

HD-16

Rebellion part of global terrorism: China 16/11

BEIJING, NOV. 15. More emphatically than ever before, China is seeking to link a rebellion in its restive Xinjiang region with global efforts against terrorism, saying its battle with Afghanistan-trained Muslim separatists bolsters the world's push toward post-September 11 security.

In an invitation-only briefing on Wednesday for a group of Beijing-based journalists, the Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mr. Zhu Bangzao outlined China's stance toward terrorism both inside its borders and across Asia.

His assessment: By combating what the government considers a violent, "splittist" movement by Turkic-speaking ethnic Uighurs in Xinjiang, in the country's far northwest, China is striking at a tentacle of the very terror network that felled the World Trade Center two months ago.

"These people have been trained by the international terrorists. So the fight against separatists in Xinjiang is part of the fight by the world against terrorism," Mr. Zhu said. "They have become a part of the international terrorist mechanism." Such assertions are not new; China has been making them with varying vehemence since the September 11 attacks on the United States. But the forum — what the Ministry called a "briefing on terrorism" — suggests the leadership wants to amplify the message.

China has long called its effort to quell Xinjiang's separatist movement an internal affair. But it suddenly stands to benefit by framing the fight as exactly the opposite — despite continuing condemnation of its crackdown by human rights activists.

The Government's basic argument — safeguarding against separatist violence — remains. But the shift of the terrorism debate since September 11 presents Beijing with an unusual opportunity to further its own agenda while being seen as embracing the global coalition against Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

China has received no explicit international support of its view on Xinjiang. The U.S. President, Mr. George W. Bush, in Shanghai last month for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum meeting, said anti-terrorism efforts "must never be an excuse to persecute minorities," an apparent reference to Uighurs.

And the U.N. Human Rights Chief, Ms. Mary Robinson, said in China last week that reports of official abuses against Uighurs have increased since the global anti-terrorism campaign began.

Uighur separatists advocate greater autonomy and have waged a scattered, low-intensity campaign of bombings, armed attacks and assassinations. Uighurs briefly ran the independent Republic of East

Turkestan in Xinjiang before the Chinese communists seized power in 1949.

Chinese officials say most Uighurs oppose the separatists, but they draw support from abroad — something seized upon by Foreign Minister, Mr. Tang Jiaxuan, at the U.N. General Assembly this week. "Opposing 'East Turkestan,'" he said, "is an important aspect of the international anti-terrorist struggle." Mr. Zhu said many members of Uighur separatist movements were trained in Afghanistan, presumably by al-Qaida. He rattled off a list of attacks that he called "clear evidence" separatist groups in Xinjiang were receiving outside help from Muslim extremists.

"We know they've been getting financial support and other support. It's very hard to find out more," Mr. Zhu said. He furnished little proof of any direct link.

Mr. Dilxat Raxit, a Sweden-based spokesman for the East Turkestan Information Center, an exiled Uighur group, said persecution against Uighurs continued this week with 22 arrests and two executions of people charged with "splitting the state" and "endangering security." No independent verification was available.

"The Chinese Government has deliberately connected terrorism with East Turkestan and has taken advantage of the September-11 incident to purge the Uighurs," he said. "It is the Chinese Government that is the terrorist." Mr. Zhu, when asked how China defines terrorism, demurred. He said the world and the region — both China and central Asia — need to devise common definitions. Such beyond-the-borders remarks, more common in recent weeks, suggest China's rhetoric, if not its mindset, is becoming more international.

— AP

Quake rocks Xinjiang

An 8.1-magnitude earthquake shook a sparsely populated, mountainous region of northwestern China on Wednesday, government seismologists said. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

The quake, which Chinese state television said hit at 5:26 p.m. local time, was centered in the Kunlun mountain area near the border of Qinghai province and the Xinjiang region in the far northwestern part of China, according to an official in the State Seismology Bureau in Beijing.

A woman who answered the telephone at the Xinjiang Seismology Bureau in Urumqi, Xinjiang's capital, confirmed the temblor and said few people live in the rugged region.

16 NOV 2001

16 NOV 2001

Falun suicides: 4 organisers jailed

REUTERS

BEIJING, Aug. 17. - Four people accused of organising the self-immolation of alleged Falun Gong followers on Tiananmen Square in January have been given jail sentences ranging from seven years to life, the *Xinhua* news agency said today.

