depart Agra for Jaipur, en route visiting the historic city of Fatehpur Sikri, a World Heritage Site with palaces, courtyards, reflecting pools and a great mosque.
5. Tour Jaipur, India's Pink City. An excursion to the Amber Fort includes an elephant ride. Visit the Maharajah's Palace, Hawa Mahal (the Palace of Winds), Royal Observatory, Albert Museum and Johari Bazar.
6. Depart by road from Jaipur for Delhi.
7. Depart Delhi.

South India

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Chennai.
2. Tour Mahabalipuram and Kanchipuram, famous as a city of 1,000 Temples. It still has 124 shrines. In turn, Mahabalipuram is famous for the seven pagodas. Evening take the train to Trichy.
3. Arrive Trichy. Tour Lord Robert Clive's house, the Danish Church and the Rock-Fort. Climb 434 steps to the ancient temple of Ganapati and further to a Shiva temple.
4. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH43) city of Madurai. En route, stop at Tanjore to visit the beautiful Chola temple of Brihadeeshwara which is capped by a monolithic cupola made of a single granite block weighing 80 tons.
5. Visit the great Meenakshi Temple dedicated to the consort of Lord Shiva with its towering gates. Tour the Tirumala Nayak Palace – a gracious building famous for the Stucco work on its domes and arches.
6. Drive to Periyar. The earliest wildlife sanctuary to be set up in 1934; it forms part of the high mountain ranges, the Western Ghats. Cruise the Periyar Lake in a motor boat.
7. Drive to Cochin.
8. Tour Cochin, famous for its churches, mosques and temples as well as a natural harbour created by underwater mud-banks; the rougher the seas are outside, the calmer the waters are within. The Portuguese explorer Vasco de Gama placed the city on the world map.
9. Morning flight to the *Asian Highway* city of Bangalore. Tour Bangalore, one of India's rapidly emerging cities thanks to its growing Information Technology sector.
10. Depart Bangalore.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Parivahan Bhawan, 1 Parliament Street, New Delhi 110001, India. Tel: (91-11) 371 8568; Fax: (91-11) 371 0236.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry for Culture and Tourism, Government of India, Transport Bhavan, 1 Sansad marg, New Delhi 110001, India. Tel: (91-11) 2371 8310; Fax: (91-11) 2373 1506; Web1: www.tourismofindia.com; Web2: www.india-tourism.com.

11. Indonesia

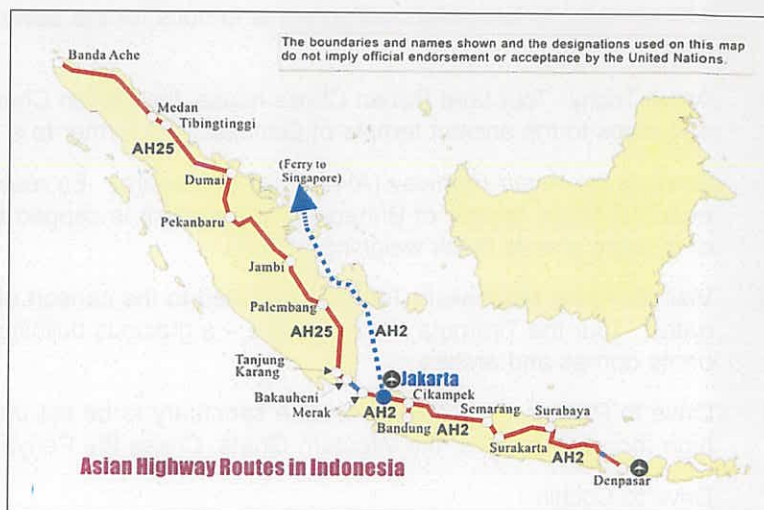
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Indonesia to Singapore via ferry. Indonesia is working to enhance the management and optimization of its road infrastructure. Strategies focus on widening and improvement of links, facilitating border crossing, placement of signs and completion of missing links.

Japan Bank for International Corporation, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Asian Development Bank are assisting in the development and maintenance of some Asian Highway links in Java and Sumatra, on which most of the investment is concentrated.

Indonesia is an archipelagic country with more than 13,000 islands. Many of the islands are mountainous and dotted with volcanoes, both active and dormant. The climate is tropical, with abundant rainfall. About 55 per cent of the work force is engaged in agriculture; principal crops are rice, fruits, cassava, peanuts, rubber, and coffee. Indonesia's natural resources are among the richest in the world; the nation is a leading producer of petroleum, its most valuable export; liquefied natural gas, tin, bauxite, nickel, and gold also are important. Products of the vast rain forests include hardwoods, rubber, palm oil, and cinchona. Tourism is a growing source of foreign exchange.

The population is mainly Malayan and Papuan, with a Chinese minority. Over 50 per cent of the people live in Java, which has about 7 per cent of the nation's land area. The official language is Bahasa Indonesia (a Malay lingua franca), but Javanese, English, Dutch, and more than 250 other tongues are spoken. Early immigrants from the Indian subcontinent, China, the Arab peninsula and Persia have left their mark on culture and religion followed by influences of Portuguese, Spanish, English and Dutch traders.



Country Profile	
Capital	Jakarta
Area	1,919,440 sq km
Population	219,883,000 (2003)
Urban Population	44 per cent
GDP	US\$ 213 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 968 (2003)
Currency	Indonesian rupiah
Major Ports	Jakarta, Surabaya
Total Length of Roads	332,651 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	3,989 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	5,727,657 (2002)

B. Asian Highway in Indonesia



AH2 Province of Central Java



AH25 Province of Lampung
(Sumatra)

Status of the Asian Highway in Indonesia

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)	Ferry (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane		
AH2	Denpasar – Surabaya – Surakarta – Semarang – Cikampek (– Bandung) – Jakarta (– Merak)	1,440	1,432			8
AH25	Banda Aceh – Medan – Tibingtinggi – Dumai – Pekambaru – Jambi – Palembang – Tanjung Karang – Bakauheni – (Ferry) – Merak	2,549	2,523			26
Total		3,989	3,955			34
Percentage		100	99.1			0.9

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway



Jakarta (AH2)

Officially opened in 1868, the Jakarta National Museum is a centre for research and study into the national and cultural heritage. It also functions as an educative, cultural and recreational information centre. With a collection of more than 100,000 objects of historic and cultural significance, the museum is one of Jakarta's many prominent sights worth visiting.

Borobudur Temple, near Jogjakarta (AH2)

This famous Buddhist temple was restored with the help of UNESCO. The walls and balustrades are decorated with bas-reliefs, covering a total surface area of 2,500 sq metres. Around the circular platform are seventy-two openwork stupas, each containing a statue of the Buddha.



Lake Toba, near Medan (AH25)

Lake Toba on Sumatra Island is the largest lake in South-East Asia with an area of about 1,145 sq kilometres, and the deepest lake in the world of over 450 metres. The town of Parapat is the main tourist resort and lies on the shores of the lake.

Mount Bromo, near Surabaya (AH2)

Bromo volcano is a three-hour drive from Surabaya, followed by a pony ride from the village of Ngadisari. Ascend the 50 steps to reach the rim. On the vast expanse of sand, there are two volcanoes: the extinct Batok which is a perfect cone and the Bromo.



D. Sample itinerary

Java Island

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Jakarta.
2. Tour Jakarta, visiting the National Museum, Sunda Kelapa traditional Harbour and Indonesia Mini Park. Leave for Bogor to visit the Botanical Gardens. Drive to Puncak through tea plantations and lush hillsides to the *Asian Highway* (AH2) city of Bandung.
3. Tour Bandung and the surroundings. Drive through the town centre and up to Mount Tangkubanprahu to visit the wide-open crater. Proceed to Ciater hot spring and later stop at Padasuka village to attend the "Angklung" bamboo orchestra demonstration.
4. Leave for Pangandaran. On the way visit Kampung Naga traditional village. Along the road, see some of the most beautiful rice terraces on Java Island. Arrive in Pangandaran.
5. Visit the wildlife conservation park watching wild animals and village life. Enjoy a cruise down the Cijulang River.
6. Drive to Kalipucang to board the public ferry boat to cruise the Citandui River through the beautiful swampy mangrove for Cilacap. Arrive at Cilacap and visit the sinking old fortress and Teluk Penyuh beach. Drive to Baturraden Mountain.
7. Drive from Baturraden to Dieng plateau, passing terraces of vegetable fields and tobacco plants on the drive up to 2,093 metres above sea level, to see the old craters with boiling mud, colourful lakes and 8th century Hindu shrines. Then drive on to Jogjakarta.

8. Drive to the magnificent Borobudur Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Return to Jogjakarta with a stop at Pawon and Mendut Temple, famous for its huge Buddha statue.
9. Tour Jogjakarta, visiting the Sultan's Palace, Sonobudoyo Museum, bird market, puppet manufacturing and show. Afternoon, visit the Hindu temple of Prambanan built around the 9th-10th century.
10. Depart Jogjakarta.

Sumatra Island

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Medan.
2. Tour Medan taking in the remaining Dutch, English, Chinese and Malay architecture. Visit the orangutan rehabilitation centre in Gunung Leseur nature reservation.
3. Drive to Brastagi. En route, stop at Sikulikap waterfall. In the afternoon arrive at the cool mountain resort of Brastagi. View two active volcanoes, Sibayak and Sinabung.
4. Leave for Prapat at the famous Lake Toba, one of the main points of the *Asian Highway*. Stop at the Sipiso Piso waterfall, at the longhouse of King Purba and at pineapples, coffee and ginger plantations. Cross the scenic Lake Toba by ferry to Samosir Island.
5. Tour the typical Toba Batak villages: Tomok with its kings' tombs, Ambarita with its execution tables and in Simanindo see traditional Batak dances.
6. Early morning, cross the lake for Sibolga, an old harbour town on the Indian Ocean. Travel through the Toba highlands, passing the hot sulphur springs at Sipoholon. By an amazing road with a thousand curves, arrive in Sibolga.
7. Depart for Bukittinggi, in the Minangkabau highlands. The route goes right through the Bukit Barisan mountain ridge of Sumatra, with a wall of tropical rain forest. Pass the equator at Bonjol. Arrive in the cool and pleasant town of Bukittinggi.
8. Tour the former Fort De Kock, visit the market and the impressive canyon near to the city. Drive to the Harau nature reserve, famous for its huge rock formations and butterflies. Return to Bukittinggi via Lake Singkarak.
9. Proceed to Maninjau. Hikers can try a one-hour walk through the deep Karbouwengat to the silver town of Kota Gadang. From there, descend to Lake Maninjau which is clean and excellent for swimming.
10. Leave for Padang via the beautiful Anai valley. The harbour city of Padang on the Indian Ocean is the economic centre of West Sumatra. Tour the city.
11. Depart Padang.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Ministry of Settlement and Regional Infrastructures, Jl. Pattimura 20, Jakarta Selatan, 12110 Indonesia. Tel: (62-21) 7221039/7210393; Fax: (62-21) 7246973.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Jl. Medan Merdeka Barat 17, 10110 Jakarta, Indonesia. Tel: (62-21) 383 8231; Fax: (62-21) 3483 3601/2; E-mail: indonews@indosat.net.id; Web1: www.indonesia-tourism.com.

12. Islamic Republic of Iran

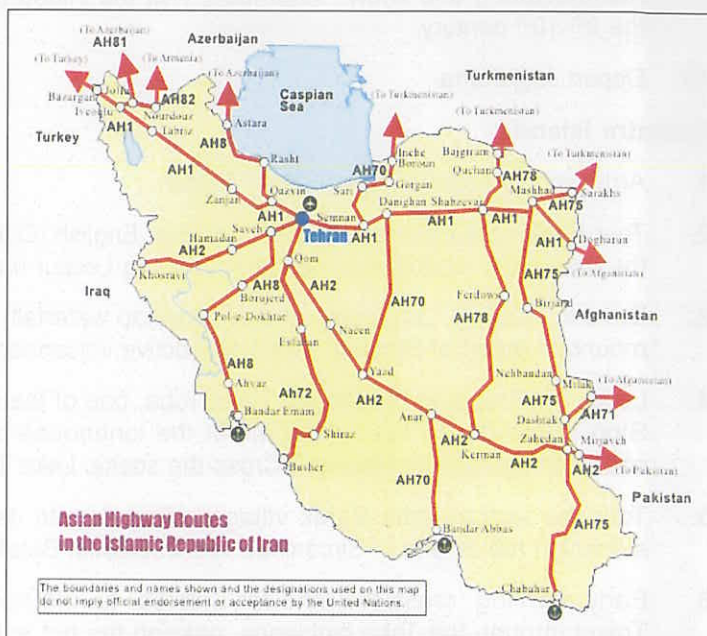
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link the Islamic Republic of Iran to Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan and also connect the seaports of Bandar Abbas, Bandar Emam and Chabahar which provide entry ports for the Central Asia and Caucasus regions. New projects to enhance international transport are being implemented, such as the North-South corridor linking the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan, and the Kerman-Zahedan part of AH2.

The Islamic Republic of Iran lies on a high plateau (altitude 1,200 metres) surrounded by the Elburz and Zagros mountain ranges; there are great salt deserts in the interior.

The climate is continental, with hot summers and cold winters. The country is one of the world's leading oil producers. Although only about 10 per cent of the land is arable, agriculture supports about a third of the population. Wheat is the most important crop, and fruit, nuts and hides are among the major exports. Textiles are the second most important industrial products, while traditional handicrafts like carpet weaving still play an economic role.

The country's culturally diverse population, with Persian, Turkic (including Azerbaijani), Kurdish, Tatar, and Arab influences, is mainly urban. Islam is the official religion; about 98 per cent are Shia Muslims, although most of the Kurds and Arabs are Sunnis. Farsi (Persian) is the official language; Azeri, Kurdish, Arabic, English and French are also spoken.



Country Profile	
Capital	Tehran
Area	1.648 million sq km
Population	66,464,000 (2003)
Urban Population	66 per cent
GDP	US\$ 128 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 1,923 (2003)
Currency	Iranian Rial
Major ports	Bandar Emam, Bandar Abbas and Chabahar
Total Length of Roads	170,000 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	10,103 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	5,238,323 (2002)

B. Asian Highway in the Islamic Republic of Iran



AH1 near Teheran



AH1 Toll Gate near Teheran

Status of the Asian Highway in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH1	Dogharun – Mashhad – Sabzevar – Damghan – Semnan – Tehran – Qazvin – Tabriz – Iveyqlu – Bazargan	2,103	2,103	
AH2	Mirjaveh – Zahedan – Kerman – Anar – Yazd – Tehran – Saveh – Hamadan – Khosravi	2,310	2,310	
AH8	Astara – Rasht – Qazvin – Tehran – Saveh – Ahwaz – Bandar Emam	1,207	1,207	
AH70	Inche Boroun – Gorgan – Sari – Semnan – Damghan – Yazd – Anar – Bandar Abbas	1,390	1,390	
AH71	Milak – Zabol – Dashtak	162	162	
AH72	Tehran – Qom – Esfahan – Shiraz – Bushehr	1,214		
AH75	Sarakhs – Mashhad – Birjand – Nehbandan – Dashtak – Zahedan – Chabahar	1,751	1,751	
AH78	Bajgiram – Quchan – Sabzevar – Kerman	1,033	1,033	
AH81	Border of Azerbaijan – Jolfa	1	1	
AH82	Nour Douz – Jolfa – Eyvoghli	146	146	
Total		11,317	11,317	
Percentage		100	100	

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Azadi cultural complex, Tehran (AH1/AH2)

Located in Tehran's Azadi Square, the Azadi Tower is a combination of Islamic and Sasanid architectural styles. It is a symbol of the city and a part of a five-hectare cultural complex that features many fine examples of Iranian arts, lifestyles, religious and historical monuments.





Persepolis, south of Tehran (AH1/AH2)

Founded by King Darius I in 518 B.C., Persepolis was the capital of the Achaemenid Empire, about 640 kilometres south of Teheran. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it was built on an immense half-artificial, half-natural terrace, where the king of kings created an impressive palace complex inspired by Mesopotamian models.

Esfahan (off AH2)

Esfahan was the capital of the Safavid era (1501-1732). During the reign of the first Shah Abbas, the most magnificent buildings of Esfahan were built, including Abbasi Jame mosque (Imam mosque), one of the best examples of Persian architecture. In the 17th century, the main square in Esfahan was one of the biggest in the world.



Mashhad (AH1/AH75)

When the Safavid dynasty adopted Islam as the state religion, Mashhad flourished as an important pilgrimage centre. The Imam Reza, the only one of the twelve Imams to be buried in the Islamic Republic of Iran, died in 817. The place of his burial was named Mashhad (the place of martyrdom). Attracting over one million pilgrims per year, the shrine is one of the most elegant architectural complexes in the Islamic world.

D. Sample itineraries

Central and Eastern Iran

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Tehran.
2. Visit the Carpet Museum to see elegant Persian carpets dating back to the 17th century. Visit the Ancient Museum and the National Jewels Museum to see breathtaking jewelry pieces used by former kings.
3. Drive to Esfahan to visit the Naghsh-e-Jahan square, the Imam mosque, and the magnificent Chehel-Sotoun and Aali-Qapu palaces.
4. Visit spectacular mosques, palaces and old bridges like the See-o-Seh Pol and Sheikh Lotfollah as well as the unique Shaking Minarets – if one is shaken, the other shakes too.
5. Visit Vank Cathedral and the Museum, a Christian centre in the Armenian Quarters.
6. Visit Persepolis, one of the country's most historic cities once occupied by Alexander the Great. See the magnificent palace complex founded by King Darius. Visit Pasargad as well as the tomb of Cyrus the Great.

7. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH2) city of Yazd and visit the Fire Temple of Zoroastrianism, once the state religion.
8. Explore more wonders of Yazd, such as the Towers of Silence and the Masjed-e-Jame, famous for its beautiful mosaic tile works.
9. Fly to the *Asian Highway* city of Mashhad.
10. Visit the shrine of Imam Reza and the historical and artistic complex attached to it, including the courtyards, porticos and porches, the Goharshad Mosque as well as its rich museum and library.
11. Fly back to Tehran.
12. Depart Tehran.

Western Iran

1. Arrival in the *Asian Highway* city of Tehran.
2. Tour Tehran, visiting the Archaeological, Glass and Carpet museums (as in the tour above).
3. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH1/AH8) to Rasht across the Alborz Mountains, the scenic ranges that rim the north borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
4. Visit the village of Masuleh and Anzali Lagoon, a wonderful place for bird-watchers.
5. Drive to the *Asian Highway* city of Tabriz (AH1), a historic city located in a valley to the north of Mount Sahand.
6. In Tabriz, visit the Blue mosque, Azerbaijan museum, Shah-Goli pavilion, and the colorful bazaar where Armenians, Turkomans and Kurds man stalls are pile high with leather boots, woollen headgear, and many-colored fabrics.
7. Fly back to Tehran.
8. Depart Tehran.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Road and Transportation Bureau, Management and Planning Organization, Baharestan Sq., Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. Tel: (98-21) 3276106; Fax: (98-21) 3114646; Web: www.tto-ir.org.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Hajj and Pilgrimage Bldg., 3rd Fl., Azadi Ave. Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. Tel: (98-21) 643 2098; Fax: (98-21) 643 3842; Web1: www.irantourism.org; Web2: www.itto.org.

13. Japan



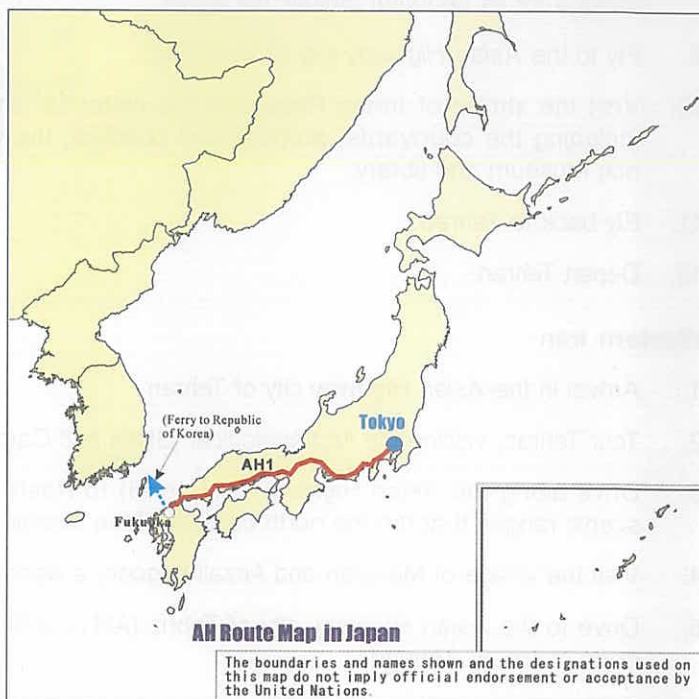
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway route links Japan to the Republic of Korea. Japan's National Road Development Plan stipulates that a total of 14,000 km of Arterial Highway-Standard Highway network should be ready by the beginning of the 21st century. So far, about 8,000 km is under operation. Designed to reduce congestion around the capital, Tokyo, the national plan provides for equitable development nationwide. Most of the highway network has been constructed and is being operated under a toll road system managed by Japan Highway Public Corporation.

Japan has developed into one of the world's great economic powers. A major world producer of ships and automobiles, it also ranks high in the production of steel, electronic equipment, and textiles. Japan's industry depends heavily on imported raw materials, especially petroleum and iron and aluminum ore, as mineral resources are meager. Many rapid streams provide hydroelectric power, however, and nuclear energy is produced. High-speed train service now extends to many parts of the country.

Japan's successful exports of high quality products, mainly in the fields of consumer electronics and Information Technology, have produced huge foreign trade surpluses. Its farming population has been declining steadily and now comprises about 8 per cent of the total labour force. Arable land (less than 16 per cent of the country's area) is intensively cultivated; rice and other cereals are the main crops. Fishing is highly developed, and the annual catch is one of the largest in the world.

The Japanese are primarily descended from various peoples who migrated from Asia in prehistoric times; the dominant strain is North Asian or Mongolic. The present educational system has created a highly educated and skilled population.

