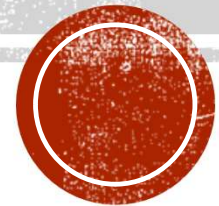


BACKGROUND GUIDE

PERU



INTRODUCTION

1. **Geography:** Peru is located in western South America, bordered by Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, and the Pacific Ocean. It covers an area of about 1.28 million square kilometers.
2. **Capital City:** Lima, the capital and largest city, is the political, economic, and cultural hub of Peru. It is home to historic sites and serves as a key urban center.
3. **Terrain:** Peru is geographically diverse, with the Andes mountains, the Amazon rainforest, and the arid coastal plains shaping its unique landscape.
4. **Climate:** The climate varies greatly due to its geography, with tropical conditions in the Amazon, dry desert conditions along the coast, and cooler temperatures in the Andes.
5. **Population:** Peru has a population of approximately 34 million, with a mix of Indigenous peoples, mestizos, and European descendants contributing to its cultural diversity.
6. **Language:** Spanish is the official language, but Indigenous languages like Quechua and Aymara are also widely spoken, particularly in the highlands.
7. **Symbolism:** Peru's flag features red for the blood of its heroes and white for peace. The vicuña, a national emblem, symbolizes its rich natural heritage.



HISTORY

1. **Ancient Civilizations:** Peru was home to advanced ancient civilizations, including the Norte Chico and the Inca Empire, which built the famous Machu Picchu.
2. **Spanish Colonization:** Francisco Pizarro and the Spanish conquered the Inca Empire in the 16th century, establishing a colonial rule that lasted nearly 300 years.
3. **Independence:** Peru declared independence from Spain on July 28, 1821, led by liberators like José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar.
4. **20th Century:** Political instability marked much of Peru's modern history, including military coups, authoritarian regimes, and guerrilla conflicts like the Shining Path insurgency.
5. **Modern Era:** Democratic governance has been restored since the 2000s, but corruption, economic disparities, and political unrest remain challenges.



POLITICAL SYSTEM

1. **Government Type:** Peru is a democratic republic with a president serving as the head of state and government. The president is elected for a five-year term.
2. **Legislature:** The unicameral Congress is responsible for lawmaking and oversight. Its members are also elected for five-year terms.
3. **Executive Branch:** The president appoints a council of ministers to oversee various sectors, including foreign affairs, economy, and education.
4. **Judiciary:** The judiciary includes the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Court, which safeguard legal rights and constitutional governance.



ECONOMY

1. **Global Standing:** Peru is one of the fastest-growing economies in Latin America, with a diverse mix of agriculture, mining, and services driving its GDP.
2. **Key Industries:** Mining is the backbone of the economy, with significant exports of gold, copper, and silver. Other important sectors include fishing, tourism, and agriculture.
3. **Trade and Exports:** Peru exports minerals, coffee, and textiles, with major trade partners including China, the United States, and the European Union.
4. **Challenges:** Income inequality, dependence on resource extraction, and rural poverty are significant economic challenges. Efforts are being made to boost diversification.



FOREIGN POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. **Regional Role:** Peru is an active member of the Pacific Alliance and the Organization of American States (OAS), promoting regional integration and cooperation.
2. **Global Partnerships:** Peru maintains strong diplomatic ties with countries in North America, Europe, and Asia, focusing on trade, investment, and cultural exchange.
3. **United Nations:** As a UN member, Peru advocates for climate action, human rights, and sustainable development. It has contributed to peacekeeping missions.
4. **Relations with Neighbors:** Peru maintains peaceful relations with its neighbors but has a historical rivalry with Chile, stemming from the War of the Pacific in the 19th century.



SOCIETY AND CULTURE

1. **Cultural Heritage:** Peru's culture reflects a blend of Indigenous and Spanish influences, with vibrant festivals, traditional music, and cuisine showcasing its diversity.
2. **Indigenous Identity:** Indigenous peoples make up about 25% of the population, preserving traditions like Quechua weaving and Aymara agricultural practices.
3. **Education:** Peru's education system has improved in recent years, but challenges remain in rural areas. Prestigious universities include the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru.
4. **Cuisine:** Peruvian cuisine is internationally acclaimed, with dishes like ceviche, lomo saltado, and causa. The country is also known for its pisco, a popular grape-based spirit.



CURRENT ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

1. **Economic Inequality:** While Peru has seen significant economic growth, rural and Indigenous communities often lack access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure.
2. **Deforestation:** The Amazon rainforest in Peru faces threats from illegal logging, mining, and agriculture. Conservation efforts aim to protect biodiversity.
3. **Political Unrest:** Corruption scandals and political instability have led to frequent changes in leadership and widespread protests in recent years.
4. **Climate Change:** Peru is highly vulnerable to climate change, facing challenges like melting glaciers, droughts, and coastal erosion. Adaptation strategies are being implemented.