An intermediate people's court here found the four guilty of intentional homicide for "organising, masterminding, instigating and assisting" followers of the banned Falun Gong spiritual group to commit suicide, *Xinhua* said.

China says the five people who set fire to themselves were deranged by their faith in Falun Gong and state media used graphic footage of the incident to help justify a fierce crackdown on the group Beijing calls an "evil cult."

A woman and her 12-year-old daughter died of burns and two others were severely disfigured, state media has said. Falun Gong has denied the five were its followers,



FANATICAL FURY: The four Falun Gong activists who were sentenced in Beijing on Friday for organising self-immolations. From left: Xue Hongjun, Liu Xiuqin, Wang Jindong and Liu Yunfang. - AP/PTI

saying its teachings don't condone suicide. *Xinhua* said Liu Yunfang was sentenced to life imprisonment for printing pamphlets for encouraging Falun Gong followers to commit suicide. Wang Jindong was jailed for 15 years for accompanying Liu, the agency said.

Xue Hongjun and Liu Xiuqin were jailed for 10 years and seven years respectively.

The verdict on a woman who played a lesser role in the incident will be announced later, it said. *Xinhua* didn't say if those sentenced were Falun Gong followers but state media confirmed they were.

45 Falun Gong organisers jailed in China

REUTERS

China ①
5-9
20/8

BELJING, Aug. 19. — Chinese courts have jailed 45 alleged Falun Gong organisers for up to 13 years for helping the spiritual movement battle an intense government effort to wipe it out, an official newspaper reported today.

The *Beijing Daily* said they were sentenced in Beijing over the past few days for organising protests, making banners and printing leaflets in defiance of a government campaign against the movement. It was outlawed, and declared an "evil cult" in 1999 after it stunned the leadership by protesting outside the top officials' Beijing compound

to demand official recognition for the movement.

The newspaper said the heaviest sentence was imposed on Zhang Hongli, jailed for 13 years on charges of renting a safe house, organising the manufacture of banners and printing Falun Gong leaflets.

Others were sentenced for their roles in what were once almost daily protests in Tiananmen Square, China's political heart, which are now rare. When the communist party began its crackdown on the cult, it found adherents almost everywhere.

Protest in Washington: Eight Falun Gong members have launched a hungerstrike in front of the Chinese embassy in

Washington, demanding release of practitioners held by Beijing, organisers have said.

Banners protesting the crackdown read "SOS!" and "Justice for Falun Gong." The Washington protesters said they started their hunger strike on Friday to press for the release of an estimated 130 Falun Gong members from a labour camp in the north-eastern Liaoning province. The Liaoning practitioners launched a hunger strike three weeks ago.

The group said the effort was a "small reflection" of what Falun Gong followers are going through in China. Since 1999, more than 50,000 practitioners have been sent to prisons, labour camps and mental hospitals.

20 AUG --

Trade as strategy: Chinese lessons

By C. Raja Mohan

China's experience shows trade can be a powerful instrument in promoting national prosperity, regional clout and international standing.

1678

CONSIDER THE following paradox: China is a closed society with an open mind and India is an open society with a closed mind. By the classical definitions of political science, communist China is a "closed" political system at the heart of which is the one party-state. India in contrast is an "open" society built on a democratic and plural political order. Yet China today is more open and globalised than India is.

In just one generation, China's reforms have produced one of the world's largest economies. On that basis China has become the second most powerful country in the international system. A decade after the launch of reforms, India remains mired in self-doubt. It is unwilling to make a clean break with the past and seek power and prosperity as China has done.

The Indian political class justifies the slow pace of reforms in the name of democracy, and the difficulty of generating consensus on complex policy issues. It is implied that the absence of political pluralism in China makes it easy for the communist party there to press ahead with necessary but unpopular reforms. Democracy or the lack of it can only explain a small part of the reality in India and China. China might not have a democratic system; but it has a thriving culture of politics.

The communist leadership manages many competing interests within the party and outside. And Chinese politics in the last two decades has been about defining the pace and direction of its reforms. The Chinese communists had to reconcile the imperatives of economic change with the opposition from sectoral interests. They had to bend ideology to fit the policy requirements. They buried past slogans and invented new ones to suit present realities.