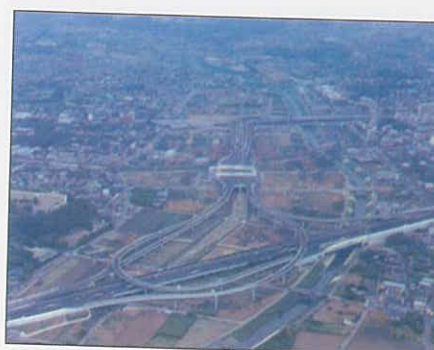


Country Profile	
Capital	Tokyo
Area	376,000 sq km
Population	127,444,000 (2002)
Urban Population	22 per cent
GDP	US\$ 460 mil.
GDP per capita	US\$ 35,620
Currency	Yen
Total Length of Roads	1,200,000 km
Asian Highway route length	1,200 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	77,000,000 (2002)

B. Asian Highway in Japan



Kanmon Bridge near Fukuoka



Yokohama Aoba Interchange near Tokyo

Status of the Asian Highway in Japan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH1	Tokyo – Fukuoka	1,200	1,200		

Detailed data is not available.

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Mount Fuji (AH1)

At 3,776 metres, Mt Fuji is the highest mountain in Japan. Described as a sacred mountain, it is climbed by about 200,000 climbers a year, usually around late July to mid August when there is virtually no snow on the peak. Rivalling Vesuvius as the world's best-known volcano, Mount Fuji has erupted at least 16 times since 781 AD, the most recent one being in 1707-1708.



Imperial Palace, Tokyo

The Imperial Palace is in the centre of modern Tokyo, built by Tokugawa Ieyasu at the end of the 16th century. The castle remained the political and military centre until 1867. After the capital moved from Kyoto to Tokyo, a new imperial palace was built at the same location as the Tokugawa castle. It was totally destroyed in World War II and had to be rebuilt. Only the East Garden is open to the public.

Kiyomizu-dera, Kyoto

Kyoto was the imperial capital of Japan from its establishment in 794 until the transfer of government to Tokyo in 1868. Surrounded by magnificent hills, Kyoto is considered the spiritual home of the Japanese people. Kiyomizu-Dera Temple may be one of the most known Kyoto's temples throughout Japan for its very high platform. From this platform, you can have an extensive view of whole town of Kyoto city.



Dazaifu, Fukuoka (AH1)

Fukuoka's most famous Shinto shrine, it is dedicated to the 9th century scholar Suguwara No Michizane. Dazaifu was at that time an important administrative centre of government. The shrine was established in the beginning of the 10th century to propitiate Michizane's soul. Pupils and students visit it in droves to pray for examination success. It is one of the "Big Three" shrines in Fukuoka.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Tokyo.
2. Tour Tokyo. Visit the Tokyo Tower Observatory, Imperial Palace Plaza, drive through Akihabara and visit the Asakusa Kannon Temple.
3. Drive up to Mount Fuji via AH1, Japan's highest mountain to enjoy a spectacular view from a height of 2,300 metres. In the afternoon, visit Hakone for a cruise on Lake Ashi and Mount Komagatake Aerial cableway.
4. Morning drive through the Hakone mountains to Odawara. Drive to Nagoya along AH1. Explore Nagoya, visiting Nagoya Castle, and Tokugawa Art Museum.
5. Morning drive to Ise-Jingu Shrine, Japan's most sacred Shinto center. Then drive to the classical city of Kyoto.
6. Explore Kyoto, visiting Golden Pavilion, Nijo Castle and Kiyomizu-Dera. After lunch, visit Nara, the first permanent capital of Japan. Explore Todaiji Temple, colorful Kasuga Shrine with 3,000 lanterns, and Deer Park where many tame deer roam freely. Return to Kyoto.
7. Drive AH1 to the *Asian Highway* city of Fukuoka.
8. Tour Fukuoka, visiting Canal City Hakata, a large shopping and entertainment complex, Momochi Seaside Park, a futuristic district along the waterfront, and Dazaifu Historic town.
9. Depart Fukuoka.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Planning Division, Road Bureau, Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport, Tokyo.
Tel: (81)3-5253-8485, Fax: (81)-35253-1618, Web: <http://www.mlit.go.jp/road>

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Japan National Tourist Organization, 2-10-1 Yuurakuchou Chiyoda- ku, Tokyo, Japan.
Tel: (81)-3-3216-1901, Fax: (81)-3-3214-7680, Web: www.jnto.go.jp

14. Kazakhstan



A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Kazakhstan to China, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Aktau port on the Caspian Sea is important with a ferry to Baku, providing connections to Europe. Asian Highway routes in Kazakhstan have enormous potential for providing transit transport between Europe, Central Asia and China and between Central Asia and the Russian Federation.

In the short-term, Kazakhstan is focusing on the maintenance of the existing road network. The mid-term National Road Development Plan of Kazakhstan aims to modernize and rehabilitate the Republican Motor Road and construction of new roads and bridges. The Asian Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the World Bank and the Saudi Fund for Development are assisting in the improvement of the road network.

Kazakhstan produces wool, cattle, and wheat, and is rich in coal, oil, gas, and such minerals as chromium, silver, tungsten, lead, zinc, and copper. The Baikonur Cosmodrome, a Russian-operated space-launch facility, is in central Kazakhstan.

Country Profile	
Capital	Astana
Area	2,717,300 sq km
Population	15,154,000 (2003)
Urban Population	56 per cent
GDP	US\$ 30 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 1,960 (2003)
Currency	Tenge
Major Port	Aktau
Total Length of Roads	87,153 km (2001)
Asian Highway route length	13,189 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	1,279,009 (2000)

The Turkic-speaking Kazakhs (Qazaqs) comprise 40 per cent of the population; ethnic Russians make up 38 per cent of the population, and other groups include Germans, Ukrainians, Tatars, and Uzbeks. The official language is Kazakh, but Russian remains the primary language of commerce and government

The region was ruled by the Mongols from the 13th to 18th century and then by the Russians. The spectacular spurs of the Tian Shan and Altai mountains on the country's southern and eastern borders make Kazakhstan a major staging post for those seeking to visit the more famous Central Asian destinations.

B. Asian Highway in Kazakhstan



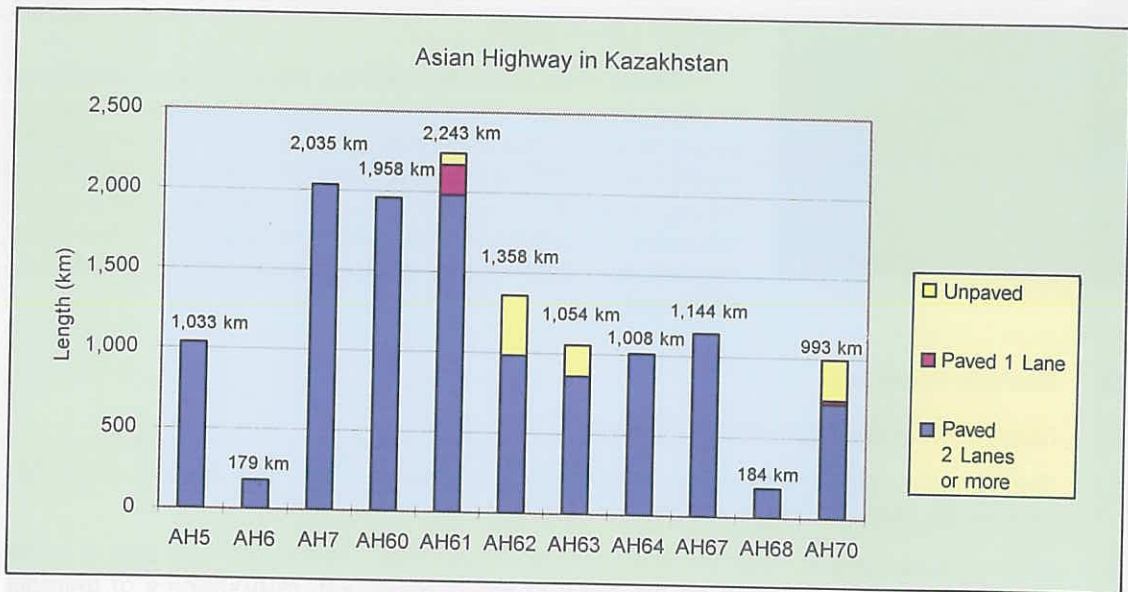
AH5 Astana to Bishkek



AH5 near Astana

Status of the Asian Highway in Kazakhstan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH5	Khogors – Almaty – Kaskelen – Kordai Merke – Shymkent – Zhibek Zholy	1,033	1,033		
AH6	Karakuga – Petropavlovsk – Chisote	179	179		
AH7	Kaerak – Kostanai – Astana – Karaganda – Burubaital – Merke	2,035	2,035		
AH60	Pnirtyshshkoe – Pavlodar – Semipalatinsk – Taskesken – Ucharal – Almaty – Kaskelen – Burubaital	1,958	1,958		
AH61	Kordai – Merke – Shymkent – Aralsk – Kyzylorda – Karabutak – Aktyubinsk – Ural'sk – Kamenka	2,243	1,981	189	73
AH62	Petropavlovsk – Arkalyk – Zhezkazgan – Kyzylorda – Shymkent – Zhibek Zholy	1,358	983		375
AH63	Pogodaev – Ural'sk – Atyrau – Beyneu – Border of Uzbekistan	1,054	860		194
AH64	Krasny Aul – Semipalatinsk – Pavlodar – Shiderty – Astana – Kokshetau – Petropavlovsk	1,008	1,008		
AH67	Bakhty – Taskesken – Semipalatinsk – Pavlodar – Shiderty – Karaganda – Zhezkazgan	1,144	1,144		
AH68	Dostyk – Ucharal	184	184		
AH70	Kotyaevka – Atyrau – Beyneu – Zhetybai (– Aktau) – Bekdash	993	715	25	253
Total		13,189	12,080	214	895
Percentage		100	91.6	1.6	6.8



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Ishim River, Astana, (AH7/AH64)

Kazakhstan's capital was a tiny mining town until the 1950s, when plans were announced to turn 250,000 sq kilometres of Kazakhstan steppe into wheat and cotton fields. The capital was shifted from Almaty to Astana in 1997 due to its more central and less earthquake-prone location and better rail links with the Russian Federation.

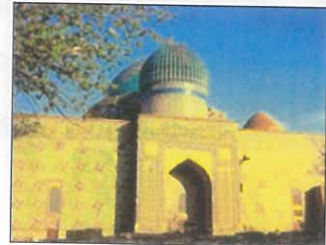


Almaty (AH5/AH60)

Exposure to the outside world has turned Almaty into Central Asia's most cosmopolitan city with shops, hotels, parks and greenery. The Zailiyski Alatau Mountains rise like a wall along Almaty's southern fringe. In 1854 Almaty acted as a frontier fort at the border of the Russian Empire.

Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, Turkestan, (AH61)

The Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi, in the town of Yasi, now Turkestan, was built at the time of Timur (Tamerlane), from 1389 to 1405. Persian master builders experimented with architectural and structural solutions which were later used in the construction of Samarkand, the capital of the Timurid Empire. Today, it is one of the largest and best-preserved constructions of the Timurid period.





Köl-Say Lakes (AH5)

These three lakes lie amid the steep forested foothills of the Küngey Alatau, 110 kilometres east of Almaty. They are strung along the Köl-Say River at an altitude of around 2000 metres and offer excellent sites for camping and trout fishing, especially in June and August. Travellers can arrange helicopter excursions to the lakes from Almaty or reach them overland from Saty. The lower lake is accessible by vehicle and horse-ride.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Almaty.
2. Tour Almaty. Visit the many museums, the 28 Soldiers Park, the popular mountain skating-rink Medeo, Orthodox Cathedral. Take a walk in the Arbat.
3. Drive to Ashen grove. Visit the National Park Altyn-Emel. At 460,000 hectares, it is the largest park of Kazakhstan on the bank of the Ili River with rare species of animals and plants. Spend the night in a yurt.
4. Drive to Besshatyr to see the burial mounds of the Saka civilization dating back as far as 200-300 A.D. Visit Kizilauyz and Tamgaly-Tas ("Stamped Stones") to see the famous Buddhist petroglyphs. Enjoy the breath-taking views at the Kapchagay reservoir, created by the damming of the Ili River.
5. Continue to Altyn-Emel Desert Reserve, home of wild donkeys, eagles, antelopes and camels. Its 'singing sand dunes' are up to 80 metres high and make low whistling sounds in high winds. Visit the Great Almaty Lake in the mountains, south of the city.
6. Fly to the capital of Astana.
7. Tour Astana, the capital since December 1997, with a population of less than 300,000. Visit the History and Culture Museum, the Saken Seifullin Museum and the Modern Art Museum.
8. Depart Astana.

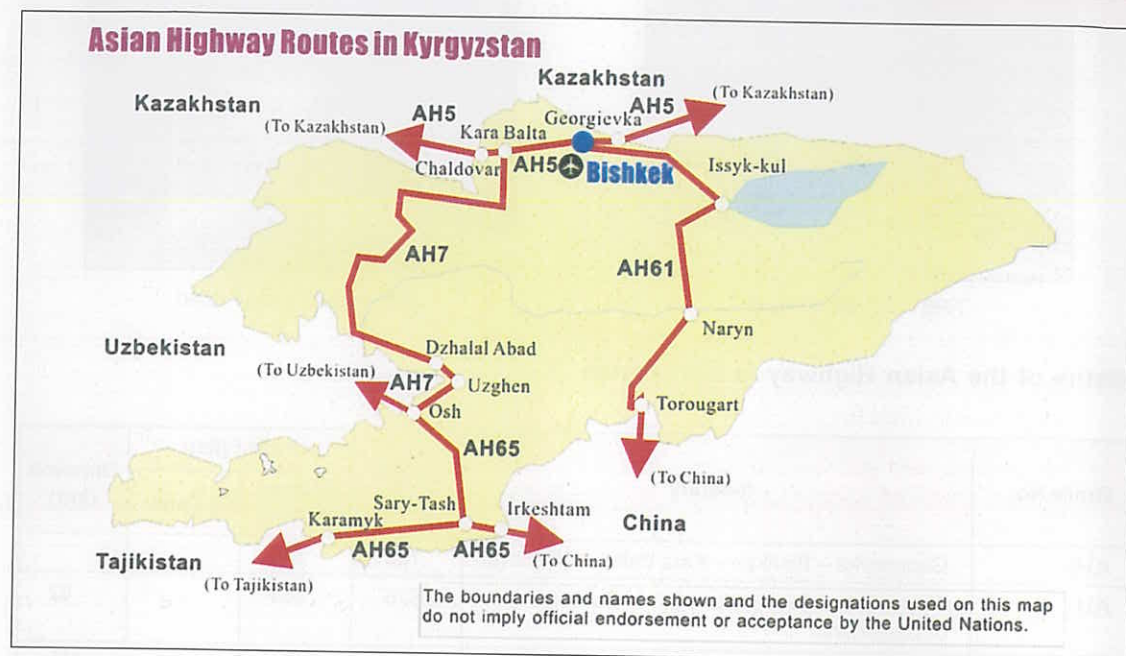
E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Division of Transit Policy and Foreign Affairs Department, Ministry of Transport and Communications, 49, Avenue, Abaya, Astana, Kazakhstan 473000. Tel: (7 3172) 324140; Fax: (7 3172) 321058.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Tourism and Sport, 126, M. Auezov St., 473000 Astana. Tel: (7-3172) 751 487, 751 740; Fax: (7-3172) 751 336, 750 314; E-mail: astana_sport@nursat.kz; Web: www.tourkz.com.

15. Kyrgyzstan



A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Kyrgyzstan to China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. They have great potential for providing transit transport between Central Asia and China and between Central Asia and the Russian Federation.

Kyrgyzstan is giving high priority to road development to provide linkages to neighbouring countries. An agreement has been signed with China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to improve road linkages.

A mountainous country, Kyrgyzstan has rich pasture land for livestock. Cotton, sugar beets, and other crops are grown. Among its mineral resources are coal, oil, natural gas, antimony, mercury, uranium, and gold. Industries include the extraction and processing of its many resources, food processing, steel manufacture and metallurgy.

The Kyrgyz, a nomadic, Turkic-speaking people with Mongol influence, comprise a little over half of the population; Russians, Uzbeks, and others make up the rest. The official language is Kyrgyz, but Russian is also spoken.

Country Profile	
Capital	Bishkek
Area	198,500 sq km
Population	5,138,000 (2003)
Urban Population	34 per cent
GDP	US\$ 2 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 342 billion (2003)
Currency	Kyrgyzstani Som
Total Length of Roads	18,500 km (1999)
Asian Highway route length	1,695 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	187,322 (1999)

B. Asian Highway in Kyrgyzstan



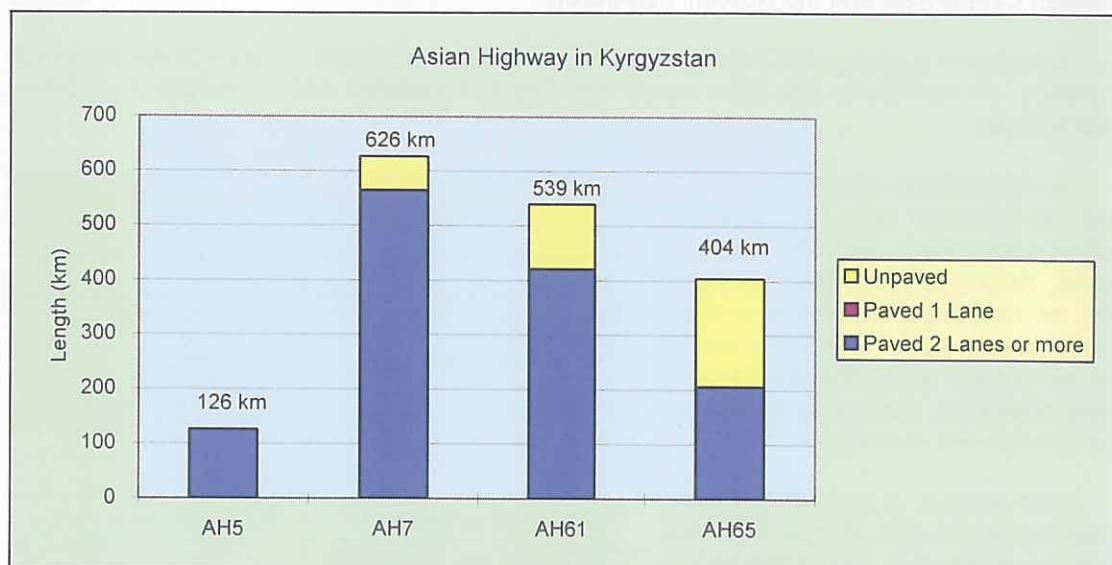
AH61 Bishkek to Iskul



AH61 near Dzhahal Abad

Status of the Asian Highway in Kyrgyzstan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH5	Georgievka – Bishkek – Kara Balta – Chaldovar	126	126		
AH7	Chaldovar – Kara Balta – Osh – Border of Uzbekistan	626	564		62
AH61	Torougart – Naryn – Bishkek – Georgievka	539	421		118
AH65	Irkeshtam – Sary Tash (– Osh) – Karamyk	404	206		198
Total		1,695	1,317		378
Percentage		100	77.7		22.3



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Bishkek (AH5)

Bishkek is the capital and industrial centre. A relaxed city of wide streets and handsome houses, it is a jumping-off point for the Tian Shan Mountains and Lake Issyk-Kul, and for the overland crossing into China via the Torugart Pass. The 4,800-metre snowcapped ramparts of the Kyrgyz Alatau range loom over the city.



Lake Issyk-Kul (AH61)

Folded between the peaks of the Küngey Alatau and the Terskey Alatau ranges, the huge Lake Issyk-Kul sits 1,600 metres above sea level. The world's second-largest alpine lake, 170 kilometres long and 70 kilometres across, it is famous for its magnificent scenery and unique scientific interest.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Bishkek.
2. Drive from Bishkek along the northern shores of Lake Issyk-Kul to Cholpon-Ata (AH61). En route, visit the 11th-century Burana Tower, an ancient Silk Route staging post, and the prehistoric petroglyphs at Cholpon-Ata. Tour the Issyk-Kul museum and cruise along the lakeshore to a health spa and resort.
3. Drive to Karakol, passing quaint rural villages. Tour the Orthodox Holy Trinity Church, Chinese mosque and Przhevalsky Memorial. Visit the Djety-Oguz, the famous "Valley of Seven Bulls" to see the glowing red, sandy cliffs. Drive to Lake Issyk-Kul and enjoy a breath taking sunset over the lake and its surrounding mountains.
4. Drive back to Bishkek, crossing Issyk-Kul's southern shores, completing the circumnavigation of the lake. Pass remote Kyrgyz villages against a backdrop of the Central Tien Shan Mountains. Stop in Balykchi and continue via Boom Gorge to Bishkek.
5. Depart Bishkek.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Foreign Economic Relation Division, Ministry of Transport and Communications, 42 Isanova Street, Bishkek. Fax: (996-312) 664 781.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Kyrgyz State Agency for Tourism and Sport, 17 Togolok Moldo St., Bishkek 720033 Kyrgyz Republic. Tel: (996-312) 220-657; Fax: (996-312) 212-845; Web: <http://homepage.kg/>.

16. Lao People's Democratic Republic

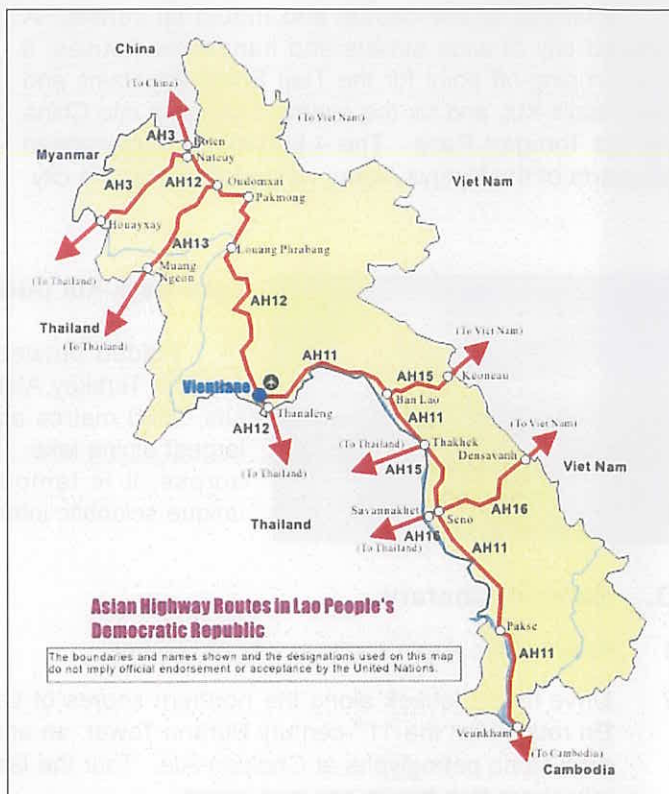


A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Lao People's Democratic Republic to Cambodia, China, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Asian Highway routes are very important in this landlocked country where the road is the dominant mode of transport. Rugged mountainous terrain makes construction and transport costly and difficult. Lao People's Democratic Republic is upgrading its road links to neighbouring countries to transform the country into a land bridge.

