

er's Mongolians set to welcome deleg



MARIA J. AVILA/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

The Mijid family, from left, Tsogtsaikhan, Baja and their daughter, Eriko, 13, left Mongolia for Denver, which, by some accounts, has the largest Mongolian population outside their homeland. The Mijids pose with Tsam masks, which are used as part of religious dances in Mongolia.

tion, courtesy of someone with two names, Jim Wagenlander, a Denver-area attorney who is an honorary consul of Mongolia.

"Mongolians have no family name as we know it. Their father's given name becomes their first name, which is rarely used," Wagenlander said. "And then they are given a name, which becomes their surname, and that's the name they go by."

Unless, of course, like Erdenechimeg, of the Mongolian Community Association of Colorado, who prefers to go by her shorter nickname of Chimeg.

But you don't have to be a Buddhist to be excited about the official visit.

"I believe this is going to be the first time the Mongolian president will see the Christians of Mongolia," said Baika, a pastor at Amazing Grace Mongolian Church, the first Mongolian Christian church in North America.



Bagabandi,
Mongolian
president



**Hamba
Lama,**
Buddhist leader

(one of four in the United States) for five years. He will receive the Mongolian Freedom Medal, an honor that its recipient attributes to "recognition of a lot of efforts by me

Facts about Mongolia

Mongolia is a landlocked country in Central Asia, bordered by Russia and China.

■ **Area:** 604,250 square miles, or slightly smaller than France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and Belgium combined.

■ **Climate:** Desert; continental (large daily and seasonal temperature ranges).

■ **Geography:** Almost 90 percent of Mongolia is pasture, desert and mountains. Ten percent is forest. About 1 percent of the land is sustainable for agriculture.

■ **Highest point:** Tavan Bogd Uul at 14,434 feet.

■ **Population:** 2,751,314

■ **Main religion:** Lamaist Buddhism

cer-shaped abode which overlooks Interstate 70 in Genesee), Bagabandi will inaugurate his first Sunday in Colorado by indulging his passion for fishing somewhere in the Rockies. Later that night, he will hold court at the King Center on the Auraria campus, addressing several hundred of his countrymen and -women before entertaining questions.

A hot topic no doubt will be the current election controversy in Mongolia, where a razor-thin electoral margin in the Great Hural has prompted court chal-

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