Equally important has been the unfinished Chinese debate about the tension between 'modernisation' and 'westernisation' and finding the right relationship between China and the West. The very same issues are at the heart of the politics of reform in India. The very different outcomes in India and China are the result of the quality of political leadership. Noth-

ing else explains the paradox that India and China have come to represent.

The Chinese leadership, following the debacle of the cultural revolution, acknowledged by the end of the 1970s the need for unadulterated modernisation of China by drawing closer to the West. Despite the ravages from decades of state-led socialism, India continues to pretend that the old order works. Indian leaders have preferred to tinker with the old order rather than radically reform it. In the pursuit of long-term national goals, the Chinese leadership has been willing to take difficult decisions; the Indian leadership has been reluctant to bite the bullet.

Trade related issues reveal the sharp contrast between the Indian and the Chinese world views in the recent period. China has pursued international trade as a means to expand national prosperity and raise its international stature. India treats trade as some kind of necessary evil that must be controlled with the full force of state power. There is communist China engaging in difficult negotiations with the entire international community to find an entry into the World Trade Organisation. Here are the Indian ideologues — of the ruling party on the right as well as the left in the Opposition — suggesting India could walk out of the global trading system.

Consider too China's support for a new round of trade negotiations. In contrast, India insists it will not allow a new round. There is China, wanting to legitimise its place as one of the world's great trading nations. Here is India deluding itself that it can prevent the next trade round. And who is there behind India in the debate on WTO? Pakistan! What terrible company to keep on global trading issues!

Indian political leaders keep harping on the threats from globalisation. What about China? It is not that China has no

problems. Globalisation will force China to break the iron rice bowl, disband its large state-owned enterprises and radically reorient its agriculture sector. China recognises there is no other way to go. It is prepared to address the challenges of globalisation by leveraging its strengths. If China is pragmatic in its approach, India remains ideological. New Delhi adopts unrealistic postures, and is caught defending them to the last. In the end, India is dragged kicking and screaming into accepting inevitable realities, as in the Uruguay Round a decade ago.

China has also sought to use trade levers to dampen the negative trends in its relations with the United States. India believes trade policy is part of the long-proclaimed jihad against the industrialised North. Instead of building on the emerging convergences with the U.S. on trade issues, it has made fighting over trade differences a matter of national honour.

Look at China using its economic relations with the U.S. to undermine the initial ideological hostility of the Bush Administration. It has mobilised its corporate allies in the U.S., offering commercial enticements (the latest is an order to purchase 36 Boeing commercial jets) that translate into jobs in the U.S. Beijing has already got the Bush Administration to move away from the threatening formulation that "China is a strategic competitor". It is a matter of time before the confrontation between the two yields to business as usual.

In contrast to China, India appears hesitant to build on the emerging political good will in the U.S. For the first time in decades, there is an Administration in Washington that is willing to acknowledge India's global role and lay the foundations for a strategic partnership. Instead of using trade policy as an ideological argument against the U.S., India should be using opportunities on the trade front to consolidate the political ties

with America. No one expects India to work against its own interests, but every one hopes New Delhi will demonstrate a little bit of pragmatism in pursuing them.

Even if a future American Administration were to send out invitations for a containment party against China, there may be few takers in Asia. China's expanding economic ties with its neighbours have raised the stakes for Asian nations in a cooperative relationship with Beijing. As the new engine of economic growth in East and South East Asia, China is all set to consolidate its political and strategic primacy in the region.

It makes eminent sense for India to similarly consolidate its primacy in the subcontinent by letting the forces of trade and globalisation work to its advantage. Imaginative Indian policies would help the region integrate economically under the compulsions of globalisation. Instead of letting expanding economic flows douse the political difficulties in the subcontinent, India has allowed petty considerations to undermine its long-term strategic objectives in the region. Here is Bangladesh all set to integrate into the Indian economy. Nearly 90 per cent of the trade between the two nations is constituted by Indian exports to Bangladesh. Yet India refuses to offer any serious duty concessions to Bangladesh and even those few announced are not implemented.

China's experience shows trade can be a powerful instrument in promoting national prosperity, regional clout and international standing. If India is to emulate China, it needs to liberate its trade policy from the clutches of old ideological slogans and bureaucratic practices. And trade is perhaps too important to be left to a single Ministry. The Government needs a mechanism that can make diverse interests work together in making India a major trading nation in the coming decade. The most important component of that must be the creation of a human resource pool that is capable of assessing the global economic environment, negotiating effectively in multilateral forums and integrating trade policy with foreign and national security objectives.