Except for the lowlands along the Mekong River, where most of the people live, and three sparsely populated plateaus, the terrain is mountainous and thickly forested.

The predominantly rural population is engaged in fishing and subsistence agriculture. Rice is by far the chief crop and corn, vegetables, coffee, tobacco, sugarcane, and cotton are important. Ethnic Lao make up about half the population; minorities include ethnic Thai, Vietnamese, and Chinese as well as a number of tribal mountain groups. Lao is the official language; French and English are also spoken.



Country Profile	
Capital	Vientiane
Area	236,800 sq km
Population	5,657,000 (2003)
Urban Population	21 per cent
GDP	US\$ 2 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 339 (2003)
Currency	Kip
Total Length of Roads	32,620 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	2,298 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	96,950 (2002)

B. Asian Highway in Lao People's Democratic Republic



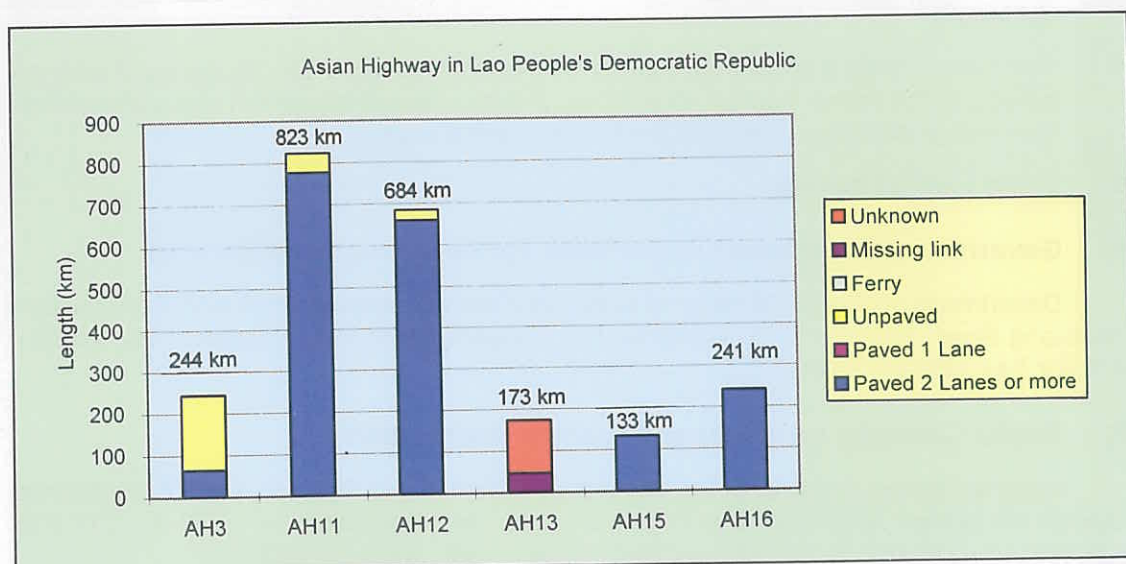
AH12 in Vientiane



AH12 Thai - Lao Friendship Bridge

Status of the Asian Highway in Lao People's Democratic Republic

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved	Ferry	Missing link	Unknown
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane				
AH3	Boten – Nateuy – Houayxay	244.0	65		178	1	0	0
AH11	Vientiane – Ban Lao – Thakhek – Seno – Pakse – Veunkham	823.0	777		46			0
AH12	Nateuy – Oudomxai – Pakmong – Louang Phrabang – Vientiane – Thanaleng	684.0	659		25	0		0
AH13	Oudomxai – Muang Ngeun	173.0	0		0	1	45	127
AH15	Keoneau – Ban Lao – Thakhek	133.0	132		0	1	0	0
AH16	Densavanh – Seno – Savannakhet	241.0	240		0	1	0	0
Total		2,298.0	1,873	0	249	3	45	127



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Vientiane (AH11/AH12)

Vientiane, the capital, is located on the bank of the Mekong River. It is the centre of culture, commerce and administration, with serene Buddhist monasteries and significant monuments. Old French colonial houses are being restored as offices and as restaurants and hotels.



Louang Phrabang (AH12)

Louang Phrabang is an outstanding example of the fusion of traditional architecture and Lao urban structures with those built by the Europeans in the 19th and 20th centuries. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site, now becoming increasingly accessible since the upgrading of the airport.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Vientiane via the Friendship Bridge from Thailand (AH12).
2. Visit Sisaket temple and other famous sites. Take a traditional boat upstream on the Mekong River to visit Pak Ou cave. Stop at Ban Xanghai where people produce Lao liquor (rice wine). After visiting Pak Ou cave, cross the Mekong River to return to Vientiane.
3. Drive to Ban Phanom, a hilltribe weaving village. Almost all the villagers are skilled weavers, making a broad range of items from purses to handbags.
4. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH12) to Louang Phrabang, perhaps the best-preserved traditional city in South-East Asia and a UNESCO World Heritage site. In Louang Phrabang, enjoy a short city tour, visiting Phousi temple hill for panoramic views of the city, and the Mai temple.
5. Visit Xieng Thong, a spectacular temple, the National Museum, with its display of personal artifacts of the former Laotian royal family, photos, musical equipment and gifts received from foreign countries. Also visit the bustling central market.
6. Depart Louang Phrabang.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of Roads, Ministry of Communication Transport, Post and Construction, Thatluang Road, P.O. Box 2520 Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic. Tel: (856-21) 415379; Fax: (856-21) 414132.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

National Tourism Authority of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lane Xang Avenue, Quarter Nahaydeo, Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic. Tel: (856-21) 217 910; Fax: (856-21) 212 769; E-mail: ntalaos@hotmail.com; Web: www.visit-laos.com.

17. Malaysia

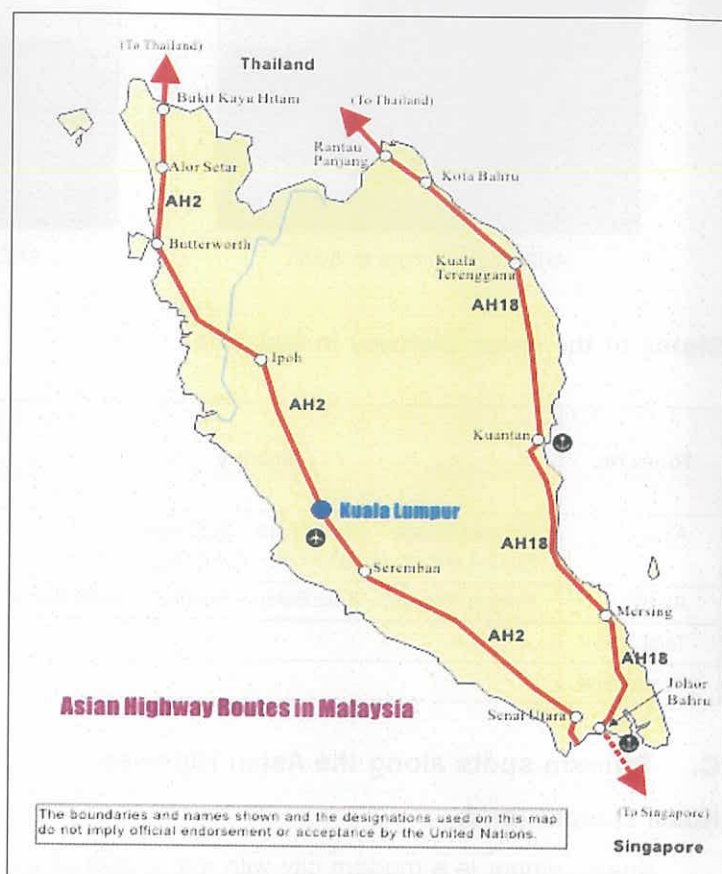
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Malaysia to Singapore and Thailand and provide access to Port Klang and Johor Bahru. Construction of the North South Expressway and other highways has improved the quality of road transport. The private sector has been supplementing the government's efforts to improve the highway network. The alignments and numbering of routes connecting Singapore are under negotiation.

Both Peninsular and East Malaysia have densely forested, mountainous interiors flanked by coastal plains. The climate is tropical.

Malaysia has a steadily expanding industrial sector and tourism has become a major source of revenue. The country has invested heavily in infrastructure improvement, including airports and information technology. It is a major producer of tin and rubber. Electronics equipment, textiles, steel, palm oil, lumber, and petroleum are other important products.

Although it has only 31 per cent of the country's area, Peninsular Malaysia has more than 80 per cent of its people. Most of the population are ethnic Malays and Chinese; there is a sizable Indian (mainly Tamil) minority. The official language is Malay, but Chinese, English, Tamil and Hindi are widely spoken.



Country Profile	
Capital	Kuala Lumpur
Area	332,965 sq km
Population	24,537,000 (2003)
Urban Population	62 per cent
GDP	US\$ 103 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 4,186 (2003)
Currency	Ringgit
Major Ports	Kuantan, Johor, Klang
Total Length of Roads	72,165 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	1,614 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	11,975,641 (2002)

B. Asian Highway in Malaysia



AH2 Kuala Lumpur to South



AH2 Kuala Lumpur to North

Status of the Asian Highway in Malaysia

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH2	Second linkage – Senai Utara – Seremban – Kuala Lumpur – Butterworth – Bukit Kayu Hitam*	821	821	
AH18	Rantau Panjang – Kota Bahru – Kuantan – Johor Bahru	774	774	
Total		1,614	1,614	
Percentage		100	100	

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Kuala Lumpur (AH2)

Kuala Lumpur is a modern city with many colonial buildings in its centre, a vibrant Chinatown with night markets, and a bustling Little India. The twin Petronas Towers skyscrapers – the tallest twin towers in the world – dominate the skyline, while a 95-metre flagpole, one of the tallest in the world, stands in Merdeka Square.



Johor Bahru (AH18)

Connected to neighbouring Singapore by road and rail via a modern causeway, Johor Bahru is also the Peninsula's southern gateway. One of its well-known sites is the imposing palace built by the late Sultan Abu Bakar. It houses an impressive collection of rare and beautiful treasures from all over the world.

Kenyir Lake, Kuala Terengganu (AH18)

Kenyir Lake spans over 260,000 hectares, making it the largest man-made lake in South-East Asia. It consists of more than 340 islands, surrounded by a vast rain forest with unpolluted rivers, waterfalls, limestone formations and pre-historic caves. A variety of plants and wildlife make the area famous for jungle trekking.



Penang (AH2)

Penang (main island off Butterworth) is referred to as the Pearl of the Orient. One of the finest Buddhist temples in South-East Asia, the Kek Lok Si temple, was built over a span of 20 years. Housing the beautifully crafted "Pagoda of Ten Thousand Buddhas", it is set against gardens, a turtle pond, shrines and beautiful sculptures.

D. Sample itineraries

West Coast, Peninsula Malaysia

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Kuala Lumpur.
2. Explore the capital with the British colonial buildings of the Dataran Merdeka, the midnight lamps of the Petaling Street night-market, bustling streets and modern office towers.
3. Drive to Cameron Highlands. En route, visit Batu Caves, discovered 100 years ago. The caves, with their 100-metre-high vaulted ceiling, are regularly visited by Hindus on the festival of Thaipusam.
4. Explore Cameron Highlands, Pahang state's premier hilltop holiday spot and a favoured getaway spot of honeymoon couples.
5. Drive along the *Asian Highway* to Ipoh (AH2), in the midst of one of the world's richest tin-mining regions. See the caves, the railway station with its Islamic architecture and the Town Hall building.
6. Depart Ipoh for the *Asian Highway* city of Penang. En route, visit the royal town of Kuala Kangsar and Taiping, one of the oldest towns in Malaysia.
7. Explore Penang, the Pearl of the Orient. Visit the Kek Lok Si Temple, Snake Temple, Penang Bird Park, Fort Cornwallis, Pantai Acheh Forest Reserve and Penang Hill.
8. Depart Penang.

East Coast, Peninsula Malaysia

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Kuala Lumpur.
2. Explore Kuala Lumpur (as in the itinerary above).
3. Drive to the *Asian Highway* city of Johor Bahru (AH2).

4. Relax and tour Johor Bahru, the southern gateway of Malaysia, with its shopping malls and landmarks like the Grand Palace, with its distinct Anglo-Malay architecture.
5. Proceed along the *Asian Highway* city to Kuantan (AH18). Visit quaint fishing villages along the way.
6. Relax and tour the environs of Kuantan, a well-known ecotourism destination. Of particular interest are the Tasik (Lake) Chini, Malaysia's second largest natural lake, and the Taman (Park) Pertanian Indera Mahkota.
7. Drive to the *Asian Highway* city of Kuala Terengganu (AH18).
8. Explore Kuala Terengganu. The Tengku Tengah Zaharah mosque, on the estuary of Ibai river, is built in such a way as to give an illusion that it is floating on water. See the state museum and the central market.
9. Drive to the *Asian Highway* city of Kota Bahru (AH18).
10. Explore Kota Bahru Museum, Siti Khadijah Central Market, the Brick Palace and the War Museum.
11. Drive to Penang and explore (as above).
12. Depart Penang.

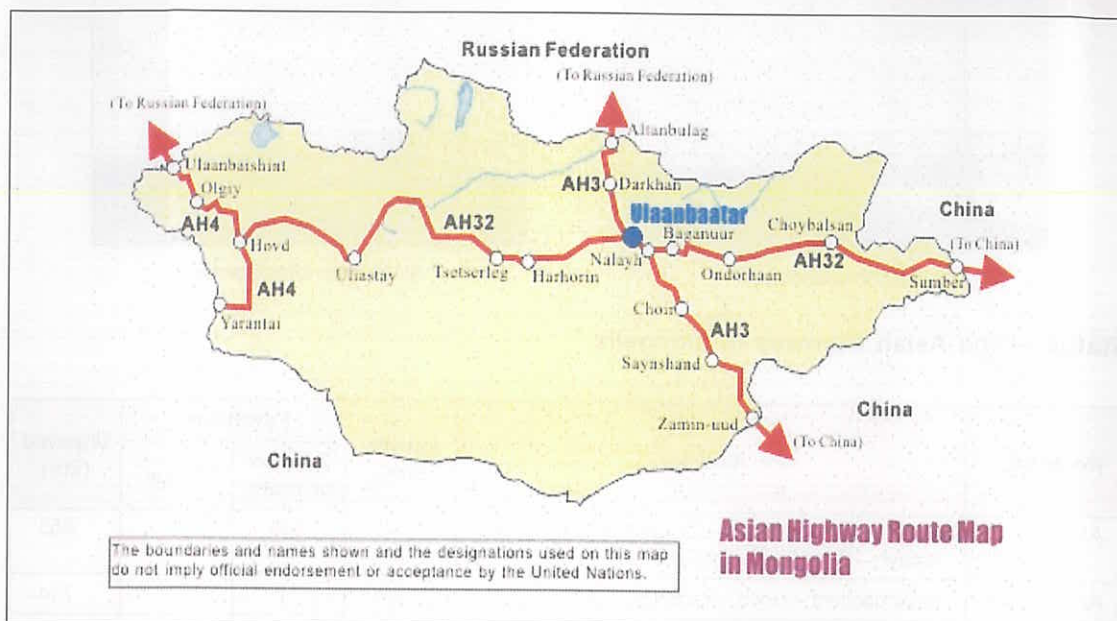
E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Highway Planning Unit, Ministry of Works, HPU 2nd Floor, Block A, Jln Sultan, Salahuddin 50580, Kuala Lumpur. Tel: (603) 27714210; Fax: (603) 27113975.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Level 6, 21, 34-36, Menara Dato' Onn, 45, Jalan Tun Ismail, Putra World Trade Centre, 50694 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Tel: (60-3) 2693 7111; Fax: (60-3) 2693 0881; E-mail: webmaster@tourism.gov.my; Web: www.tourism.gov.my.

18. Mongolia



A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Mongolia to China and the Russian Federation. Roads are the primary means of transport for people and freight. The Government is implementing the "Millennium Road" project, with East-West links and North-South links to improve road connections with neighbouring countries. It is getting support from the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, the Kuwaiti Fund and the Government of Japan. The Asian Highway routes in Mongolia provide important transit routes for China and the Russian Federation.

With an average elevation exceeding 1,500 metres, mountain ranges and high plateaus cover most of the north west and the central south, and the Gobi desert lies in the south and east. Wide seasonal variations in temperature, rugged terrain, and an arid climate limit agriculture; nomadic year-round grazing of sheep, goats, cattle, horses, yaks, and camels has been the major occupation for centuries. A small industrial sector is based primarily on livestock processing and the manufacture of textiles and consumer goods. Some timber is cut in the north, and coal, copper, molybdenum, tin, tungsten, and gold are mined and processed.

The population is composed primarily of Khalkha Mongols; there are also minorities of Oirat Mongols, Kazakhs, Chinese, and Russians.

Country Profile	
Capital	Ulaanbaatar
Area	1.565 million sq km
Population	2,594,000 (2003)
Urban Population	57 per cent
GDP	US\$ 1.18 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 455 (2003)
Currency	Togrog/Tugrik
Total Length of Roads	49,250 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	4,286 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	142,800 (2002)

B. Asian Highway in Mongolia



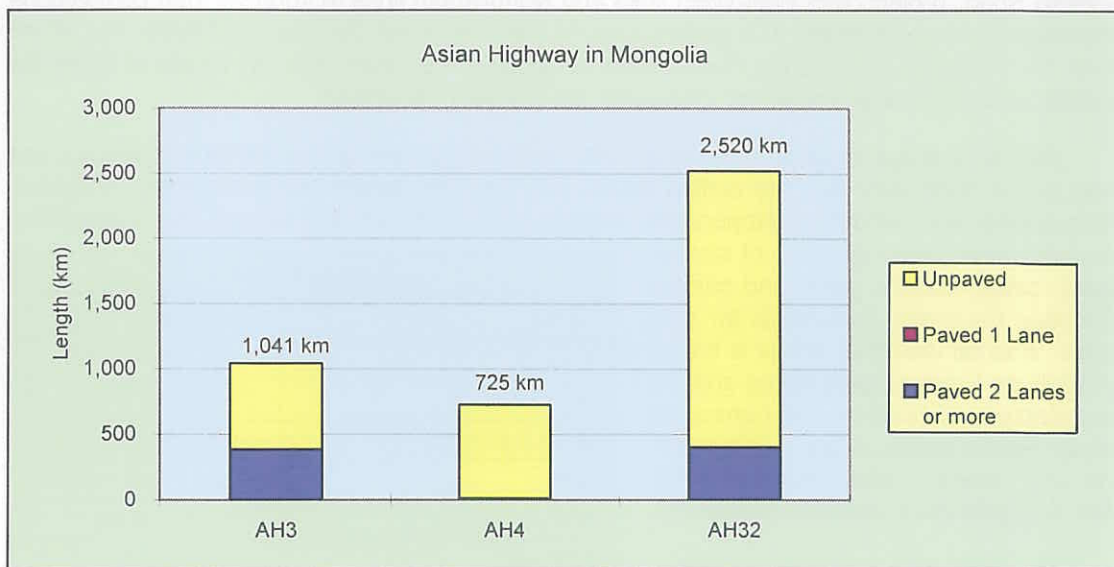
AH32 in Ulaanbaatar



AH32 near Ulaanbaatar

Status of the Asian Highway in Mongolia

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH3	Altanbulag – Darkhan – Ulaanbaatar – Nalayh – Saynshan – Zamin-Uud	1,041	386		655
AH4	Ulaanbaishint – Hovd – Yarantai	725	11		714
AH32	Sumber – Choybalsan – Ondorhaan – Nalayh – Ulaanbaatar – Uliastay – Hovd	2,520	403		2,117
Total		4,286	800		3,486
Percentage		100	18.7		81.3



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Ulaanbaatar (AH3/AH32)

Ulaanbaatar is situated in central east Mongolia, along a large wide valley. Mountains surround the city. The Tuul River runs from east to west in the south of the city. Ulaanbaatar was built in 1778 and named the City of Felt. In 1924, it was declared the capital.



Amarbayasgalant Monastery

The Amarbayasgalant monastery, located 360 kilometres north of Ulaanbaatar is one of the favourite destinations for visitors. It can be reached by jeep via Darkhan. Built in 1727-1736, the monastery was the second most important in Mongolia after Erdene Zuu monastery in Kharakhorum.

The Gobi Desert

The Gobi Desert covers almost 30 per cent of the country. The area is often imagined as a lifeless desert. In reality, most of it is a land of steppes, rich with wildlife and vegetation and home for camel breeders. The climate is extreme with severe summers and winters.



Kharakhorum

Mongolia's ancient capital, Kharakhorum, is Genghis Khan's fabled city. In its symbolic ruins, monumental walls with 108 stupas surround Mongolia's first Buddhist monastery, the Erdene Zuu, built in 1586. Turtles carved from stone mark the boundaries of the complex. Nearby are monuments and rock inscriptions erected in the 8th – 9th centuries in memory of independence fighters.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Ulaanbaatar.
2. Tour Ulaanbaatar, including the former Winter Palace of Mongolian rulers and the Museum of Bogd Khan. Visit the Museum of Religion, a former Buddhist monastery built in the Chinese-Tibetan style, and the modern part of the city via the Boulevard of Peace.
3. Depart for Bayangobi. Visit a horse-keeper's camp and see the making of airag, the Mongolian national drink of fermented mare's milk. Try horseback riding on Mongolian traditional wooden saddles before leaving for a ger camp at Bayangobi.
4. Depart for the site of the 13th century capital of the Mongolian Empire – Kharakhorum, the city from which Genghis Khan launched his attacks. Visit the ancient Erdene Zuu monastery built by Altan Khan, who proclaimed Buddhism as Mongolia's main religion. At night, enjoy a traditional Mongolian campfire dinner and spend the night in a ger camp.

5. Fly back to Ulaanbaatar. Visit the Gandan monastery, the main Buddhist temple. Stroll the monastery grounds and watch the monks in their prayers. See the magnificent statue of Migjid Janraisig decorated with pure gold and dressed in silk and precious stones.
6. Fly to the Gobi desert. Trek to the Eagle Valley National Park to view stunning landscapes. Continue to a ger camp, stopping for a visit at a camel farm to ride the camels and observe the nomadic lifestyles.
7. Tour Bayan Zag – the Flaming Cliffs, an archaeological site and home to some of the world's finest fossil discoveries, including fossilized dinosaur eggs.
8. Fly back to Ulaanbaatar for souvenir shopping and a folklore show featuring traditional dancers and hoomi (throat) singers.
9. Depart Ulaanbaatar.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of Roads, Ministry of Infrastructure, P.O. Box 426, Post office 44, Ulaanbaatar 210644, Mongolia. Tel: (976-11) 325328; Fax: (976-11) 310503. Department of Roads, Web: www.dor.mn.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry of Infrastructure, Government Bldg. 2, Negdsen Undesni St. 11, Ulaanbaatar 210646, Mongolia. Tel: (976-11) 321721; Fax: (976-11) 310612. Web: www.mongoliatourism.gov.mn.

