

29-Dec-16 World View — China punishes Mongolia for Dalai Lama visit during financial crisis

Description

This morning's key headlines from GenerationalDynamics.com

- Mongolia's herders faces a 'dzud' weather catastrophe
- China punishes Mongolia for Dalai Lama visit during financial crisis

Mongolia's her



During a Mongolian 'dzud', animals starve because they cannot dig through a thick, solid layer of ice to reach food

An extremely harsh winter in Mongolia is sending temperatures to -50°C (-70°F), causing a humanitarian disaster, and threatening both lives and livelihoods.

Mongolia appears to be headed for another winter "dzud." The word "dzud" refers to a phenomenon that appears to be somewhat unique to Mongolia.

It usually occurs after a dry summer combines with heavy snowstorms creating an ice crust that makes it difficult for livestock, mostly cows, sheep and goats, to dig through to reach grass. This year, the dry summer in the northeast and late autumn rains means the dzud risk is high. Heavy snowfall from October has refrozen after more heavy snow in November.

A third of Mongolia's population rely directly on livestock — milk, cheese and meat for food, dung for heating, fur for clothing, and income from selling these items. Over 1.2 million livestock died in last winter's dzud, leaving tens of thousands of herders in poverty. The worst dzud in memory occurred in 2010, killing 8 million animals. [UB Post \(Mongolia\)](#) and [Deutsche Welle](#)

China punishes Mongolia for Dalai Lama visit during financial crisis

In 2011, Mongolia economy grew by an astronomical 17.5%, thanks to its huge reserves of copper, coal and gold, making the economy seem invincible. Instead of saving some of that money, Mongolia borrowed billions of dollars more to invest in huge road and infrastructure projects. Now Mongolia is in a major economic crisis, thanks to reduced purchases by China and falling commodity prices, at a time when it's being hit hard by a new harsh winter "dzud."

In the midst of this economic and financial crisis, the Buddhist leader the Dalai Lama visited Mongolia's capital city Ulaanbaatar in November for a six-day visit. More than half of Mongolia's population are Buddhist, and tens of thousands of them flocked to see the Dalai Lama, with some traveling hundreds of miles.

China does not like the Dalai Lama, as he is worshipped by millions of Tibetan Buddhists in China. So China punished Mongolia by closing part of the border, leaving hundreds of trucks carrying copper and coal backed up on the highway in sub-zero temperatures.

Mongolian officials quickly saw the error of their ways. Foreign minister Tsend Munkh-Orgil made what is apparently an official apology to China:

"You can understand that during the full term of this government, the Dalai Lama will not be allowed to visit Mongolia even for religious purposes."

According to a Chinese analyst: "China shall accept Mongolia's apology because China doesn't want to create friction in Northeast Asia either, particularly at a time when it is facing tensions with other nations, such as Japan and South Korea." [Shanghaiist](#) and [Global Times \(Beijing\)](#) and [Al-Jazeera](#)

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KEYS: Generational Dynamics, Mongolia, dzud, China, Tibet, Dalai Lama, Tsend Munkh-Orgil

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