THE HINDU

16 AUG 2001

China closes magazine critical of capitalists

FROM ERIK ECKHOLM

Beijing, Aug. 16: Censors have shut down a small but influential Marxist journal for attacking President Jiang Zemin's plan to bring capitalists into the Communist Party, a sign that Jiang will brook little dissent from any quarter as he tries to cement his place in the pantheon of great leaders.

The closing in recent weeks of the journal, *Pursuit of Truth*, was Jiang's most open move yet against hard-line Marxists, many of them elderly revolutionary veterans, who question his plan to broaden a party that by its constitution is the "vanguard of the working class."

Late next year, Jiang is expected to give up his post as general secretary of the Communist Party and, in 2003, his term as President of China expires. As the transition approaches, party insiders say, Jiang is trying both to define his place in history and to adapt the increasingly clumsy methods of Communism to a world of social and technological complexity.

In a series of speeches over the last year, Jiang has laid out what the official media describe as a major new advance in Marxist theory, building on the core principles of Marx as amended by Mao

Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.

His theory, called the "three represents," asserts that the party must represent "advanced productive forces, advanced Chinese culture and the fundamental interests of the majority."

Jiang made the practical meaning clear in a speech on July 1, when he announced that newly prominent groups such as private-company owners, high-tech innovators and managers in foreign businesses were helping to build Chinese socialism, and so should be welcomed into the party.

Jiang and his supporters plan to incorporate the new theory into the party constitution over the coming year, one party official said, "so public criticism is especially unwelcome now."

For many ordinary Chinese, who pay little heed to ideology, the debate seems academic.

They know that many party members are already involved in business and that successful entrepreneurs in some regions have for years been invited into the party.

Now, Jiang argues that if the party does not find a systematic way to embrace diverse and powerful new groups, potent opposition forces may emerge.

But some true-believing Marx-

ists have cringed, calling this a betrayal of socialism. Debate has bubbled quietly, even as officials and the media have been instructed to study and laud Jiang's thought.

Jiang has a strong upper hand, political experts believe, and the carping from the diminishing left poses no serious threat. Up to now he has usually tolerated their criticisms.

But *Pursuit of Truth* carried exceptionally blunt attacks on Jiang's ideas, an editor at a party magazine said yesterday.

It is one of a handful of periodicals run by the so-called Leftists, who argue that rampant private enterprise will lead to more corruption and the exploitation of workers and farmers.

Established in 1990, it is edited by a retired propaganda official named Yu Quanyu. Two articles in particular are said to have angered Jiang.

A widely noticed article in the May issue by Lin Yanzhi, a deputy party secretary in Jilin province and son of a revolutionary founder, argued that "we must uphold the purity of the party" and that if capitalists are brought in, they will "seize power within the party."

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

THE TELEGRAPH

17 AUG 2001

China hardens stand against Dalai lama

BEIJING: Signifying a hardening of its stance on the vexed Tibet issue, China on Wednesday indicated that it may not consult the exiled spiritual leader, the 14th Dalai Lama while deciding on his successor.



Dalai Lama

"The reincarnation or soul boy of the 14th Dalai Lama will be found upon his death in accordance with historical customs and religious rituals," the official Xinhua news agency reported from Lhasa, Tibet's capital.

This remark was made by Raidi, chairman of the standing committee of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress, while being interviewed by a group of journalists from Hong Kong in Lhasa on Sunday. Supporters of the Dalai Lama say that China is playing a "waiting game" with the spiritual leader by refusing to resume negotiations with him.

China has put several pre-conditions for resuming talks on the vexed Tibet issue which includes renunciation of "Tibetan independence" by the Dalai Lama and acknowledgement of Tibet as an inalienable part of Chinese territory and recognising Taiwan as a province of China. (PTI)

THE TIMES OF INDIA

9 AUG 2001

Jiang under fire over capitalists' entry into CPC

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

BEIJING, Aug. 14. — President Mr Jiang Zemin's attempt to allow capitalist entrepreneurs to join the Chinese Communist Party has infuriated Maoist grandees and prompted a media crackdown on criticism of party policy. Mr Jiang floated the idea of letting private businessmen join the party in a 1 July speech expounding his "Three Represents Theory" aimed at charting the future course of the Communist Party.