19. Myanmar

A. Introduction

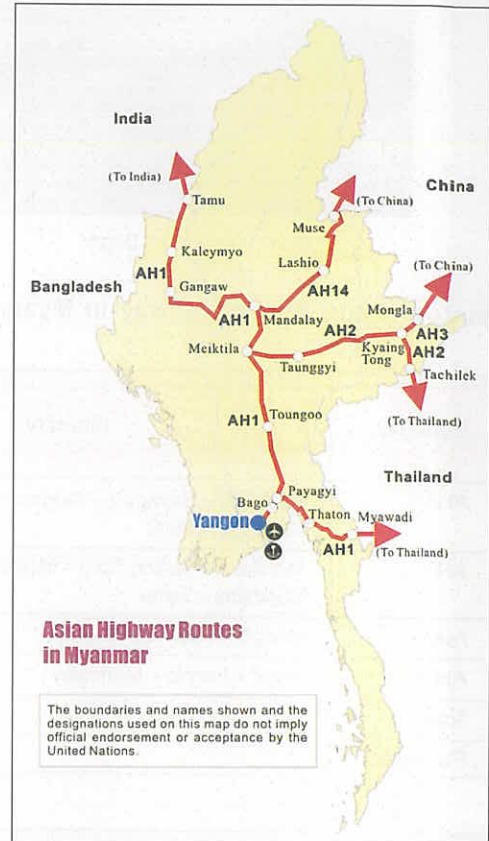
The Asian Highway routes link Myanmar to China, India and Thailand and provide access to Yangon port. They are an important bridge between South and South-East Asia. Myanmar is working to maintain and upgrade the main road network with private sector participation. The topography, presence of north-south rivers and lack of external financial assistance are some of the construction challenges involved.

Except for the centrally located Irrawaddy valley and delta, where most of the people live, the terrain is mountainous. The climate is mostly tropical with monsoons. About 65 per cent of the labor force is employed in agriculture (mostly rice cultivation) and forestry (especially teak and rubber production). The country has rich mineral resources, including petroleum, tin, copper, zinc, and coal. Tourism is becoming one of the most important sources of foreign exchange.

Country Profile

Capital	Yangon
Area	678,500 sq km
Population	49,485,000 (2003)
Urban Population	29 per cent
GDP	US\$ 9.61 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 194 (2003)
Currency	Kyat
Total Length of Roads	42,300 km (2001)
Major Ports	Yangon, Dawei, Mawlamyaing
Asian Highway route length	3,003 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	264,000 (2000)

ties. The major races are the Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. The official language is Burmese but English is also spoken along with more than 100 distinct languages.



Myanmar's developing economy began to recover in the 1980s. Myanmar lies on the cross-roads of two of the world's great civilizations – China and India. Its culture is a blend of both interspersed with Myanmar native traits and characteristics. Myanmar is a union of many nationalities; speaking over one hundred languages and dialects. The term 'Myanmar' embraces all nationalities.

B. Asian Highway in Myanmar



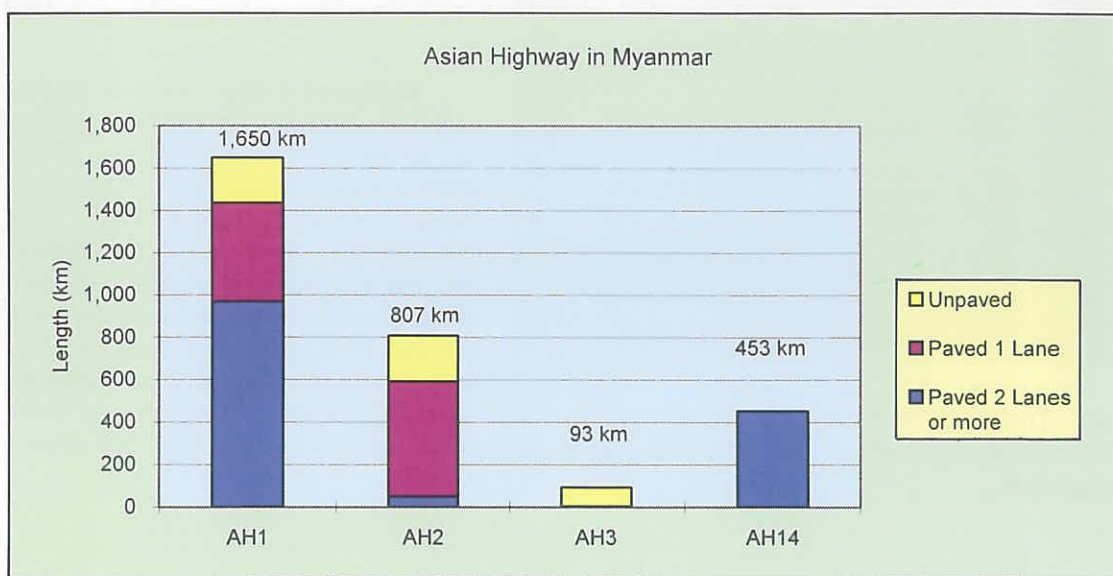
AH1 Yangon to Bago



AH1 near Tamu

Status of the Asian Highway in Myanmar

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH1	Myawadi – Payagyi (– Yangon) – Meiktila – Mandalay –Tamu	1,650	969	467	214
AH2	Tachilek – Kyaning Tong – Meiktila – Mandalay – Tamu	807	50	541	216
AH3	Mongla – Kyaning Tong	93		5	88
AH14	Muse – Lashio – Mandalay	453	453		
Total		3,003	1,472	1,013	518
Percentage		100	49.0	33.7	17.3



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Yangon (AH1)

Yangon is home to the gold-plated Shwedagon Paagoda. Built in the 18th century to enshrine eight of the Buddha's hairs, the mighty monument is surrounded by an assortment of statues, temples, shrines, images and pavilions.



Mandalay (AH1/AH14)

This sprawling cultural centre was the last capital of Myanmar before the British took over and is the country's second largest city. Highlights of Mandalay include Shwenandaw Kyaung, the sole remaining building of the once extravagant moated palace and Mandalay Hill with its stairways, temples and sweeping views. Bustling markets with handicrafts from Upper Myanmar are worth visiting.

Bago (AH1)

During the Mon dynasty, Bago was a major seaport and capital of lower Myanmar. The city was destroyed by war in 1757 but partially restored in the early 19th century. Sights include the Shwemawdaw Pagoda which dominates the town, the Hintha Gone Pagoda and the 55 metre long, reclining Shwethalyaung Buddha.



Inle Lake, near Taunggyi (AH2)

Inle Lake is the most famous scenic spot in the Shan State, about 30 kilometres south of Taunggyi, the state capital. The lake is 22.4 kilometres long and 10.2 kilometres wide, shallow and extremely picturesque. Studded with floating islands formed by the growth and decay of vegetation, it is famous for unique leg-rowers, floating villages and colourful markets and festivals.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Yangon.
2. Tour Yangon, a city with colonial and spiritual heritage. Tour the National Museum, Kyaukhtatgyi Pagoda's 70-metre-long reclining Buddha, downtown Yangon, Sule Pagoda, Mahabandoola Park, India town and lively Chinatown.
3. Fly to Bagan, one of the most remarkable archaeological sites in Asia. A former capital of Myanmar, it still boasts the huge stupas and temples built by the kings on the banks of the Irrawaddy River. Watch the sunset from the upper terrace of Myauk Guni Temple.
4. Visit Nyaung Oo Market, the Shwezigon Pagoda and its golden stupa and Wetkyi-In Gubyaukgyi, a cave temple with mural paintings. Observe the process of traditional lacquerware, one of Myanmar's best-known handicrafts.

5. Drive to Mount Popa, an extinct volcano over 1,500 metres high. Rejoin the *Asian Highway* for the drive to the former capital of Mandalay (AH1/AH14).
6. Tour Mandalay, Myanmar's cultural capital. Visit the Kuthodaw Pagoda with its 729 marble stone slabs of Buddhist scriptures (known as the world's biggest book), and the Kyauktawgyi Pagoda with its huge sitting Buddha.
7. Cruise down the Irrawaddy River to the former capital of Mingun, with its huge unfinished pagoda and home to the Mingun Bell, considered the world's largest uncracked ringing bell. In the former capital of Ava, visit the Bagaya Monastery and the ruins of the Royal Palace and fort.
8. Fly from Mandalay to Heho in Shan State. Enjoy a scenic drive to Pindaya through the picturesque countryside. Visit Pindaya's limestone cave with its maze of chambers displaying more than 8,000 Buddha statues and local handicraft workshops. Drive to Inle Lake.
9. Tour Inle Lake by boat. See the leg-rowing fishermen and the floating gardens, built up from strips of water hyacinth and mud and anchored to the bottom with bamboo poles. Visit a floating village at Ywama, the lake's "downtown".
10. Fly back from Heho to Yangon.
11. Visit Myanmar's holiest monument, the Shwedagon Pagoda with its golden stupa covered with 60 tons of pure gold leaf. Afternoon, shop at Bogyoke Market, formerly Scott's Market.
12. Depart Yangon.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Public Works, Ministry of Construction, 60, Shwedagon Pagoda Rd., Yangon, Myanmar.
Tel: (95-1) 282639, 289233; Fax: (951) 289531.

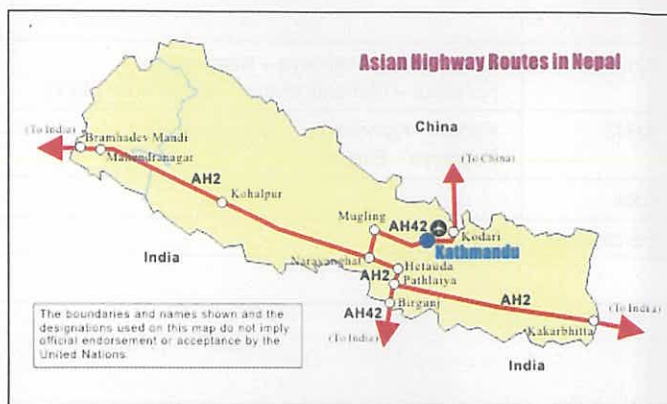
F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Directorate of Hotels and Tourism, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, No. 77-91, Sule Pagoda Road, Yangon, Myanmar. Fax: (95-1) 289 604/242 522; E-mail: mtt.mht@mptmail.net.mm; Web: www.myanmar.com/Ministry/Hotel_Tour.

20. Nepal

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Nepal to China and India. Nepal is implementing plans to connect all the district headquarters of the country by road. Efforts are under way to improve and maintain the strategic road network. The extreme difficult terrain with vulnerable geology makes road construction difficult and expensive. Multilateral and bilateral agencies are assisting the development of the highway network.

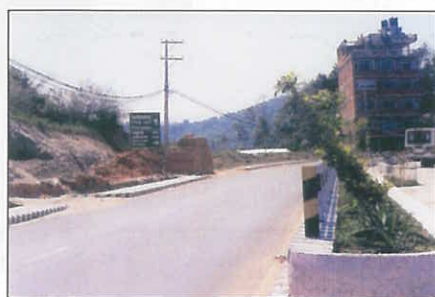


Nepal comprises three major areas: forests and cultivatable land in the south; the towering Himalayas, including Mount Everest, in the north; and moderately high mountains in the central region, which contains the Kathmandu valley and most of the population. Nepal features the world's eight highest peaks, tropical jungles, rushing rivers and peaceful valleys.

The economy is predominantly agricultural; rice, corn, wheat, millet, jute, timber, and potatoes are the principal products. Livestock raising is also important, and manufactured products include textiles, carpets, and processed foods. Tourism is a major source of foreign income. The population is a mixture of Indo-Aryan, Tibetan, and other peoples. Nepali is the official language, but there are some 20 Nepalese languages. English is also spoken.

Country Profile	
Capital	Kathmandu
Area	140,800 sq km
Population	24,223,000 (2003)
Urban Population	14 per cent
GDP	US\$ 6.16 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 254 (2003)
Currency	Nepalese Rupee
Total Length of Roads	16,834 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	1,321 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	3,54,955 (2002)

B. Asian Highway in Nepal



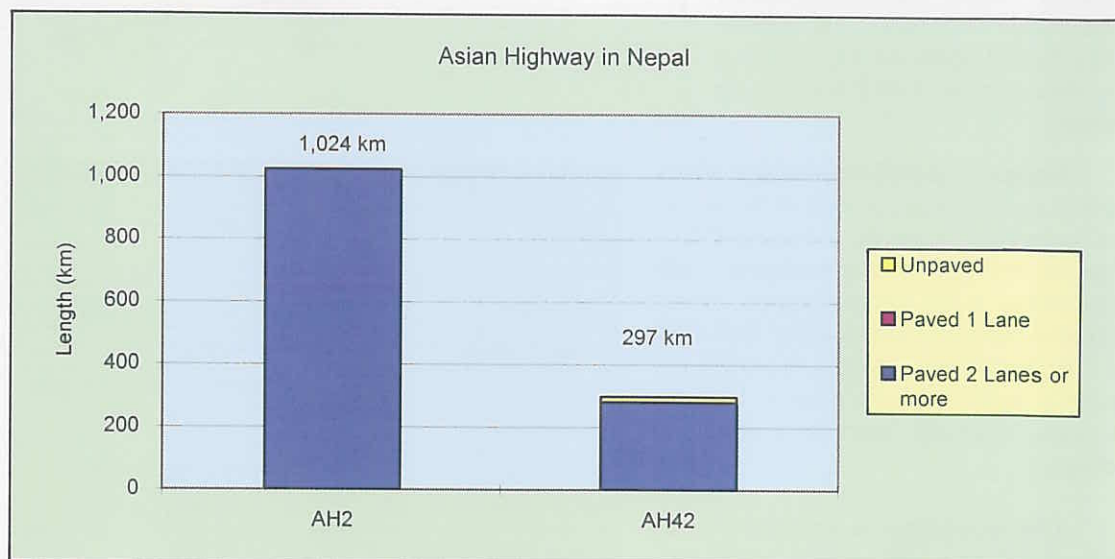
AH42 Junction of Sindhuli Road to AH2



AH42 in Dhulikhel

Status of the Asian Highway in Nepal

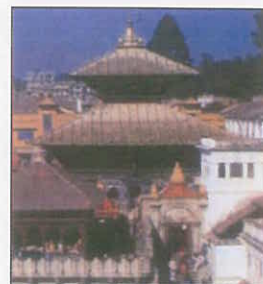
Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH2	Kakarbhitta – Pathlaiya – Narayanghat – Kohalpur – Mahendranagar – Bramhadev Mandi	1,024	1,024		
AH42	Kodari – Kathmandu – Narayanghat – Pathlaiya – Birgunj	297	280		17
Total		1,321	1,304		17
Percentage		100	98.7		1.3



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Pashupatinath, Kathmandu Valley (AH 42)

Pashupatinath is the holiest Hindu pilgrimage destination in Nepal, with linga images of Shiva, shrines, and temples. A gold-plated roof, silver doors, and woodcarvings of the finest quality decorate the pagoda construction. A circuit of the Pashupati area takes visitors past a 6th century statue of the Buddha, an 8th century statue of Brahma and numerous other temples.



Patan (AH42)

Patan, the second-largest city in the Kathmandu valley lies just across the Bagmati River. The city has superb temples and artisans whose handiwork provides the focus of the stunning Durbar Square, the largest display of Newari architecture in Nepal. It includes the Royal Palace and the two-tiered Jagannarayan Temple.

Royal Chitwan National Park (AH2)

The Royal Chitwan National Park is one of the best planned tourist areas in Nepal. In the earlier part of the century, when rapid deforestation was devastating Nepal's southern Terai belt, the government proclaimed the Chitwan area a national park. Today, Royal Bengal tigers and one-horned rhinos roam the region. Elephant safaris, jungle walks, canoeing and a variety of cultural activities can be enjoyed.



Lumbini (AH2)

Shakyamuni Buddha was born in Lumbini, in southern Nepal. Since then, Nepal has been a sacred ground for Buddhists. The ruins of the old city can still be seen. The restored garden and surroundings of Lumbini have the remains of many of the ancient stupas and monasteries. A quiet garden, shaded by the leafy Bo tree (the type of tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment), and a newly-planted forest nearby lend an air of tranquillity.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Kathmandu.
2. Tour Kathmandu City, including the Durbar Square complex of palaces, courtyards and temples. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is the city's main social, religious and urban focal point. Afternoon, tour Patan and Swayambhunath Stupa, one of Nepal's holiest Buddhist sites.
3. Tour Bhaktapur city with its 15th century palace of 55 windows and the National Art gallery. Afternoon, explore Pashupatinath temple, one of the most sacred Hindu shrines in the world. Devotees can take ritual dips in the Bagmati River flowing beside the temple, also a World Heritage Site.
4. Drive along the *Asian Highway* to Mugling and Narayanghat to reach the famous Royal Chitwan National Park, (about a seven-hour journey) (AH42).
5. Enjoy Royal Chitwan National park, the country's oldest park and a World Heritage Site. Also visit the elephant breeding center and the Bikram Baba religious site.
6. Drive back along the *Asian Highway* (AH42) to Kathmandu.
7. Depart Kathmandu.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of Roads, Babar Mahal, Kathmandu, Nepal. Fax: (977-1) 4 262395; Web: www.dorhmis.gov.np.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, Singhadurbar, Kathmandu, Nepal. Tel: (977-1) 4 225 579; Fax: (977-1) 4 423 062; Web: www.welcomenepal.com.

21. Pakistan

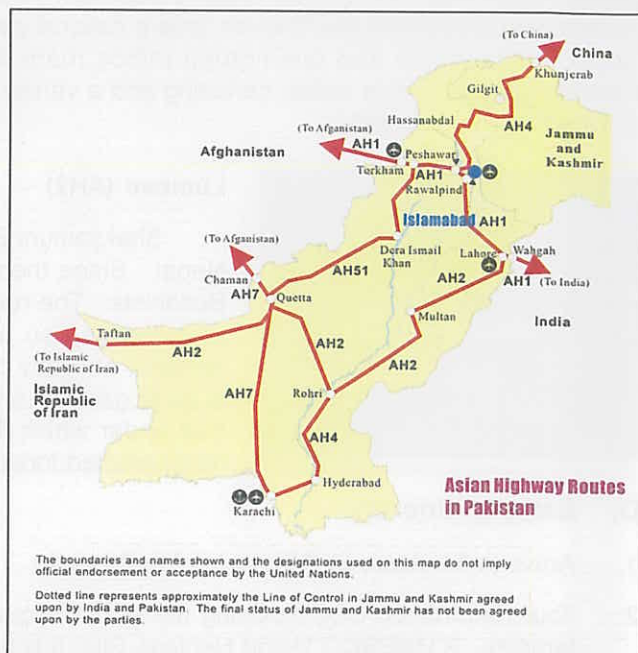
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Pakistan to Afghanistan, China, India and the Islamic Republic of Iran. They also provide links to Karachi, an important seaport for landlocked Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics. The Government's development programme aims to improve road density, maintain the road network and regulate the overloading of vehicles.

The Indus River runs the length of the country. Agriculture is the economic mainstay, with wheat, rice, cotton, and sugarcane the principal crops. Vast irrigation projects and the use of fertilisers have increased output, and the country is now self-sufficient agriculturally. The production of textiles, consumer goods, cement, and fertilisers, as well as oil refining and metal processing, are important components of Pakistan's expanding industrial base.

The area that is now Pakistan was the site of the Indus Valley civilisation, the earliest known culture on the Indian sub-continent. The territory's location placed it on the historic route from central Asia to India, and for thousands of years invaders, including Aryans, Persians, Alexander the Great, Seleucids, and Parthians, swept down on the settlements there.

The people are a mixture of many ethnic groups, with Punjabis the most numerous: Pathan tribes dominate the north west and Baluchis in the west. Urdu is the official language, while English and Punjabi, Pashto, Baluchi, and other ethnic languages are also spoken.



Country Profile ²	
Capital	Islamabad
Area	796,096 sq km
Population	153,578,000 (2003)
Urban Population	34 per cent
GDP	US\$ 74 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 482 (2003)
Currency	Pakistani Rupee
Major Port	Karachi
Total Length of Roads	257,000 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	5,377 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	4,200,000 (2002)

² Excluding data for Jammu and Kashmir, the final status of which has not yet been determined.

B. Asian Highway in Pakistan



AH1 Islamabad – Lahore



AH1 near Islamabad

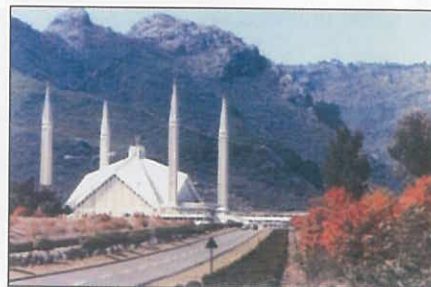
Status of the Asian Highway in Pakistan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH1	Wahgah – Lahore – Rawalpindi (– Islamabad) – Hassanabdal – Peshawar – Torkham	607	607	
AH2	Wahgah – Lahore – Multan – Rohri – Quetta – Taftan	1,828	1,828	
AH4	Khunjerab – Hassanabdal – Rawalpindi (– Islamabad) – Lahore – Multan – Rohri – Hyderabad – Karachi	1,289	1,289	
AH7	Chaman – Quetta – Karachi	816	816	
AH51	Peshawar – Dera Ismail Khan – Quetta	837	837	
Total		5,377	5,377	
Percentage		100	100	

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Islamabad (AH1)

Islamabad, the capital, is located against the backdrop of Margalla Hills. It is green, spacious and peaceful. The master plan of this modern city was prepared in 1960. Construction was started in October 1961. The city came to life on 26 October 1966, when the first office building was occupied.



Takht-E-Bhai, Peshawar (AH1)

Peshawar is very much a frontier town, located near the famous Khyber Pass. The Shahji-ki Dheri mounds, situated to the east, cover ruins of the largest Buddhist stupa in the subcontinent (2nd century A.D.). Surrounded by hills and offering a mysterious charm, this is a charismatic, captivating city.

