

KALMYKIA
THE TIBETAN-
BUDDHIST REPUBLIC OF RUSSIA

This is the only Buddhist people group in Europe. The 100,000 Kalmyks represent a piece of the Tibetan World in a Russian republic that straddles Europe and Asia. They have a turbulent and unique history.

Four hundred years ago the Mongols forcefully swept across Western China. Some of them settled in what is now Kalmykia in Russia. These people adopted their own unique form of Tibetan Buddhism. They formed an alliance with the Russian Czar.

During World War II, Soviet dictator Josef Stalin grew suspicious of the Kalmyks and exiled them to Siberia. When the Kalmyks returned home in 1957, their Buddhist temples were gone. Under harsh life in Siberia, their Buddhist culture was gone as well.

Now, under the leadership of a very wealthy elected president, **Kirsan Ilyumzhinov**, they are experiencing a Buddhist revival complete with the building of many Tibetan Buddhist temples. Tibetan Buddhism is turning the hearts of their youths back to their roots. The Kalmyks are also pondering whether to allow Ilyumzhinov to gain more power, or try to establish a Western style democracy.

Pray that the Kalmyk people will hear of the Saviour of the World,
Jesus Christ, and experience the peace He offers.