Mr Jiang's theory, which has been relentlessly pushed by

aides for the past year, says the Communist Party not only represents the common man but also the "most productive forces" and "the most advanced culture" — the elite.

Reformists and Jiang supporters see the theory as the basis for efforts to establish the rule of law and modest political reforms which the President has largely ignored since coming to power in 1989. But the extreme Left of the party has recoiled in horror, viewing the theory as a betrayal of the working and peasant class as well as an attempt to build a personal-

ity cult around Mr Jiang.

Many Leftists also believe that capitalism is already responsible for the rampant corruption within the CCP, which will only get worse if private businessmen are allowed into the party's ranks.

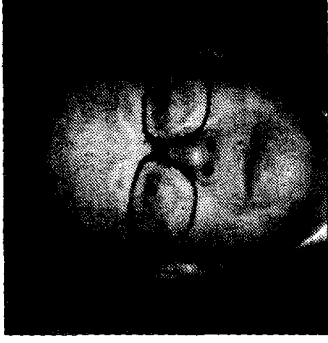
Maoist magazines such as *Zhenli de Zhuiqiu* and *Zhongliu* have been sniping at Mr Jiang's theory since last year, triggering a new and different media crackdown.

Under regulations announced last week any reports or publications that go against CCP policies are illegal, and staff at *Zhenli de Zhuiqiu* said the magazine had been suspended.

Opposition to Mr Jiang's idea of allowing capitalists into the CCP has also sprung up in open letters on the Internet, one of which purports to be from the former head of the CCP's propaganda department, Mr Deng Liqun.

The letter slammed the "cult of personality" around Mr Jiang which it said was trying to enshrine the "Three Represents" in the CCP's charter alongside the ideas of CCP founder Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping.

The theory could be adopted at next year's CCP congress, when major leadership changes will be announced, and would have a



Mr Jiang Zemin

significant impact on the ideology of the new generation of leaders, Western diplomats say.

Falun Gong stages scattered protests

BEIJING, JULY 22. Chinese police quickly quashed small scattered protests on the second anniversary on Sunday of the banning of the Falun Gong spiritual movement.

Just eight people were seen being bundled into police vans on Sunday morning on Beijing's Tiananmen Square — far fewer than during many previous protests on key dates associated with Falun Gong.

One woman who held a white banner and shouted slogans when police pushed her aboard a van was bundled to the rear of the vehicle.

There, an officer hit her repeatedly, rocking her head back with each blow.

Officers threw another woman to the ground before hustling her and three others away. Police yelled "Disperse! Disperse!" at a crowd that formed around the van to watch.

Falun Gong protests have dwindled in intensity in the face of the government's relentless 2-year crackdown on the group.

Thousands of practitioners are in jails or labour camps. Many more have been pressured into renouncing the group. Others have been forced underground.

Some officials claim the

Government is close to eradicating the movement it regards as a cult.

Last July 22, police detained about 100 protesters, including one group of about 25 people, on Tiananmen Square.

While still heavy, security on the vast plaza was not as intense on Sunday as it sometimes has been in the past. Officers played cards and read newspapers in the backs of some police vans stationed on the margins of the square, which was crowded with Chinese and foreign tourists.

Falun Gong attracted millions of followers in the 1990s with a blend of slow-motion exercises and ideas drawn from Buddhism, Taoism and the group's exiled leader, Mr. Li Hongzhi.

Followers say practice promotes health, moral living and even supernatural powers.

The Government banned Falun Gong on July 22, 1999, as a threat to Communist Party rule and Chinese society. It has accused Falun Gong of cheating followers and causing 1,600 deaths, mostly of practitioners who it said refused medical treatment according to what it claims are the group's teachings. — AP



Chinese plainclothes police personnel lift a Falun Gong protester into a van as they detain her in Beijing's Tiananmen Square on Sunday. — Reuters