Badshahi Mosque, Lahore (AH1)

Lahore is the provincial capital of Punjab and Pakistan's second largest city. Apart from being the cultural and academic centre of the country, Lahore is the Mughal "Show-Window" of Pakistan. The city is built in the form of a parallelogram, the area within the walls being about 461 acres.



Karachi (AH4/AH7)

Karachi, the largest and most populous city, presents an interesting and colourful combination of the old and new. The narrow twisting lanes and alleys of the old city throb with life alongside wide metalled road and elegant modern buildings. Within the city, talented artisans produce traditional handicrafts of exquisite beauty.

D. Sample itineraries

North Pakistan

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Islamabad.
2. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH1) city of Peshawar. En route, visit Taxila, the ancient capital of Gandhara, and one of the most important sites along the Silk Road. Many Buddhist monuments there date back to its glory days between the 1st and 5th centuries A.D.
3. Excursion to Khyber Pass, a gateway for generations of invaders to the sub continents. Afternoon tour of Peshawar, a city that has gained tremendous historical, military and political importance because of its proximity to the Khyber Pass.
4. Drive to Swat. En route, visit Takht-e-Bhai, an important Buddhist monastery from the Kushan Period that drew pilgrims from China and the subcontinent.
5. Drive over the lush green Shangla Pass to Besham. From Besham, continue on the famous Karakoram highway to Chilas, a semi desert town by Indus river and also a former stop on the Silk Road.
6. Drive to Hunza.
7. Drive by jeep to Hopper glacier in Nagar Valley. Afternoon visit the recently restored Baltit Fort, an architectural masterpiece and a major symbol of the Hunza Valley culture. Also visit the bazaar in Karimabad, the capital of Hunza.

8. Early morning drive by jeep to Duiker to watch the magnificent view of the Hunza valley at sunrise. Afternoon drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH4) city of Gilgit and visit the great Kargah Buddha, carved into the hillside nearby.
9. Fly back to Islamabad.
10. Depart Islamabad.

Central to South Pakistan

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Lahore.
2. Tour Lahore, capital of the Punjab, built in the form of a parallelogram. Visit the Mausoleum of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir, the Shalimar Gardens, Lahore Fort and the Thirteen Gates of Lahore.
3. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH2) city of Multan. En route, visit Harrapa, a lasting reminder of the golden days of the Indus Valley Civilization.
4. Explore Multan's mausoleums and mosques. The museum is modest but contains a fine collection of coins, medals, postage stamps and manuscripts from the Islamic and pre-Islamic period. In the centre of Multan Fort is a Memorial Obelisk, the only architectural remains of the British period.
5. Drive to Bahawalpur; en route visit mystic city of Uch.
6. Tour Bahawalpur, including an excursion to Derawar Fort. Bahawalpur is known for its distinctly embroidered slippers and shoes and the filigree pottery. It has a marble mosque and a few British buildings like the Science College.
7. Transfer to railway station for a train journey to the *Asian Highway* city of Rohri and further drive to Sukkur.
8. Drive to Mohenjodaro, the most important excavation site of the Indus Valley Civilization. Drive back to Sukkur and fly to the *Asian Highway* city of Karachi.
9. Tour Karachi, a tropical city on the Arabian Sea and the commercial capital of Pakistan.
10. Depart Karachi.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Ministry of Communications and Railways, Block D, Pakistan Secretariat, Islamabad, Pakistan. Tel: (92-51) 9225401/2256337; Fax: (92-51) 9205454.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

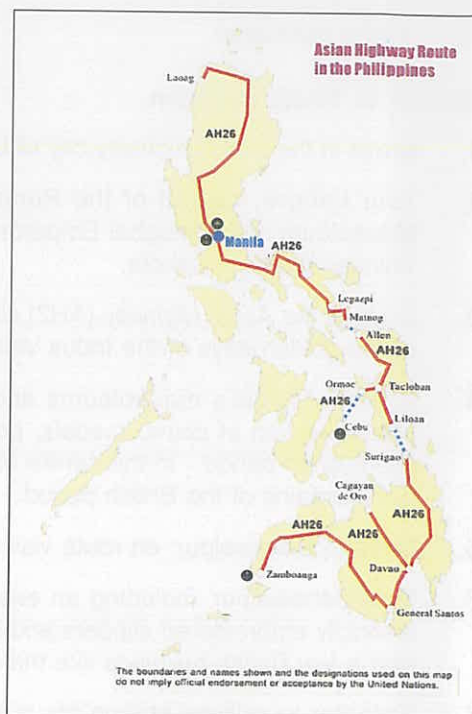
Federal Ministry for Minorities, Culture, Sports, Tourism and Youth Affairs, Room 217, Block D, Pakistan Secretariat, Islamabad, Pakistan. Tel: (92-51) 921 0108; Fax: (92-51) 922 4697; Web: www.tourism.gov.pk.

22. Philippines

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway AH26 links major seaports and cities in the Philippines. The Government is endeavouring to improve the existing infrastructure through proper maintenance, rehabilitation and upgrading. It is also mobilizing the private sector in providing transport infrastructure.

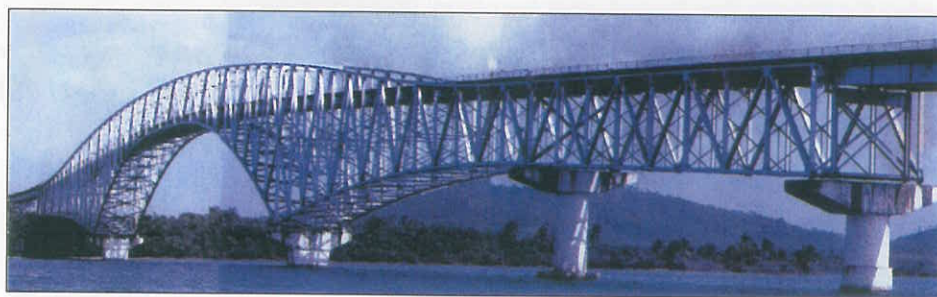
Country Profile	
Capital	Manila
Area	300,000 sq km
Population	80,731,000 (2003)
Urban Population	61 per cent
GDP	US\$ 79.54 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 985 (2003)
Currency	Philippine Peso
Major Ports	Manila, Cebu and Zamboanga
Total Length of Roads	202,000 km (2000)
Asian Highway route length	3,517 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	2,438,320 (2000)



Of the over 7,000 tropical islands, the two largest are Luzon and Mindanao. The islands are mountainous and volcanic. The Philippine economy is a mixture of agriculture, light industry and supporting services. Half of the working population is engaged in agriculture; rice, corn, and coconuts are the principal crops. Among the mineral resources are nickel, zinc, copper, cobalt, gold, silver, iron, and chromite. Manufactures include processed foods, clothing and textiles, electronic equipment, chemicals, refined metals, and electronics.

The great majority of the population are ethnic Malays (known as Filipinos), but there are groups of Negritos (negroid pygmies), Dumagats (similar to the Papuans of New Guinea), and Chinese. Filipino, based on Tagalog, is the national language, but English is widely spoken. There are also eight major dialects and some 70 native tongues.

B. Asian Highway in Philippines



The San Juanico Bridge between Samar and Leyte Islands

Status of the Asian Highway in Philippines

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)	Ferry (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane		
AH26	Laoag – Manila – Legazpi – Matong – Ferry – Allen – Tacloban (– Ormoc – Ferry – Cebu) – Liloan – Ferry – Surigao – Davao (– Cagayan de Oro) – General Santos – Zamboanga	3,517	2,979		388	150
Total		3,517	2,979		388	150
Percentage		100	84.7		11.0	4.3

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Manila (AH26)

Rizal Park in Manila is where national independence hero, Dr. Jose P. Rizal, was executed during the Spanish regime. The park has many points of interest including a Japanese garden, Chinese garden, and artist's sanctuary, a grand stadium, an observatory, an open-air concert hall, a light-and-sound theater, restaurants, food kiosks and playgrounds.



Davao (AH26)

Davao is the gateway to Southern Mindanao. Davao Gulf is an amazing marine world pulsating with an enchanting and colorful aquatic life. A number of island resorts located all through the area make for a perfect ecotourism experience.

Magellan's Cross, Cebu (AH26)

Planted in 1521 by Ferdinand Magellan, this marks the spot where the first Christian Filipinos, Rajah Humabon and Queen Juana and about 400 followers were baptized. The cross helps Cebu lay claim to being the cradle of Christianity in the Far East. It is also first and oldest city the Philippines, antedating Manila by 7 years.





Laoag (AH26)

The city of Laoag is known as the 'Sparkling Gem of Ilocandia'. Today, it is a major crossroads for trade and commerce in the Ilocos region. Though bustling with business, the city has retained pretty much an unhurried, laid-back lifestyle.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Manila.
2. Tour Manila, including Rizal Park, Walled City of Intramuros, ancient Fort Santiagos Church and Casa Manila. Visit the Chinese Cemetery, Makati area, the luxurious suburb, and drive by Ayala Avenue, the Makati Commercial Center and Forbes Park.
3. Fly from Manila to Cebu, the country's oldest and third largest city. Take a ferry boat ride to Tagbilaran. Proceed to one of nature's wonders, the Chocolate Hills. Enjoy a scenic cruise down Loay River.
4. Return by ferry boat to Cebu.
5. Fly to the *Asian Highway* city of General Santos. Carry on to Kalsangi to tour the vast pineapple plantation. Its cannery can process up to 1,000 tons of fresh pineapples a day. Drive to Lake Sebu, home to one of the country's colourful tribes, the T'bolis.
6. Explore Lake Sebu, along whose shores one of the most vivid market days in the Philippines are held. Observe the T'boli craftsmen at work on their brass and bronze designs, and the T'nalak weavers with their abaca fiber handicrafts. Physically fit visitors can explore one of the seven waterfalls in the area. Return to General Santos City.
7. Depart for the busy fish-port of General Santos and watch the pre-daylight drama of fishmongers getting ready to sell their catch. Drive towards the *Asian Highway* (AH26) city of Davao through the winding highway. Visit the Philippine Eagle Sanctuary.
8. Fly back to Manila.
9. Depart Manila.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of Public Works and Highways, Project Management Office, 63 Visayas Avenue, Project 6, Quezon City, Philippines. Tel: (632) 4560847/9265768; Fax: (632) 9265768; Web: www.dpwh.gov.ph.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

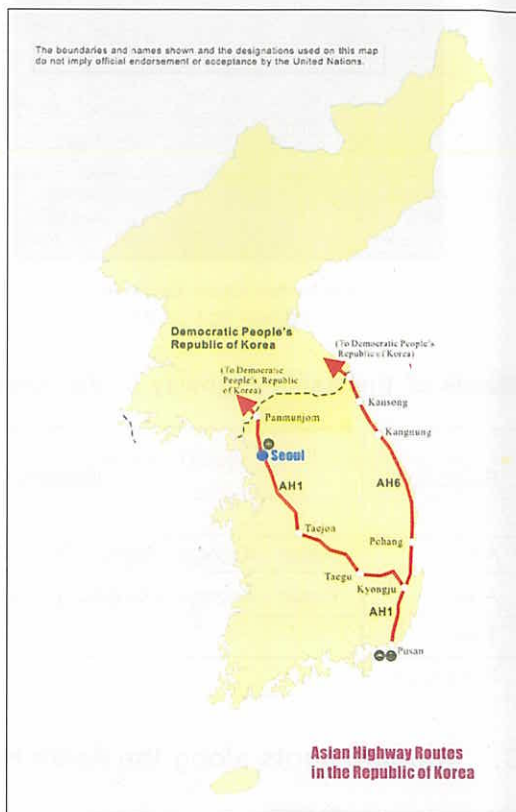
Department of Tourism, Office of the Secretary, T.M. Kalaw, Malate, Manila, Philippines. Tel: (63-2) 524 1751; Fax: (63-2) 521 7374; E-mail: webcontent@tourism.gov.ph; Web: www.tourism.gov.ph.

23. Republic of Korea

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes in the Republic of Korea link the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the seaport of Pusan. Road transport is the dominant mode for passenger and freight traffic. There is strong demand for additional road infrastructure due to the rapidly increasing number of motor vehicles. By 2020 the Government is planning to construct around 6,000 kilometres grid pattern expressway network, 9 arterial expressway running east to west and 7 running north to south.

The land is largely mountainous. Some 3,420 islands, mostly uninhabited, lie off the coast. Of the peninsula's five major minerals gold, iron ore, coal, tungsten, and graphite – only the last two are found principally in the south. About 20 per cent of land is arable; rice, barley, wheat, corn, soybeans, and grain sorghums are extensively cultivated. The fishing waters off Korea are among the best in the world.

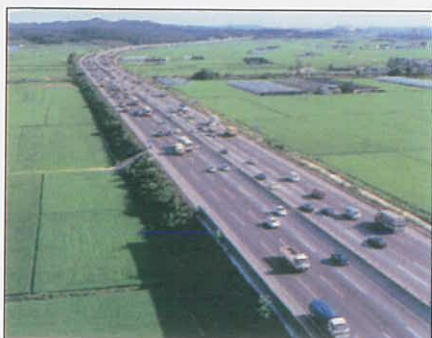


Country Profile	
Capital	Seoul
Area	98,480 sq km
Population	48,020,000 (2003)
Urban Population	84 per cent
GDP	US\$ 507 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 10,567 (2003)
Currency	South Korean Won
Major Ports	Pusan
Total Length of Roads	96,037 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	907 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	13,905,705 (2002)

As one of the Four Tigers of East Asia, South Korea has achieved an incredible record of growth and integration into the high-tech modern world economy. Important industrial advances were made in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, and the Republic of Korea now has one of the most rapidly growing economies in Asia. Manufactured products include textiles, clothing, processed foods, electrical and electronic equipment, automobiles, chemicals, ceramics, and a variety of consumer products. The nation's rapid industrialization and urbanization in

the 1960s and 1970s has been accompanied by a continuing migration of rural residents into the cities, particularly Seoul. Korean is the national language; English is widely taught.

B. Asian Highway in Republic of Korea



AH1 near Osan between
Daejeon and Seoul

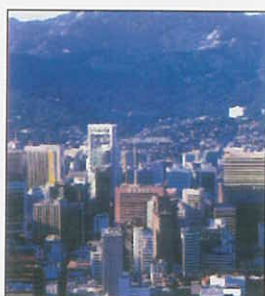


AH1 Hobeop Junction
in Daejeon

Status of the Asian Highway in the Republic of Korea

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH1	Pusan – Kyongju – Taejon – Seoul – Panmunjom	500	500	
AH6	Pusan – Kyongju – Kangnung – Kansong – Border of DPRK	407	407	
Total		907	907	
Percentage		100	100	

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway



Seoul (AH1)

Seoul, a historical and cultural city, has been the capital of the Republic of Korea for more than 600 years since the Joseon Dynasty was founded in 1392. About a quarter of the total Korean population live in Seoul, a centre of politics and economy. The city is trying to develop itself into a hub of North-East Asia, under the master plan worked out in preparation for the 21st century.

Kyongju City (AH1/AH6)

The Kyongju Historic Areas contain a remarkable concentration of outstanding examples of Korean Buddhist art, in the form of sculptures, reliefs, pagodas, and the remains of temples and palaces. This form of unique artistic expression flowered between the 7th and 10th centuries.





Pusan (AH1/AH6)

Pusan is the second largest city in the Republic of Korea. It is a major port, offering gateways to Japan and to the rest of the world. Pusan also boasts scenic nature spots with the Nakdonggang River flowing in the west. Its landscape includes a coastline with fine beaches, scenic islets and tall mountains.

D. Sample Itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Seoul.
2. Tour Seoul, visiting Kyongbok Palace, National Museum, Blue House, the Presidential Office. Visit a Korean Folk Village to relive the real 18th century lifestyle of the Korean people.
3. Drive to Mount Sorak. Relax at Waterpia Hot Spring Resort with outdoor and indoor hot spring water swimming pools and sauna.
4. Drive to Mount Sorak National Park for a cable car ride to one of the top peaks for a panoramic view of Mountain Sorak. Proceed to Shinheungsa Temple. Drive along the *Asian Highway* to Panmunjom, the border between the two Koreas.
5. Drive down the *Asian Highway* (AH1) to Kyongju, passing tiny fishing villages.
6. Tour Kyongju, visiting Puluksa Temple, Sokkuram Grotto, Tumuli Park-Royal Tombs.
7. Visit Haeinsa Temple which houses the most important Buddhist treasures in Korea. The Tripitakana consists of over 80,000 pieces of inscript wooden plates carved in Koryo Dynasty. It took more than 15 years to complete this incredible work.
8. Drive down the *Asian Highway* to Pusan. Visit the United Nations cemetery where lie buried the many soldiers who died during the Korean War. Drive back to Seoul along the *Asian Highway* (AH1).
9. Depart Seoul.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Road Policy Division, Bureau of Public Roads, Ministry of Construction and Transportation, 1 Joongang-dong, Kwacheon-City, Gyunggi-do, Republic of Korea. Tel: (82-2) 504 9071-2; Fax: (82-2) 502 0340; Web: www.moct.go.kr/.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 82-1 Sejong-Ro, Jongro-Gu, Seoul 110703, Republic of Korea. Tel: (822) 370 49740-4; Fax: (822) 370 49749; Web1: www.visitkorea.or.kr, Web2: www.knto.or.kr.

24. Russian Federation



A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link the Russian Federation to Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Finland, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Ukraine. The Asian Highway routes also provide important access to the seaports of Vladivostok, Nahodka and St. Petersburg. Although road construction has been concentrated in the European part of the country, the new 10-year national highway programme pays more attention to development of the Asian part of the Russian Federation, including Siberia and the Russian Far East.

The "North-South" corridor, linking Scandinavia with the Caucasus, Central Asian and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the East-West corridor linking Eastern Europe and the Far East through the Russian Federation are two important Asian Highway routes.

The Russian Federation stretches about 8,000 kilometres from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean. The biggest country in the world, the Russian Federation occupies 11.5 per cent of the world's land-mass. It covers eleven time zones. Along with Moscow, St. Petersburg is an important administrative, business and cultural centre.

Country Profile	
Capital	Moscow
Area	17,075,200 sq km
Population	143,246,000 (2003)
Urban Population	73 per cent
GDP	US\$ 417.54 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 2,914 (2003)
Currency	Russian Ruble
Major ports	Vladivostok, Nahodka, St. Petersburg
Total Length of Roads	922,000 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	16,869 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	25,393,700 (2000)

The climate varies from extreme cold in the North and Siberia (where Verkhoyansk, the world's coldest settled place, is located), to subtropical along the Black Sea. Most of the western part of the Russian Federation is flatland, except for the Urals, the Caucasus (the site of Mountain Elbrus, 5,633 metres, Russian Federation's highest peak), and scattered highlands; it includes the largest lakes west of the Urals, Lake Ladoga and Lake Onega.

Russians make up 83 per cent of the country's population; there are Ukrainians and non-Slavic minorities. Russian is the official language. Many people worship in the Russian Orthodox Church, other religions include Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, Islam and Buddhism.

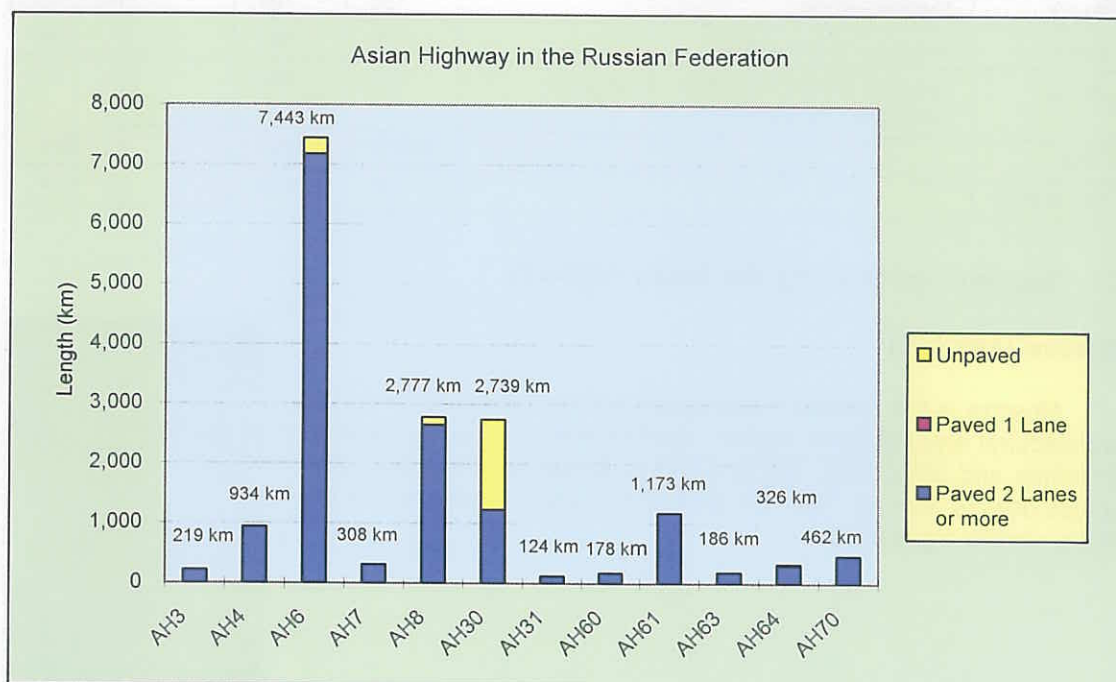
B. Asian Highway in the Russian Federation



Section of AH8 near Moscow



Section of AH8 near Moscow



Status of the Asian Highway in the Russian Federation

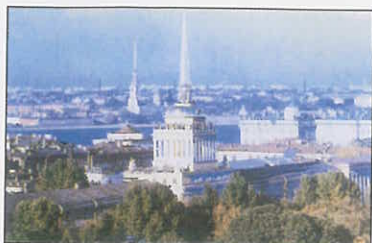
Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH3	Ulan Ude – Kyahta	219	219		
AH4	Novosibirsk – Barnaul – Tashanta	934	934		
AH6	Hasan – Razdolnoe (– Vladivostok – Nahodka) – Ussuriysk – Pogranichny Zabaykalsk – Chita – Ulan Ude – Irkutsk – Krasnoyarsk – Novosibirsk – Omsk – Isilkul Petuhovo – Chelyabinsk – Ufa – Samara – Moscow – Krasnoe – Border of Belarus	7,443	7,176		267
AH7	Yekaterinburg – Chelyabinsk – Troisk	308	308		
AH8	Border of Finland – Tropynovka – Vyborg – St. Petersburg – Moscow – Tambov – Borysgolebsk – Volgograd – Astrakhan – Hasavjurt – Mahachakala – Kazmalyarskiy	2,777	2,651		126
AH30	Ussuriysk – Khabarovsk – Belogorsk – Chita	2,739	1,231		1,508
AH31	Belogorsk – Blagoveshchensk	124	124		
AH60	Omsk – Chelrak	178	178		
AH61	Ozinki – Saratov – Borysgolebsk – Voronezh – Kursk – Troebortnoe – Krupets – Border of Ukraine	1,173	1,173		
AH63	Samara – Kurlin	186	186		
AH64	Barnaul – Veseloyarskiy	326	303		23
AH70	Border of Ukraine – Donetsk – Volgograd – Astrakhan – Kotyaevka	462	462		
Total		16,869	14,945		1,924
Percentage		100	88.6		11.4

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Moscow (AH6/AH8)

Moscow is the Russian Federation's political, scientific, historical, architectural and business centre. Architecture, museums, theatres, churches and cathedrals, modern and historical buildings and other unique objects abound. With an area of 1,035 sq kilometres, it is one of the world's biggest cities.





