

WONDERS OF NATURE



The Norwegian Wonder

What is a Fjord?

A Fjord (pronounced as 'fee-ord') is a long, deep glacial valley of seawater, usually narrow and steep-sided, extending below sea level.

How is it formed?

Flooding of a glacial valley of seawater usually causes fjord. When a glacier cuts a U-shaped valley due to constant rubbing of the surrounding layer of rock by the sediments, Fjord is formed. The flooding creates a narrow deep lake that connects to the sea. This further pushes down the water, which shallows down the fjord below sea level.

Where are fjords usually found?

Fjords are usually located where some amount of glacial activity is extended to sea level. Norway is particularly known for its fjords and is one of the major tourist attractions. Besides, Greenland, Chile, New Zealand, the Arctic and parts of Alaska and Canada are also home to varying Fjords all over.



Trivia

- The shallow entrance and steep sides makes fjords excellent natural harbours. Thus they provide homeports for fishing. Besides, many industries use fjords for fish farming and ship building.
- Fjord swimming is a well-established activity in Sognefjord, Norway.

Tracking new heights

China is considered to be the one of the most developed countries in the world. Being technically advanced, China is noted for many of the world's engineering marvels. Its Qingzang Railway project is one such marvel considered to be one of China's major accomplishments of the 21st century.

What is the Qingzang project about?

The Qingzang railway or the Qinghai-Tibet railway is a high altitude railway that connects Xining, Qinghai Province, to Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, in China. This railway is the first to connect China with the Tibet Autonomous Region, to have a conventional railway. This was not possible earlier due to the altitude and terrain of the region.

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What are the dimensions of the project?

The total length of Qingzang railway is 1956 km. The construction of the 815 km section between Xining and Golmud regions was completed by 1984. The 1142 km section between Golmud and Lhasa region was opened in 2006. The line includes the Tanggula Pass, at 5,072 m (16,640 feet) above sea level the world's highest rail track. The line also comprises of the 1,338 m Fenghuoshan tunnel, which is supposedly the highest rail tunnel in the world.



MANMADE MARVELS

What is the future plan of the project?

The line is to be expanded further and about 44 railway stations are to be built. Among them the Tanggula Mountain railway station, at 5,068 meters would be the world's highest. The entire rail route offers the passengers a scenic view of the surrounding province encompassing the peaks, rivers, snow-capped mountains, bridges, lakes and beautiful grasslands.



Trivia

Condor station at 4,786 meters on the Rio Mulatos-Postosi line, Bolivia, and La Galera station at 4,781 meters in Peru are rated among the world highest stations.