St. Petersburg (AH8)

St. Petersburg is a magnificent city founded 300 years ago. Peter the Great built it on the Gulf of Finland, with vast, crystalline squares and palaces deeply evocative of Russia's past. Considered the cultural heart of modern day Russia, St. Petersburg is rapidly regaining a reputation as one of the great cities of Europe.

Vladivostok (AH6)

Vladivostok ("Lord of the East" in Russian) is located less than 100 kilometres east of the Chinese border. Today, businesses from all over the world have flooded in to take advantage of the city's position as a crossroads of North-East Asia.



Irkutsk (AH6)

Irkutsk is one of great economic and cultural centres in the eastern part of the Russian Federation. Formerly cut off by the rocky Urals, this distant Siberian city is today a city of youth and students. It abounds with institutes and colleges, vocational schools and libraries.

D. Sample itineraries

Central Region

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* (AH6) city of Irkutsk.
2. Tour Irkutsk – one of the oldest cities in Siberia. See the white stone churches in Siberian baroque style, carved wooden houses, visit the art museum and the local Lore Museum.
3. Drive to Sludianka city. Enjoy the Siberian taiga forest with its slender birch trees and mighty pines.
4. Drive to one of the highest peaks of the Baikal region, Cherskiy Peak, for a breathtaking view of the snowy mountains of the Sayan and smooth surface of Baikal. The ascent with stops for rest takes about 3.5 hours. The descent is much quicker.
5. Enjoy a fascinating programme on the shore of Baikal. Take a train to Port Baikal along the Circumbaikal Loop. After a 30-minute boat ride, arrive at Listvyanka settlement.

6. Take a pedestrian, bicycle or horseback tour round the Listvyanka fishermen settlement with a visit to old St. Nicholas Church to understand the traditions and way of life of the local people. Visit the well-known museum of Baikal history. On the way back to Irkutsk, visit the open-air ethnographic museum.
7. Depart Irkutsk.

Moscow – St. Petersburg

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Moscow.
2. Tour Moscow to see the Red Square, the historical centre, Tverskaya Street, Christ the Saviour Cathedral.
3. Visit the Kremlin, the former residence of Czars and Patriarchs, and the Armory with its fabulous collection of Gold, silver, jewelry, Faberge eggs, carriages and Czarist thrones. Experience the legendary Moscow Metro with its mosaics and frescos.
4. Excursion to Kolomenskoye, the summer residence of Czars since the time of Ivan the Terrible.
5. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH8) to St. Petersburg.
6. Tour St. Petersburg. Visit Peter and Paul's Fortress, the oldest building in St. Petersburg and former political prison, Alexander Nevsky Convent, once one of the country's most revered monasteries, and St. Isaac's Cathedral.
7. Excursion to the Hermitage, with its enormous collection of Western art. There are also historical, Russian and Oriental sections definitely worth visiting.
8. Depart St. Petersburg.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Ministry of Transport, Bochkova St. 4, Moscow 189085, Russian Federation. Tel: (7-095) 2878 087; Fax: (7-095) 287 9146; Web1: <http://www.rosavtodor.ru/en/>, Web2: www.mintrans.ru.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Tourism Department, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, 47, Myasnitskaya str., Moscow, Russian Federation. Tel: (7-095) 207-3602; E-mail: info@russiatourism.ru; Web: www.russiatourism.ru/eng.

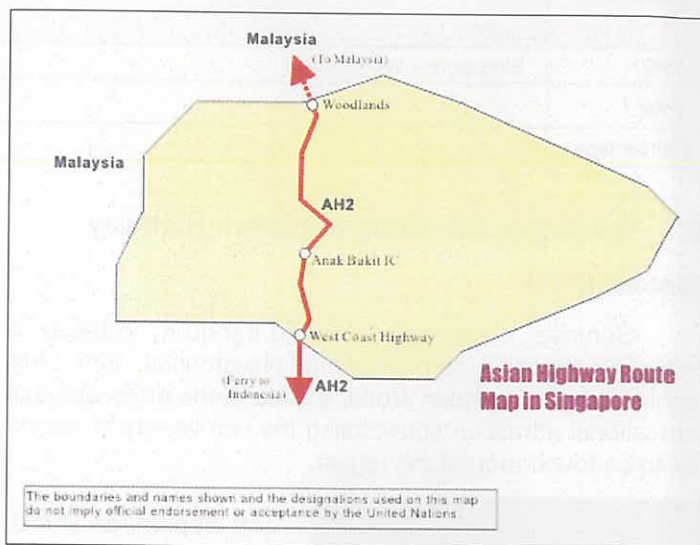
25. Singapore

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway links Singapore to Indonesia (by ferry) and Malaysia. Singapore has a comprehensive road network aimed at providing better connectivity to all commuters and to sustain economic growth. The Woodlands Checkpoint-West Coast Highway is the existing Asian Highway which is of primary class with six lanes. Inclusion of the Second Link-Tuas Check Point-West Coast Highway in the Asian Highway network is still under negotiation.

Singapore is largely a low-lying island with a tropical climate. It is almost entirely urbanized and densely populated. Lying on the equator, the thriving city-state that has become one of the juggernaut economies of Asia. Its port, at Keppel Harbor, is one of the world's largest and busiest. The economy is supported primarily by manufacturing, service industries like tourism, and trade. Shipbuilding is also important.

The population is mainly Chinese; Malays and Indians constitute large minorities. Malay, Chinese, Tamil and English are all widely spoken.



Country Profile	
Capital	Singapore
Area	692.7 sq km
Population	4,452,732 (July 2002 est.)
Urban Population	100 per cent
GDP	US\$ 95.94 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 21,547 (2003)
Currency	Singapore Dollar
Major Ports	Singapore
Total Length of Roads	3,149 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	19 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	706,956 (2002)

B. Asian Highway in Singapore



AH2 Bukit Timah Expressway



AH2 Woodlands Checkpoint

Status of the Asian Highway in Singapore

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH2	Singapore – Woodland	19	19	
Total		19	19	
Percentage		100	100	

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Sentosa (AH2)

"Sentosa", meaning peace and tranquility in Malay, is one of Singapore's top recreational playgrounds. One of its highlights is Underwater World, a state-of-the-art leisure and educational attraction showcasing the rich variety of marine life to be found around the region.



The Esplanade (AH2)

The Esplanade is the country's centre of culture and performing arts. It boasts theatres, concert halls, a library, galleries and restaurants. It has earned the nickname "Durian", as its shape resembles two halves of the yellow-green durian fruit from South-East Asia and the roofs bring to mind its prickly outer skin.

D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the Asian Highway city of Singapore.
2. Tour Jurong Bird Park. Take the panorail ride for a panoramic view of the park and to the world's largest walk-in aviary. The famed bird show is claimed to be the first of its kind in this region and boasts a wide variety of performing birds.
3. Visit Sentosa Island, the Isle of Tranquility. Take a scenic cable car ride to Sentosa and catch a bird's eye view of Singapore's skyline and one of the world's busiest ports. The Underwater World is one of Asia's largest tropical oceanariums.
4. Spend a day shopping at Chinatown, Little India, Arab Street and the many shopping malls. Try the Night Safari, claimed to be the world's first wildlife park to be viewed by night.
5. Depart Singapore.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Land Transport Authority, 460 Alexandra Road, #26-00 PSA Building, Singapore 119963.
Tel: (65) 6375 7254; Fax: (65) 6377 7000; Web: www.lta.gov.sg; Ministry of Transport,
Web: www.mot.gov.sg.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Singapore Tourism Board, Tourism Court 1 Orchard Spring Lane, Singapore 247729.
Tel: (65) 6736 6622; Fax: (65) 6736 9423; Web: www.stb.com.sg.

26. Sri Lanka

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway links Sri Lanka to India (by ferry) and provides access to the major seaport, Colombo, Trincommalee and Galle. Road transport is the most predominant mode of inland transport. Sri Lanka has a well-developed nationwide road network. Multilateral agencies are helping Sri Lanka's effort to upgrade and maintain the network. The completion of the Colombo-Katunayake, Southern, and Colombo-Kandy expressways will enhance the highway network.

The island is mainly flat or gently rolling. Plantation crops, principally tea, rubber, and coconuts, dominate the agricultural sector of the economy and are important exports. Manufactured products include textiles (the most important export), processed agricultural products and consumer goods. Sri Lanka is also a leading producer of high-grade graphite.

Sri Lanka is the world's leading producer of high quality tea, which is its main export. Most itineraries which include hill country resorts also include a visit to a tea estate and factory to see production and processing which is done in some of the most scenic areas of the Island. Most of the foreign trade of the island is routed through Colombo, and the city has been an important fuelling station for ships that pass through the Suez Canal. Tourism is again on the rise.

The population is composed mainly of Sinhalese. Tamils make up a large minority, and there are smaller Muslim, European and Eurasian minorities. The national languages are Sinhala (the official language) and Tamil. English is widely spoken.



Country Profile	
Capital	Sri Jayawardhanapura-Kotte
Area	65,610 sq km
Population	19,063,000 (2003)
Urban Population	24 per cent
GDP	US\$ 17.64 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 925 (2003)
Currency	Sri Lankan Rupee
Major Ports	Colombo, Trincommalee, and Galle
Total Length of Roads	98,800 km (2003)
Asian Highway route length	650 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	695,978 (1999)

B. Asian Highway in Sri Lanka



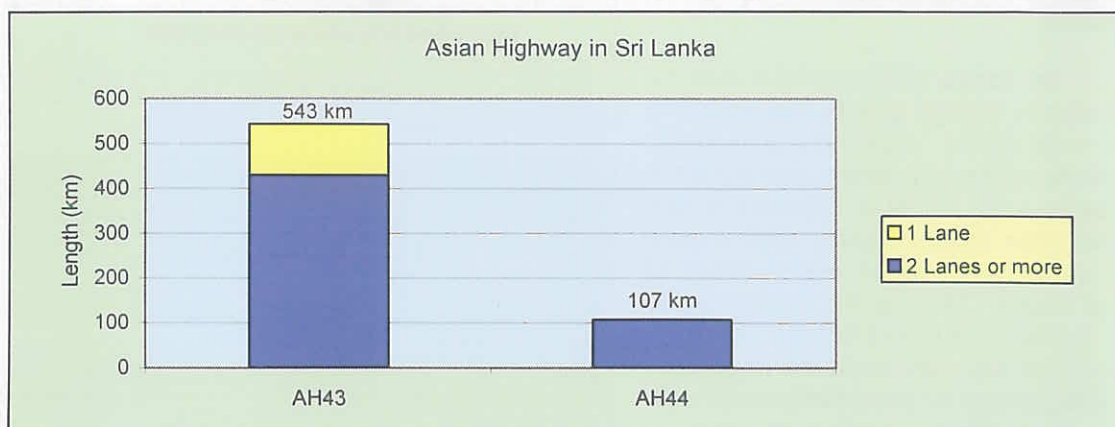
AH43 Colombo – Galle



AH43 Colombo – Kurunegala

Status of the Asian Highway in Sri Lanka

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH43	Talaimnnar – Dambulla – Kurunegala (– Kandy) – Colombo – Matara	543	430	113
AH44	Dambulla – Trinconmalee	107	107	
Total		650	537	113
Percentage		100	82.6	17.4



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Colombo (AH43)

Colombo is a colourful and bright city with a bustling business centre and a cluster of colonial buildings. It has a population of nearly one million. Among the places of interest are old forts, temples, churches and mosques, the National Museum, Independence Hall and the Zoological Gardens.





Sacred City of Kandy (AH43)

Kandy was the last capital of the Sinhala kings whose patronage enabled the Dinahala culture to flourish for more than 2,500 years until the occupation of Sri Lanka by the British in 1815. It is also the site of the Temple of the Tooth Relic (the sacred tooth of the Buddha), which is a famous pilgrimage site.

Sigiriya

The ruins of the capital built by King Kassapa I (reigned 177-495 AD) lie on the steep slopes and at the summit of a granite peak standing some 370 m high. A series of galleries and staircases emerging from the mouth of a gigantic lion constructed of bricks and plaster provide access to the site.



D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Colombo.
2. City tour, featuring nearby Pettah, Colombo's busiest and most traditional bazaar, and Cinnamon Gardens, the prestigious residential area.
3. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH43) to Pinnewela. Visit the elephant orphanage to see the feeding or the daily river-bath. Later in Dambulla, visit the cave temples with statues of the Buddha and Hindu deities. Drive to Polonnaruwa, the former capital of the Sinhalese kings.
4. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH43) to Anuradhapura, a former royal capital. Visit the tallest pagoda of Sri Lanka and the temple of the holy Bo-tree. Afternoon, visit Mihintale where Buddhism began in Sri Lanka. In a series of flights, 1,840 granite steps lead up the hillside.
5. Drive to the Sigiriya rock. Worth the climb are the phenomenal frescoes of the Sigiriya Maidens. Continue along the *Asian Highway* (AH43) to the hill-city of Kandy where the palace of the last Sinhalese king has become a temple and the holiest shrine in Sri Lanka.
6. Visit the Botanical Garden Peradeniya. During World War II, it served as headquarters of Earl Mountbatten, Supreme Commander of the allied forces in South-East Asia. From Peradeniya the road ascends to 1,500 metres through tea country.
7. Leave for Hambantota. Afternoon, do a photo safari into the Bundala game park.
8. Leave Hambantota. At Dondora, reach the most southern point of the island. Visit the old city of Galle and its well-preserved fort. Pass through resorts like Bentota, Beruwala, Kalutara. See the "toddy-tappers", young men who climb the trees to collect the sweet, milky sap of the coconut blossom, or one of the many turtle hatcheries. Reach Colombo.
9. Depart Colombo.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Ministry of Highways, 9th Fl, Sethsiripaya, Battaramulla, Sri Lanka. Tel: (94-1) 887473/822402; Fax: (94-1) 862686; Ministry of Highways, Web: www.mohsl.gov.lk; Road Development Authority, Web: www.rda.gov.lk.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ministry of Tourism, No.64, Galle Road, Colombo 03, Sri Lanka. Tel:(94-1) 441 464; Fax: (94-1) 441 501; E-mail: tourinfo@sri.lanka.net; Web: www.srilankatourism.org.

27. Tajikistan



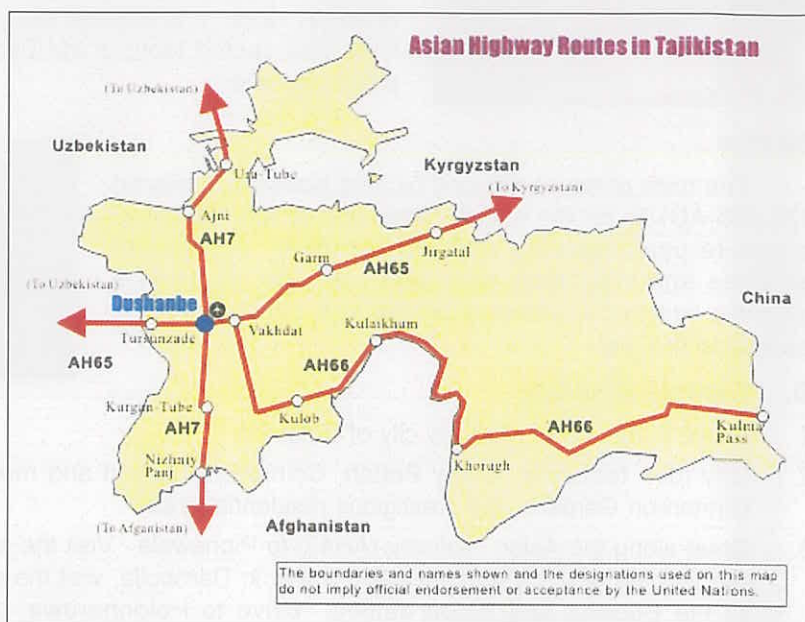
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Tajikistan to Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. Due to its mountainous topography, the highways play an important role in linking different parts of the country. The route AH7 in Tajikistan provides a link to the seaports in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan for Central Asia.

Development of modern transport corridors is under way to integrate transport and communications between states and regions and overcome economic isolation.

The economy is largely agricultural, producing cotton, wheat, barley, fruits, mulberry trees (for silk), and livestock. Mineral resources include coal, antimony, gold, and salt. Manufactured products are largely agriculture-related but also include textiles, carpets, and leather products, canned goods, and metalworking. Tajikistan has experienced strong economic growth since 1997. Continued privatization of medium and large state-owned enterprises will further increase productivity.

The majority of the population are Tajiks; Uzbeks and Russians are the largest minorities. The official language is Tajik, which is closely related to Persian (Farsi).



Country Profile	
Capital	Dushanbe
Area	143,100 sq km
Population	6,245,000 (2003)
Urban Population	28 per cent
GDP	US\$ 1.20 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 192 (2003)
Currency	Somoni
Total Length of Roads	27,767 km (2001)
Asian Highway route length	1,925 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	134,000 (1999)

B. Asian Highway in Tajikistan



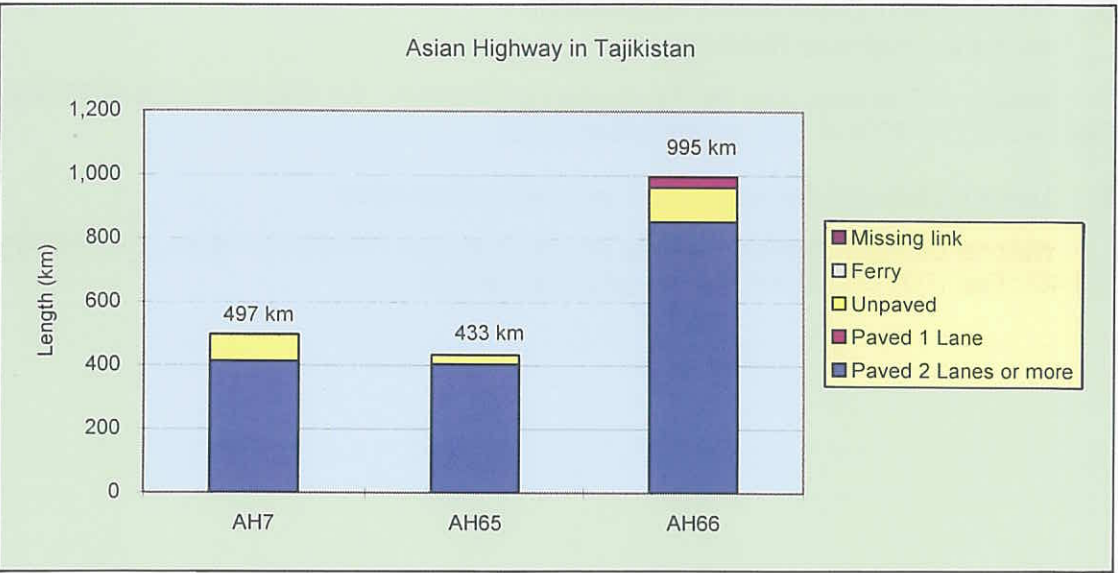
AH7 Anzob Tunnel Dushanbe to Anji



AH7 Dushanbe to Anji

Status of the Asian Highway in Tajikistan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)	Ferry (km)	Missing Link (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane			
AH7	Border of Uzbekistan – Chavast – Dushanbe – Nizhniy Panj	497	413		83	1	
AH65	Border of Kyrgyzstan – Vakhdat – Dushanbe – Tursunzade	433	404		29		
AH66	Kulma Pass – Khorugh – Kulob – Vakhdat	995	854		108		33
Total		1,925	1,671		220	1	33
Percentage		100	86.8		11.4	0.1	1.7



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Dushanbe (AH7/AH65)

The capital of Tajikistan is located in the western part of the country. The city is a major industrial and cultural centre in an area rich in agricultural potential. It is a leading cotton textile centre and also home to a university and the Tajik Academy of Sciences.



The Pamirs

The Pamirs (the Roof of the World) is a unique high mountain complex located mainly in Tajikistan. From this mountainous hub radiate some of the world's highest ranges: the Hindu Kush, the Karakorams, Himalayas, Kun-Lun and Tien-Shan.

Khojand

Khojand (pronounced 'Ho-jan') is the capital of northern Tajikistan and the second largest city. It is one of Tajikistan's oldest towns, founded by Alexander the Great. Commanding the entrance to the Ferghana Valley, Khojand's former riches spawned palaces, grand mosques and a citadel, before it was destroyed by the Mongols in the early 13th century.



D. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Ministry of Transport, Ainy Str. 14, Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Tel: (992-372) 233519/377310; Fax: (992-372) 212003; E-mail: mintrans@tajnet.com.

E. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

National Company "Sayoh" Pushkin, St., 14, Dushanbe 734025, Tajikistan. Tel: (7-3772) 231 401; Fax: (7-3772) 231 401; E-mail: gafarov@td.silk.org.

28. Thailand

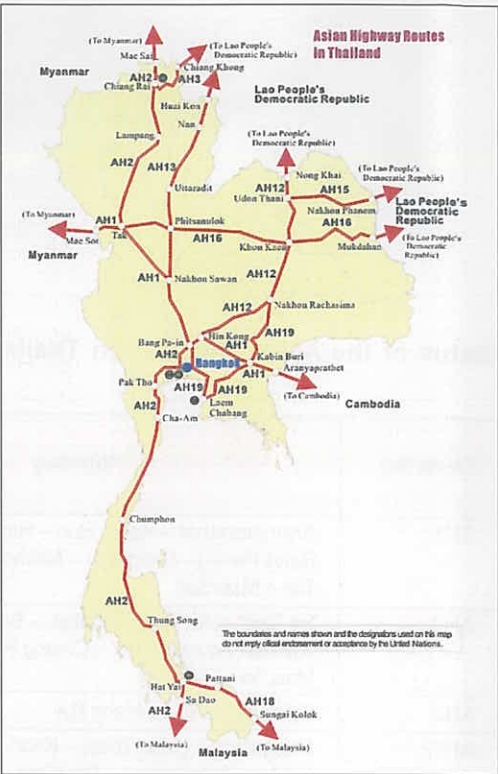
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Thailand to Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia and Myanmar and to the major seaports of Bangkok and Laem Chabang. Thailand has a well-developed road network that will be the central part of a East West Corridor between South and South-East Asia, as well as a North-South corridor linking the ASEAN countries to China. The current road network development plan includes construction of an intercity motorway network and upgrading of the main national trunk road to four lanes.

A fertile, thickly populated plain, the core of the country, rises to mountains and forests in the north and the Korat plateau in the north east and east; a narrow, mountainous peninsula extends southward into the Gulf of Thailand. The climate is tropical with monsoons.

Country Profile	
Capital	Bangkok
Area	514,000 sq km
Population	62,843,000 (2003)
Urban Population	31 per cent
GDP	US\$ 132 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 2,106 (2003)
Currency	Baht
Major Ports	Bangkok and Laem Chabang
Total Length of Roads	249,243 km (2001)
Asian Highway route length	4,556 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	6,234,000 (1996)

Thais, ethnically related to the Shan of Myanmar and Lao of Lao People's Democratic Republic, constitute 75 per cent of the population; there are large Chinese minorities. Thai is the national language but English is widely used in the business community.



Thailand's economy is primarily agricultural but manufacturing and tourism are major sources of foreign exchange earnings. Tourism is now becoming an increasingly important factor in the economic development programme. Rice is the main crop and the major factor in a normally favourable trade balance; rubber, teak, and tin are also valuable commodities.

B. Asian Highway in Thailand



AH1 near Bang Pa-in



AH1 Bangkok to Don Muang Airport

Status of the Asian Highway in Thailand

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Ferry (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH1	Aranyaprathet – Kabin Buri – Hinkong – Bang Pa-in (– Bangkok) – Nakhon Sawan – Tak – Mae Sot	701	700		
AH2	Sa Dao – Hat Yai – Bangkok – Bang Pa-in Nakhon Sawan – Tak – Chiang Rai – Mae Sai – Tachilek	1,549	1,549		
AH3	Chiang Khong – Chiang Rai	117	116		1
AH12	Nong Khai – Udon Thani – Khon Kaen – Nakhon Ratchasima – Hin Kong	511	510		
AH13	Huai Kon – Nan – Uttaradit – Phitsanulok – Nakhon Sawan	557			
AH15	Nakhon Phanom – Udon Thani	243	242		1
AH16	Mukhdahan – Khon Kaen – Phitsanulok – Tak	708	707		1
AH18	Hat Yai – Sungai Kolok	268	268		
AH19	Nakhon Ratchasima – Kabin Buri – Laem Chabang – Chonburi – Bangkok	458	458		
Total		5,113	4,553		3
Percentage					

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Grand Palace, Bangkok (AH1/AH2)

Built by King Rama I and completed in 1782, the magnificent Grand Palace complex houses the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, one of the most venerated sites in Thailand. On special occasions, the Grand Palace is the locale of important religious ceremonies usually presided over by the King or a leading member of the Royal Family.





Historic Town of Sukhothai (AH2)

Sukhothai was the capital of the first Kingdom of Siam in the 13th and 14th centuries. It has a number of fine monuments, illustrating the beginnings of Thai architecture. The great civilization which evolved in the Kingdom of Sukhothai absorbed numerous influences and ancient local traditions and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Golden Triangle, Chiang Rai (AH2/AH3)

Chiang Rai, Thailand's most northern province, is known for its tourist attractions, good weather and mild-mannered people. Nearby is a royal residence with beautiful gardens. A little further north, the Golden Triangle is where the borders of Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand meet.



Bang Pa-in Palace (AH1/AH2)

Bang Pa-in Palace dates back to the 17th century when King Prasat Thong originally constructed a palace on Bang Pa-In Island in the Chao Phraya River. The present palace dates from King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910) who built the Thai-style pavilion in the middle of a large pond.

D. Sample itineraries

North Thailand

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Bangkok.
2. Leave Bangkok for the *Asian Highway* (AH2) city of Bang Pa-in for a scenic boat trip to Ayutthaya, the former Thai capital with its ancient ruins and temples. Continue to Lopburi, and tour the city. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH13) city of Phitsanulok.
3. Visit Wat Phra Si Ratana Maha That and its highly revered Buddha statue. Drive to the ancient Thai capital of Sukhothai. Continue to the *Asian Highway* (AH2) city of Lampang, tour the old city on horse carriages. Visit Baan Sao Nat, a 100-year old teakwood mansion, and a temple where monks prepare herbal medicines.
4. In Lampang, visit the morning market and drive to Phayao which has the biggest natural lake in Thailand. Proceed to the *Asian Highway* (AH2) city of Chiang Rai.
5. Visit the hilltribe community project at Ban Locha. Drive via Mae Sai, the northernmost Thai town to the Golden Triangle, where the borders of Thailand, Myanmar and Lao People's Democratic Republic converge. Enjoy a boat trip on the Mekong River.

6. Depart for Chiang Mai and visit the local handicraft centres. Visit Wat Doi Suthep, a famous landmark, tucked away in the mountains. The temple is reached by climbing 290 steps. Enjoy a typical Kantoke dinner with traditional dances.
7. Visit an elephant camp in Chiang Dao and watch the skilled elephants at work. Enjoy an elephant ride and bamboo rafting. Visit an orchid farm and in the afternoon transfer to Chiang Mai Railway Station for the overnight train to Bangkok.
8. Depart Bangkok.

North-East Thailand

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Bangkok.
2. Depart Bangkok for Saraburi. Visit Phra Buddha Badh with its shrine of the holy footprint of the Buddha and large number of temple bells surrounding the compound. Continue to Khao Yai National Park. En route, visit Wat (Temple) Thep Phitak Punnaram with its huge seated Buddha statue.
3. Visit Kong Kaew waterfall with its original bamboo suspension bridge. Depart for the *Asian Highway* (AH12) city of Nakhon Ratchasima. Visit the Monument of Thao Suranari, who rallied her people to defeat Laotian invaders in 1826. Continue to the *Asian Highway* city of Pimai.
4. Explore the National Museum and the magnificent Khmer temples. After lunch, continue along the *Asian Highway* (AH12) to Khon Kaen to visit its museum, then proceed to the *Asian Highway* city of Udon Thani.
5. Visit prehistoric Ban Chiang with remains dating back to 4000 BC. Continue to the *Asian Highway* (AH12) city of Nong Khai, a border town on the Mekong River overlooking Lao People's Democratic Republic.
6. Fly back to Bangkok.
7. Depart Bangkok.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Department of Highways, Si Ayutthaya Road, Bangkok 10400, Thailand. Tel: 02-245 5500/ 02-583 9326; Fax: 02-245 6864; Department of Highways: www.doh.mot.go.th; Ministry of Transport: www.mot.go.th.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Tourism Authority of Thailand, 1600 New Phetchaburi Road, Makkasan Ratchathewi, Bangkok 10400, Thailand. Tel: (66-2) 250 5500; Fax: (66-2) 250 5511; E-mail: governor@tat.or.th; Web1: www.tat.or.th; Web2: www.tourismthailand.org; Web3: www.experiencethailand.com.

29. Turkey



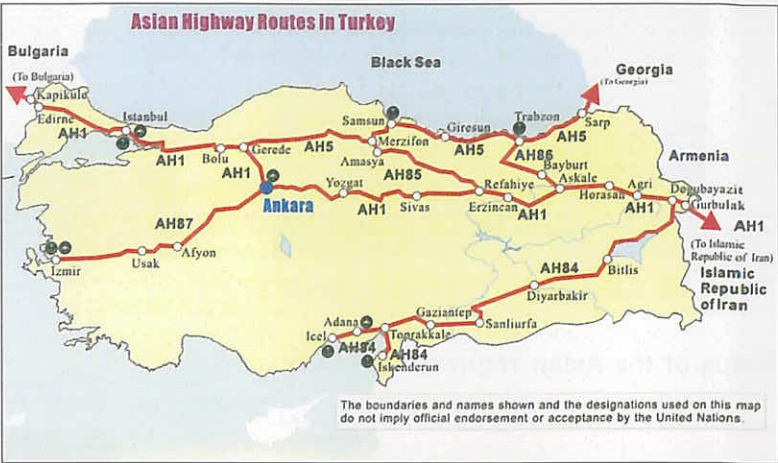
A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Turkey to Bulgaria, Georgia and the Islamic Republic of Iran and to Izmir, Icel, Iskendeun and Sarp sea-ports. Turkey is the land bridge between Asia and Europe and has an extensive and high quality road network.

The current plan aims to develop and upgrade highway infrastructure, motorways and dual-carriageway highways to enhance efficiency and shorten traveling time.

Asian Turkey, which constitutes 97 per cent of the country, is separated from European Turkey by the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara, and the Dardanelles. European Turkey is largely rolling agricultural land, while Asian Turkey is mostly highland and mountains, with narrow lowland strips along the seacoasts. Anatolia, the western portion of Asian Turkey, is one of the oldest inhabited regions in the world.

The economy is basically agricultural, but industrialization has been emphasised since the late 1940s. Chief crops include wheat and other cereals, cotton, tobacco, and fruit; livestock raising is important. Leading manufactures are textiles, processed foods, iron and steel, petroleum, cement, chemicals, and forest products. Coal and lignite, chromium, copper, iron, antimony, and mercury are mined; some petroleum is produced. Turkey is also noted for its carpets, Meerscham pipes, and pottery.



Country Profile	
Capital	Ankara
Area	780,580 sq km
Population	71,325,000 (2003)
Urban Population	67 per cent
GDP	US\$ 209 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 2,930 (2003)
Currency	Turkish Lira
Major Ports	Istanbul, Ozmir, Icel, Iskenderum, Samsun and Trabzon
Total Length of Roads	354,422 km (2003)
Asian Highway route length	5,254 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	7,342,888 (2001)

B. Asian Highway in Turkey



AH1 Second Bosphorus Bridge in Istanbul



AH87 near Ankara

Status of the Asian Highway in Turkey

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	Gravel	Earth
AH1	Gurbulak – Dogubayazit – Askale – Refahiye – Sivas – Ankara – Gerede – Istanbul – Kapikule – Border of Bulgaria	1,915	1,915			
AH5	Sarp – Trabzon – Samsun – Merzifon – Gerede – Istanbul – Kapikule – Border of Bulgaria	960	960			
AH84	Dogubayazit – Diyarbakir – Toprakkale (– Iskenderun) – Icel	1,188	1,188			
AH85	Refahiye – Amasya – Merzifon	338	338			
AH86	Askale – Bayburt – Trabzon	247	247			
AH87	Ankara –Afyon – Usak – Izmir	606	606			
Total		5,254	5,254			
Percentage		100	100			

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Istanbul (AH1)

Strategically located on the Bosphorus peninsula between the Balkans and Anatolia, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, Istanbul has been associated with major political, religious and artistic events for more than 2,000 years. Its masterpieces include the ancient Hippodrome of Constantine, the 6th century Hagia Sophia and the 16th century Suleymaniye Mosque.





Ankara (AH1/AH87)

Ankara lies in the centre of Anatolia. The town, once an important trading centre on the caravan route to the east, had declined in importance by the 19th century. It became an important centre again when Kemal Atatürk chose it as the base from which to direct the War of Liberation. It was declared the capital on 13 October 1923.

Izmir (AH87)

Izmir is Turkey's second largest seaport. Settled during the Bronze Age, it changed hands many times from the 7th to 15th century, when the Ottoman Turks conquered it. A busy commercial and industrial centre as well as gateway to the Aegean Region, it is dotted with idyllic fishing harbours, holiday villages and the ruins of ancient civilizations.



Icel (AH84)

Icel lies on the eastern Mediterranean coast of Turkey. A rapidly developing city and the largest free-zone area on the Turkish Mediterranean. It occupies the site of an extremely ancient city. At the Yumuktepe tumulus, three kilometres west of the town, excavations have unearthed several successive settlements.

D. Sample itineraries

South, North and East Turkey

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Istanbul.
2. Fly to the *Asian Highway* city of Adana. Drive to Antakya, the biblical city of Antioch. Visit Sokullu Mehmet Pasha caravanserai, Antakya Mosaic museum and the Grotto of St. Peter. The Castle of Antioch, set high above the city, offers a magnificent view over the city and the plain.
3. Drive to Adiyaman, the *Asian Highway* city of Gaziantep.
4. Drive to Nemrut Dag, a 2,150-metre mountain ordered to be built by the pre-Roman King Antiochus I. See the huge heads of ancient gods and goddesses in what is now a World Heritage Site.
5. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH84) city of Diyarbakir, famous for its massive black basalt walls. Cross the Euphrates River, see the city walls, market and Ulu Cami.
6. Drive to Van, situated on the shores of Lake Van, the largest lake in Turkey and one of the world's highest lakes at 1,670 metres above sea level.
7. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH1) city of Dogubayazit, the closest town to Mount Ararat, visit the 18th century Ishak Pasha Palace, built on a high valley overlooking the caravan route.

8. Drive to Kars. Visit Ani, an ancient city with ruins of eight churches, a convent, and a citadel along with the main cathedral which has alternately been a church or mosque.
9. Drive to Erzurum, the largest city in Eastern Anatolia, and an important transportation centre. Visit Islamic monuments from Seljuk, Mongol and Ottoman periods.
10. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH86) city of Trabzon on the Black Sea coast.
11. Tour Trabzon, famous for its natural and historical treasures. Visit St Sophia Church, the most important historical building in Trabzon, now a museum. Several important Byzantine churches, later converted to mosques, are worth seeing.
12. Fly to Istanbul.
13. Depart Istanbul.

Central and West Turkey

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Istanbul.
2. Tour historic Istanbul, which is both the nearest European city to Asia and the nearest Asian city to Europe. Visit famous icons like the Hippodrome, Blue Mosque, St. Sophia museum, and Topkapi Palace, the grand Ottoman structure that is now a renowned museum.
3. Explore the spice bazaar and enjoy a cruise of the Bosphorus strait, an unforgettable experience through one of the world's great waterways. See ancient mosques, the Naval Museum, historic clock towers, parks and palaces.
4. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH1) to the city of Ankara.
5. Tour Ankara, the capital of Turkey since 1923. Visit the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations and Ataturk's Mausoleum, the memorial of the founder of Turkey. Gordion, a small town, two hours' drive to the north, is where King Midas of the golden touch, is said to have been born.
6. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH87) city of Usak. Spend the night at a 19th century caravanserai.
7. Drive to the *Asian Highway* (AH87) city of Izmir.
8. Tour Izmir, the largest export harbour in Turkey characterized by narrow streets, old Ottoman hans and magnificent Levantine mansions, as well as old mosques, synagogues and churches.
9. Depart Izmir.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

General Directorate of Turkish Highways, Ministry of Public Works and Settlement, Karayollari Genel Mudurlugu, Planlama Sb. Md. C-Block, Yucetepe, Ankara 06 100, Turkey. Tel: (90-312) 4158380; Fax: (90-312) 4171093; Web: <http://ubak.gov.tr>.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Ankara Tourism Information Office, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Bulvarı1, No.121 Tandoğan, Ankara, Turkey. Tel: (312) 488 70 07 or (312) 231 55 72; Fax: (312) 231 5572; E-mail: tanitma@turizm.gov.tr; Web: www.tourismturkey.org.

30. Turkmenistan

A. Introduction

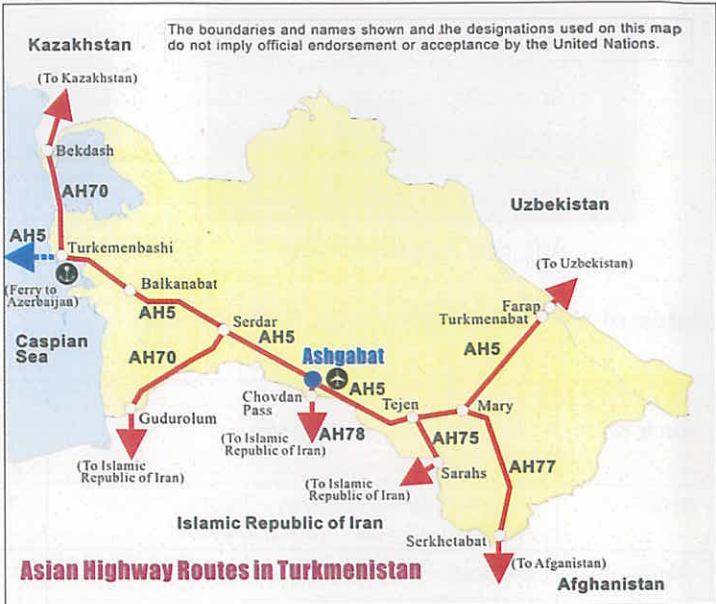
The Asian Highway routes link Turkmenistan to Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Uzbekistan and to Turkmenbashi seaport in the Caspian Sea which is an important connection for Central Asia and Europe.

The majority of the road network in Turkmenistan needs upgrading. The Government has plans to rehabilitate about 2,500 kilometres of roads by 2010 and upgrade the Ashgabat-Turkmenbashi section of AH5 to a six-lane road.

Turkmenistan was part of the kingdom of ancient Persia and was later (8th – 19th century) ruled by the Arabs, the Seljuk Turks, Jenghiz Khan, Timur and the Timurids, and the Uzbeks. The Karakum desert occupies 90 per cent of the country; the Kara Kum canal provides irrigation and hydroelectricity.

Turkmenistan's natural gas deposits have made it one of the wealthiest of the Central Asian Republics. Among its other resources are oil, salt, phosphate, mirabilite, and sulphur. Karakul sheep (whose wool is made into carpets), cattle, and other livestock are raised, and silkworms are bred. Cotton is the chief crop; others include grains, sesame, and wine grapes. Industries include metalworking, oil refining, and many agriculturally related manufactures.

The Turkmens (or Turkomans), a Turkic-speaking people, comprise 60 per cent of the population; other groups include Russians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and Tatars. Turkmen is the official language, and Russian is widely spoken.



Country Profile	
Capital	Ashgabat
Area	488,100 sq km
Population	4,867,000 (2003)
Urban Population	45 per cent
GDP	US\$ 21.5 billion (2001 est.)
GDP per capita	US\$ 4,700 (2001 est.)
Currency	Turkmen manat
Major Port	Turkemenbashi
Total Length of Roads	24,000 km (1999)
Asian Highway route length	2,204 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	N. A.

B. Asian Highway in Turkmenistan



AH5 near Ashgabat to west



AH78 in Ashgabat

Status of the Asian Highway in Turkmenistan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH5	Farap – Turkenabat – Mary – Tejen – Ashgabat – Serdar – Turkemenbashi	1,227	1,227		
AH70	Bekdash – Turkmenbashi – Serdar – Gudurolun	499	475		24
AH75	Tejen – Sarahs	120	120		
AH77	Tourghondi – Serkhetabat – Mary	315	315		
AH78	Ashgabat – Chovdan Pass	43	43		
Total		2,204	2,180		24
Percentage		100	98.9		1.1

C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Ashgabat (AH5)

Ashgabat was founded by Russians in 1869. In subsequent years, this fortress attracted a host of merchants and entrepreneurs. The Turkmen Fine Arts Museum houses a collection of beautiful Turkmen carpets. One of them, among the largest and heaviest in the world, covers an area of 193.5 sq metres and weighs 885 kgs.



Parthian, Capital of Nisa (AH5)

Nisa is the most significant architectural monument located near the city of Ashgabat, in the suburbs of the village of Bagyr. It is the capital of the famous Parthian Kingdom that existed for almost 600 years up to the 3rd century.

Merv Archaeological Site (AH5)

Merv is the oldest and best-preserved of the oasis-cities along the Silk Route in Central Asia. The remains in this vast oasis span 4,000 years of human history. A number of monuments are still visible, particularly from the last two millennia.



D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive at the *Asian Highway* city of Ashgabat.
2. Sightseeing tour of Ashgabat. Visit the Hippodrome, where famous Turkmen horse riders prove their prowess, and the magnificent Carpet Museum, which showcases classic Turkmen carpets. *Try sitting a loom and attempting this difficult art!*
3. Excursion to Nisa, a city that bears the stamp of various civilizations. See the remains of ancient Parthian fortresses and temples.
4. Drive to Mary (AH5). Visit the History Museum which houses an extensive collection of artifacts from the numerous civilizations that flourished throughout ancient Turkmenistan.
5. Excursion to ancient Marv, one of the most historic-cultural regions of the Central Asia. Visit the ruins of several former settlements in the area.
6. Transfer at Gaudan or Serakhs on the border with the Islamic Republic of Iran to continue along the *Asian Highway* and "The Silk Road".
7. Depart Turkmenistan.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

Ministry of Transport, Karla Marksa ul 24, 744014 Ashkabad, Turkmenistan. Tel: (7-3632) 254615.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Turkmenistan Tourism, 17 Pushkin Street, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Tel: +3932 397771; Fax: +3632 396740; Turkmenistan State Committee for Tourism and Sport, 17, Pushkin Str., 744000 Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Tel.: (99 312) 354777, 390066; Fax: (99 312) 390065.

31. Uzbekistan

A. Introduction

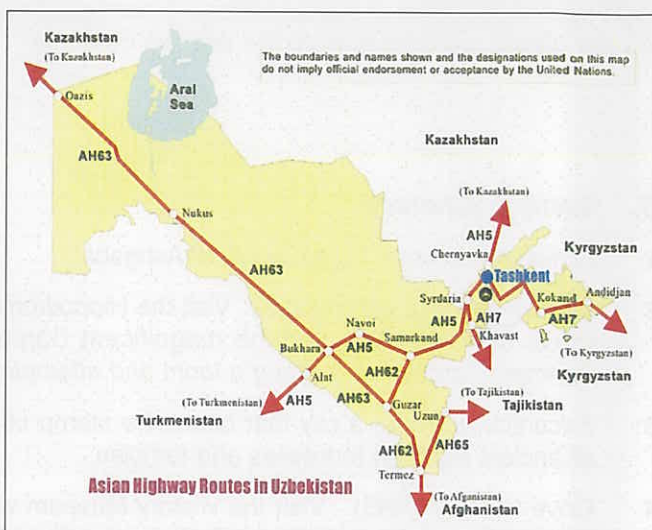
The Asian Highway routes link Uzbekistan to Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. These AH routes are also important in providing transit transport through Uzbekistan.

The northwest is largely made up of the Kyzyl Kum desert and borders the Aral Sea in the extreme north; the south east has fertile soil and touches on the Tian Shan mountains. The Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers pass through the country, providing irrigation for its farms.

Major economic activities include the growing of cotton and rice, stock-raising and machine building, textile manufacturing, metallurgy, and food processing. Oil, natural gas and coal are the major resources; there are also zinc, copper, tungsten and other ores. Various types of mineral water springs are spread out on the territory of Uzbekistan, which are said to provide effective treatment for various diseases.

The Uzbek, a Turkic-speaking people, make up the majority of the population; other groups include Russians, Tajiks, Kazakhs, and Tatars. Uzbek is the official language, but Russian and other ethnic languages are also spoken.

B. Asian Highway in Uzbekistan



Country Profile	
Capital	Tashkent
Area	447,400 sq km
Population	26,093,000 (2003)
Urban Population	37 per cent
GDP	US\$ 8.52 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 326 (2003)
Currency	Uzbekistani sum
Total Length of Roads	181,121 km (2002)
Asian Highway route length	2,966 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	N.A.



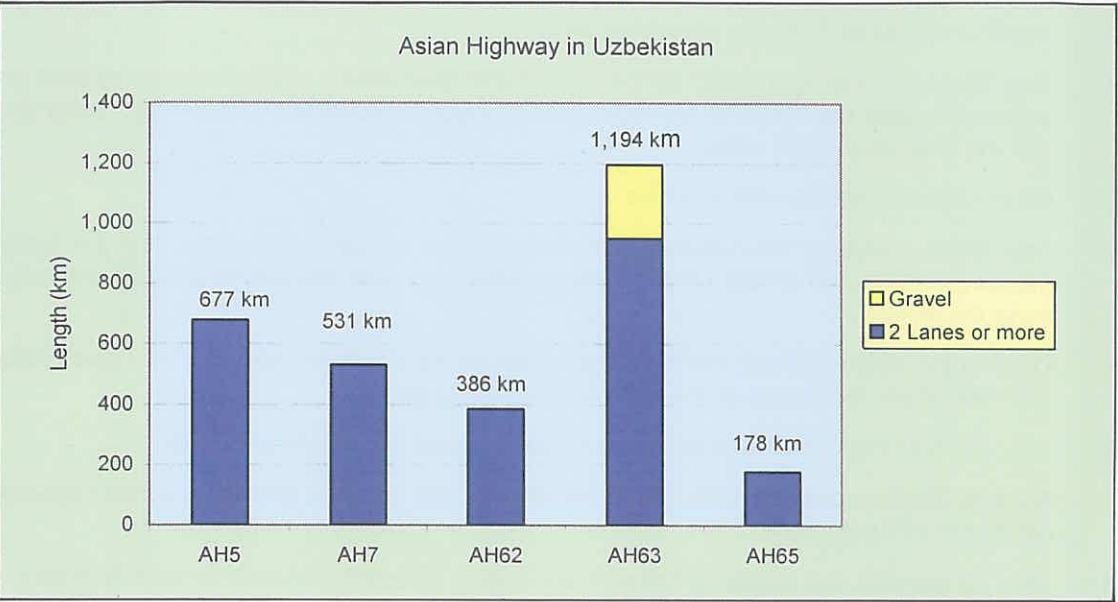
AH5 near Tashkent



AH74 Angren to Kakand

Status of the Asian Highway in Uzbekistan

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)		Unpaved (km)
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane	
AH5	Chernyavka – Tashkent – Syrdaria – Samarkand – Navoi – Bukhara – Alat	677	677		
AH7	Border of Kyrgyzstan – Andijon – Tashkent – Syrdaria – Khavast	531	531		
AH62	Chernyavka – Tashkent – Syrdaria – Samarkand – Guzar – Termez	386	386		
AH63	Oasis – Nukus – Bukhara – Guzar	1,194	950		244
AH65	Uzun – Termez	178	178		
Total		2,966	2,722		244
Percentage		100	91.8		8.2



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway

Tashkent (AH5)

The capital is Central Asia’s hub with shimmering roots as a Silk Road city. The 2,000-year-old city is a major exporter to Eastern Europe of silk, cotton and textiles, as well as oil, coal, copper, sulphur, rice and manufactured products. Tashkent was an important commercial centre during the Middle Ages.





Samarkand (AH5)

Most of Samarkand's high-profile attractions are the work of Timur and the Uzbek Shaybanids, who made the city Central Asia's economic, cultural and intellectual epicentre in the 14th and 15th centuries. One of Central Asia's most awe-inspiring sights is the Registan, an ensemble of majestic, tilting medressas.

Bukhara (AH63)

There are over 140 protected buildings in Bukhara, including the Labi-hauz, a 17th century plaza built around a pool; three-domed bazaars; the 47 m high Kalan minaret, once the tallest building in Asia; and the mausoleum of Ismail Samani, the town's oldest structure and one of the most elegant in Central Asia.



D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the *Asian Highway* city of Tashkent.
2. Tour Tashkent, visiting the 16th century Kukeldash Madrassah, which is being restored as a museum, and the State Art Museum, which houses a collection of paintings, ceramics and the Bukharian royal robes.
3. Fly to Urgench and transfer to Khiva.
4. Tour Khiva, including the majestic monuments of the old city, Ichon-Qala, and the Juma mosque with its 218 ornate carved wooden columns. The city claims to have the most minarets in Asia.
5. Drive to the *Asian Highway* city of Bukhara through the Karakum desert. Visit Tuprok Kala and Ayaz Kala, fortresses of the late Khorezmian kings.
6. Tour the holy city of Bukhara including Kalyan Minaret and the Arc Fortress.
7. Drive to Shakhrisabz, the birth city of Tamerlane, and continue along the *Asian Highway* (AH5) city of Samarkand.
8. Tour Samarkand, the capital of Tamerlane's empire including the world famous Registan.
9. Drive along the *Asian Highway* (AH5) back to Tashkent.
10. Depart Tashkent.

E. Government Department responsible for Asian Highway Network

National Highway Administration "Uzavtoyul", Pushkin St., 68 A, 700000 Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Tel: (998-71) 136 1088; Fax: (998-71) 136 0665.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Uzbektourism, 47 Khorezm str., Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Tel: (998-71) 133 54 14, 136 79 54; E-mail: marketing@uzbektourism.uz; Web: www.uzbektourism.uz.

32. Viet Nam

A. Introduction

The Asian Highway routes link Viet Nam to Cambodia, China, and Lao People's Democratic Republic and to Hai Phong, Da Nang, Vinh and Vung Tau seaports. Work is progressing to improve and upgrade the road network in Viet Nam with the help of the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Japan Bank for International Cooperation. Viet Nam is planning to enhance its road transport infrastructure maintenance management system and pave most of its national roads by 2005 and principal roads by 2010.

The terrain is generally rugged; the two principal regions, the Red River delta in the north and the Mekong River delta in the south, are linked by a narrow, mountainous strip. The country has a long coastline of 1,600 kilometres. The people of Viet Nam describe their country as a bamboo shoulder pole slung with two baskets of rice – the fertile southern Mekong Delta and the northern Red River Delta.

Country Profile	
Capital	Ha Noi
Area	329,560 sq km
Population	81,377,000 (2003)
Urban Population	25 per cent
GDP	US\$ 36.96 billion (2003)
GDP per capita	US\$ 454 (2003)
Currency	Dong
Major Ports	Hai Phong, Da Nang, Vung Tau, Ho Chi Minh
Total Length of Roads	205,026 km (2001)
Asian Highway route length	2,678 km
Number of Motor Vehicles	429,163 (2002)

timber resources are concentrated in the north. Offshore petroleum deposits have been developed, and crude oil is exported.

About 80 per cent of the population is Vietnamese. Significant minorities include highland tribal peoples such as the Nungs and Meos, and Cambodians and Thais.



Agriculture, primarily rice, is the basis of the economy, engaging more than 80 per cent of the work force; Viet Nam is a major rice exporter. Peanuts, corn, sweet potatoes, and beans are also grown; cash crops include cotton, jute, coffee, and tea. Fishing is important. Mining, particularly of coal, heavy industry, and most of the

B. Asian Highway in Viet Nam



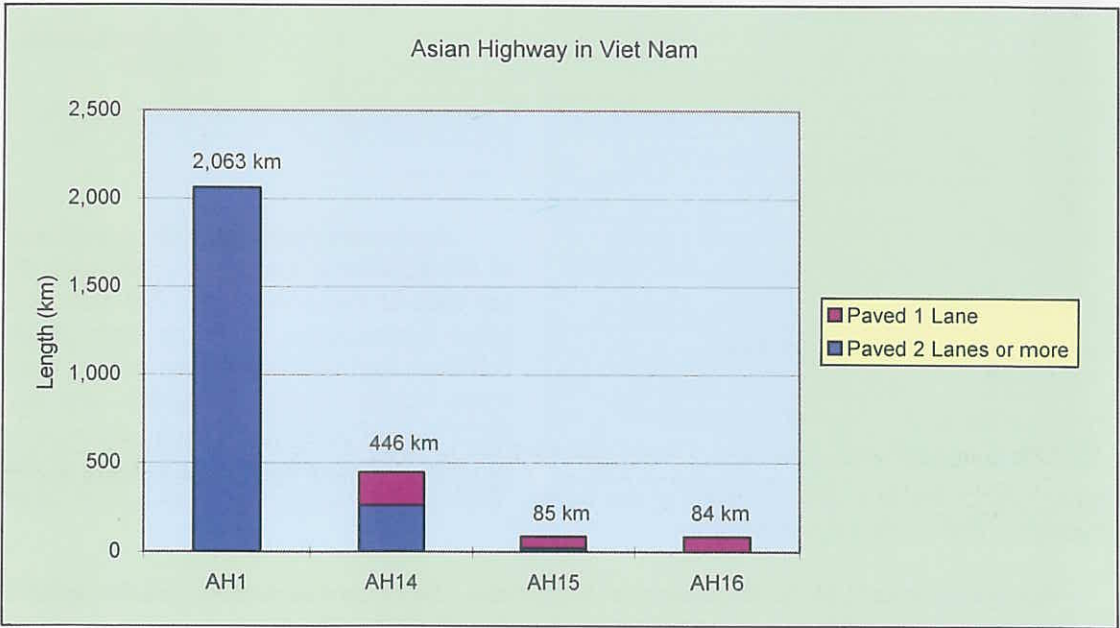
AH1 in Ha Noi



AH14 near Ha Noi

Status of the Asian Highway in Viet Nam

Route No.	Itinerary	Length (km)	Paved (km)	
			2 Lanes or more	1 Lane
AH1	Huu Nghi – Ha Noi – Vinh – Dong Ha – Hue – Da Nang – Hoi An – Nha Trang – Bien Hoa (– Vung Tau) – Ho Chi Minh – Moc Bai	2,063	2,063	
AH14	Hai Phong – Ha Noi – Viet Tri – Lao Cai	446	260	186
AH15	Vinh – Cau Treo	85	20	65
AH16	Dong Ha – Lao Bao	84	84	
Total		2,678	2,343	335
Percentage		100	87.5	12.5



C. Tourism spots along the Asian Highway



Ha Noi (AH1/AH14)

Ha Noi is the political, economic, and cultural centre. Founded in 1010, it preserves many ancient architectural works including the Old Quarter and over 600 pagodas. Hectares of lakes lie intertwined between the streets. Many traditional handicrafts are also practiced including bronze molding, silver carving, lacquer and embroidery.

Ho Chi Minh City (AH1)

Ho Chi Minh City, formerly known as Saigon, is the second most important city after Ha Noi. This region is criss-crossed by hundreds of rivers and canals, the largest being the Saigon River. Once praised as the "Pearl of the Far East," Ho Chi Minh City was known as an important trading centre for Chinese, Japanese, and European merchants.



Vung Tau (AH1)

Vung Tau is an old port with 20 kilometres of beaches and calm waters. Five beaches scattered over the peninsula include Bai Truoc, with restaurants, kiosks, and hotels, and O Quan Beach, a peaceful cove with good winds enjoyed by surfers.

Hue (AH1)

A former ancient capital, the heritage city of Hue is in between Viet Nam's two rice bowls, the Red river delta and the Mekong delta. It is renowned for its cultural heritage, the most famous of which is the ancient capital of Hue City and the tombs and temples left by the Nguyen Emperors.



D. Sample itinerary

1. Arrive in the Asian Highway city of Ho Chi Minh City.
2. Tour Ho Chi Minh City. Visit the former Presidential Palace, the Notre Dame Cathedral, Old Saigon Post Office and Thien Hau Pagoda in lively chinatown. Visit the Cu Chi Tunnels, an incredible underground network built by Vietnamese resistance fighters during the independence struggle.
3. Full day trip to the Mekong Delta. Take a boat trip along narrow waterways overhung with dense vegetation and try exotic fruits in one of the many orchards.

4. Drive along the *Asian Highway* to the cooler climes of Dalat, with its French chalets and pine forests. Visit the summer palace of Viet Nam's last Emperor, Bao Dai, marvel at its Art Deco architecture, then continue on to the old Dalat Railway Station, Xuan Huong Lake, the Central Market and Lam Ty Ni Pagoda.
5. Leave for Nha Trang, taking the road descending to the arid coastal city of Phan Rang. Visit the 13th century Po Klong Jarai Cham Towers.
6. Visit some of the nearby islands. Return to the mainland for the scenic drive along the *Asian Highway* to Qui Nhon.
7. Continue up the *Asian Highway* (AH1) to Hoi An, breaking the journey to visit My Lai Massacre Memorial near to Quang Ngai. Arrive in Hoi An, a major Asian trading port in the 17th and 18th centuries.
8. Browse for souvenirs in Hoi An. Drive to Hue, the former imperial capital. The route along the *Asian Highway* (AH1) passes through Da Nang before climbing over the Pass of Ocean Clouds and dropping down to the fishing village of Lang Co.
9. A boat trip on the romantically named Perfume River to visit Hue's best-known religious site, Thien Mu Pagoda, and the mausoleum of former emperor Minh Mang. Afternoon, visit the elaborate mausoleums of emperors.
10. Fly to the *Asian Highway* city of Ha Noi, the capital of Viet Nam and transfer to Hai Phong, Viet Nam's third largest city. Hai Phong still has many impressive examples of classic European colonial architecture in its town centre.
11. Take a hydrofoil trip to Cat Ba Island, the largest in the bay. From Cat Ba, enjoy a cruise among some of the 3,000 limestone islands scattered throughout the spectacular Ha Long bay, a World Heritage Site. Return to Hai Phong by hydrofoil in the afternoon.
12. Leave Hai Phong and return to Ha Noi along the *Asian Highway* (AH14).
13. Tour Ha Noi, a unique city with tree-lined boulevards, French colonial architecture, lakes and oriental temples. Visit Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum, the One Pillar Pagoda, the Fine Arts Museum, the Temple of Literature and the Old Quarter.
14. Depart Ha Noi.

E. Government Department Responsible for Asian Highway Network

International Relation Department, Ministry of Transport, 80 Tran Hung Dao Street, Ha Noi, Viet Nam. Tel: (84-4) 9422079; Fax: (84-4) 9421436.

F. Useful Contacts for travel and tourism information

Viet Nam National Administration of Tourism, 80, Quan Su Street, Ha Noi, Viet Nam. Tel: (84-4) 942 1063/2280/1061; Fax: (84-4) 942 4115; E-mail: icdvnat@hn.vnn.vn; Web1: www.VietNamtourism.com; Web2: www.VietNam-tourism.com.

Annex

Sources of Data and Photographs

A. Sources of data

In the country profile tables, data following sources are used.

Area	Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2001, ESCAP
Population	2003 ESCAP population data sheet, Emerging Social Issues Division
Urban Population	2003 ESCAP population data sheet, Emerging Social Issues Division
GDP	Poverty and Development Division, ESCAP
GDP per capita	Derived based on above population and GDP data
Length of Road	Country reports prepared by the national experts for the Asian Highway, Statistical Abstract of Transport in Asia and the Pacific 2002 and World Road Statistics 2002, International Road Federation
Number of Motor Vehicles	Country paper prepared by the national experts for the Asian Highway, Statistical Abstract of Transport in Asia and the Pacific 2002 and World Road Statistics 2002, International Road Federation

B. Sources of photographs

The source photographs of the Asian Highway in member countries are: national experts or focal points in member countries; ESCAP; and ESCAP consultant H. Nishimura. The photographs of the Asian Highway in Tajikistan are provided by Nippon Koei. The photographs of the Asian Highway in Japan are provided by Japan Highway Public Corporation.

ESCAP would like to acknowledge the following sources for their permission to use the photographs of tourism attractions in respective countries:

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Afghanistan	
Herat Mosque	http://www.afghan-web.com/
Armenia	
Lake Sevan	Ministry of Transport and Communications
Gumri	Ministry of Transport and Communications
Azerbaijan	
Baku	IntePromo Inc
Ganja	http://www.geocities.com/
Bangladesh	
Dhaka	Parjatan Corporation
Chittagong	Dot Com, Bangladesh
Sylhet	ESCAP
Cox's Bazar	ESCAP
Bhutan	
Thimphu	World Tourism Organisation
Phuentsholing	Bhutan Travel & Tourism Corporation
Cambodia	
Phnom Penh	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia
The Temples of Angkor	ESCAP
Tônle Sap Lake	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia
Sihanoukville	Ministry of Tourism, Cambodia
China	
Beijing	UNESCO Bangkok
Kunming	Yunnan Provincial Tourism Administration
Shanghai	China National Tourism Administration
Xi'an	China National Tourism Administration
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	
Pyongyang	Pacific Asia Travel Association
Pohyon Temple	Pacific Asia Travel Association
Georgia	
Tbilisi	Georgia Parliamentary website
Poti	Port of Poti, Georgia, website
India	
Delhi	Indian Embassy, Bangkok
Agra	UNESCO, Bangkok
Ajanta Caves	Indian Embassy, Bangkok
Madurai	Indian Embassy, Bangkok

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Indonesia	
Jakarta	Jakarta City Government Tourism Office
Borobudur Temple	ESCAP
Lake Toba – Parapat	ESCAP
Mount Bromo	East Jawa Government Indonesia
Islamic Republic of Iran	
Azadi cultural complex, Tehran	Mahan Air, Bangkok
Persepolis	Mahan Air, Bangkok
Esfahan	Mahan Air, Bangkok
Mashhad	Mahan Air, Bangkok
Japan	
Mount Fuji	Japan Highway Public Corporation
Imperial Palace, Tokyo	Japan National Tourist Organization
Kiyomizu-dera, Kyoto	Japan National Tourist Organization
Dazaifu, Fukuoka	Fukuoka Prefecture
Kazakhstan	
Ishim River, Astana	Department of Tourism
Almaty	Kazakhstan Embassy, Bangkok.
The Mausoleum of Khoja	Kazakhstan Embassy, Bangkok
Ahmed Yasawi	
Köl-Say Lakes	Turkestan Travel Company
Kyrgyzstan	
Bishkek	www.kyrgyz-web.com
Lake Issyk-Kul	United Institute of Geology, Geophysics and Mineralogy, Russia
Lao People's Democratic Republic	
Vientiane	ETC Asia Company Limited Thailand
Louang Phrabang	UNESCO Bangkok
Malaysia	
Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board
Johor Bahru	Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board
Kenyir Lake, Terengganu	Terengganu State Secretariat Office, Malaysia
Penang	Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board
Mongolia	
Ulaanbaatar	Mongolian Tourism Board
The Amarbayasgalant Monastery	Mongolian Tourism Board
The Gobi Desert	Mongolian Tourism Board
Kharakhorum	Mongolian Tourism Board

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Myanmar	
Yangon	http://www.myanmar.com
Mandalay	http://www.myanmar.com
Bago	http://www.myanmar.com
Inle Lake	http://www.myanmar.com
Nepal	
Pashupatinath, Kathmandu Valley	Nepal Tourism Board
Patan	Nepal Tourism Board
Royal Chitwan National Park	Nepal Tourism Board
Lumbini	Nepal Tourism Board
Pakistan	
Islamabad	Pakistan Embassy, Bangkok
Peshawar, Takht-E-Bhai	Pakistan Embassy, Bangkok
Lahore, Badshahi Mosque	Pakistan Embassy, Bangkok
Karachi	ESCAP
Philippines	
Manila	Philippine Convention and Visitors Corporation
Davao	Philippine Convention and Visitors Corporation
Magellan's Cross, Cebu	www.cebucity.ph
Laoag	Philippine Convention and Visitors Corporation
Republic of Korea	
Seoul	Korea National Tourism Organization, Bangkok
Kyongju City	Korea National Tourism Organization, Bangkok
Pusan	Korea National Tourism Organization, Bangkok
Russian Federation	
Moscow	Committee for Tourism of Moscow City Government
St. Petersburg	Aeroflot Russian Airlines, Bangkok
Vladivostok	GVC Group
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Sentosa	Singapore Tourism Board
Esplanade	Singapore Tourism Board
Sri Lanka	
Colombo	http://www.colombocityguide.com/
Sacred City of Kandy	Sri Lanka Tourist Board
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Tajikistan	
Dushanbe	http://www.geocities.com/
The Pamirs	Telecomm Technology Ltd.
Khojand	http://www.geocities.com/
Thailand	
Grand Palace, Bangkok	Tourism Authority of Thailand
Historic Town of Sukhothai	Tourism Authority of Thailand
Golden Triangle, Chiang Rai	Tourism Authority of Thailand
Bang Pa-In Palace	Tourism Authority of Thailand
Turkey	
Istanbul	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
Ankara	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
Izmir	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
Icel	Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Turkey
Turkmenistan	
Ashgabat	State Committee of Turkmenistan for Tourism and Sport
Parthian, Capital of Nisa	Sikyakhat Tourist Company & Hotel
Merv Archaeological Site	Latif Co.
Uzbekistan	
Tashkent	Department of marketing, research and advertising, "Uzbektourism" National Company
Samarkand	UNESCO, Uzbekistan
Bukhara	UNESCO, Uzbekistan
Viet Nam	
Hanoi	Viet Nam National Tourism Administration
Ho Chi Minh City	Viet Nam National Tourism Administration
Vung Tau	Viet Nam National Tourism Administration
Hue	Viet Nam National Tourism Administration

ASIAN HIGHWAY ROUTE MAP



Legend of Height



Data Sources:

1. Digital Elevation Model: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), USA (<http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/seg/topo/globe.shtml>)
2. Inland water body: The Department of Geography, University of Maryland, USA (<http://www.geog.umd.edu/landcover/1km-map.html>)

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Printed in Bangkok
December 2003 – 1,040

United Nations publication
Sales No. E.03.II.F.31
Copyright © United Nations 2003
ISBN: 92-1-120170-5
ST/ESCAP/2303



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