TYPICAL BEHAVIOUR

5-6 Religious cults are suicidal WJ

ONE can't really blame the Chinese; even the government of the United States found it very hard to stomach the existence of a cult such as the Branch Davidian whose headquarters in Waco, Texas, it stormed, with tragic consequences some years ago. If anyone thinks the Falun Gong's basic ethos is any different, he or she should take a look at the exhibition the organisation had in Hong Kong in March, prominently featuring other deadly cults, such as the Aum Shinrikyo, responsible for the sarin nerve gas attack in the Tokyo subway. Religious cults are by and large totalitarian organisations, run by pathological personalities with a pronounced criminal streak, and no sensible government can afford to ignore them. The latest report is that 14 Falun Gong members committed suicide in a North China labour camp. The organisation says they were tortured to death, but, frankly, the Chinese official version sounds much more credible, in view of the fact that a similar attempt was made in January this year. Why? Because religious cults are in most cases led by maniacs who believe that sacrificing one's life to the guru or to the organisation is the highest mark of devotion or testimony to its wretched truth.

The Chinese would have very little interest in attracting negative international attention to themselves at a time when it is trying to convince the world that it may be repressive, but not tyrannical. Let us not confuse this with Tibet where the lama orders are seen not so much as religious leaders as guardians of Tibetan national aspirations. The two are not comparable. The Chinese are doing to the Falun Gong what any sensible government would do to any organisation that threatens to disturb public order. We may also point out the trouble Rajneesh got into when he tried to transplant his ashram in the state of Oregon. His followers created such a nuisance for the local inhabitants that they were thrown out by the courts. Chinese methods are perhaps more repressive, but, in this case, not very different, in essence, from what their Western counterparts practise. The Western media acts in bad faith when it sees Falun Gong as a purely fundamental rights issue.

ser b VICTORY LAP 19/17
Beijing gears up for 2008 Olympics

BEIJING residents may have more reason to rejoice than Chinese dissidents at the decision of the International Olympic Committee to award the 2008 Olympics to Beijing, beating Paris, Toronto, Osaka and Istanbul. Dissidents are worried that the Chinese government may construe the decision as a signal that the world winks at its totalitarian style of governance and brutal human rights record; but the non-political Beijing resident is thrilled at the \$20 billion makeover to their city promised by government. It is not often that a Third World city gets to stage the Olympics. There is a lot to be said for mega sports events acting as a stimulus for revamping a city's infrastructure. Considerable construction activity and sprucing up of Beijing will be required in the coming days. Beijing's air is as foul as that of India's metropolitan cities, but in its determination to put across to the world a well-heeled appearance it has launched an ambitious greening project. In addition, a complete overhaul of city infrastructure such as roads, parks, sewers and subway lines are planned.

Chinese authorities may be expected to go about the job of providing clean streets, clean air and state-of-the-art facilities with ruthless efficiency — beggars and migrants were swept into detention centres when inspectors from the IOC came visiting this year. This, of course, broaches the issues that dissidents have been raising — how much does international recognition encourage Beijing to simply continue with unacceptable practices. Contrary to Chinese dissidents' fears, intensive media scrutiny and interaction with people from all over the world in the run-up to Beijing 2008, may just persuade the Chinese authorities to relax and open up.

80 years later, Mao's China tries to cope with capitalist tinge

By CRAIG S. SMITH
New York Times Service

Shanghai, July 17: China's Communist Party is celebrating its 80th anniversary this month as the gap widens between its increasingly anachronistic pronouncements and the reality those words struggle to describe.

Nowhere is that paradox more pointed than at the site of the party's founding meeting.

In a few years, according to current development plans, the building in which Mao and 14 comrades plotted the eradication of

capitalism will be part of a small, gray-brick island surrounded by office towers bearing the names of some of the world's biggest multinational corporations. Already the modest brick house sits in the middle of a new, upscale entertainment quarter designed by Ben Wood, one of the architects behind the restoration of Faneuil Hall in Boston, otherwise known as the Cradle of Liberty.

One block behind the Communist party site, a Starbucks serves frozen lattes, and one block in front, a McDonald's will soon be serving burgers.

The entertainment quarter, dubbed "New Heaven and Earth" by Vincent Lo, the Hong Kong property tycoon behind the project, is just one corner of his company's 129-acre redevelopment plan. The project is transforming the heart of old Shanghai from a teeming proletarian residential neighborhood into a landscaped corporate park and luxury housing complex where private homes will sell for millions of dollars.

Henry Cheng, who oversees the project, said no one in the govern-

ment had mentioned the incongruity of the birthplace of Chinese communism being cradled in capitalism's mighty palm.

But he said the city had gone to great lengths to ensure that none of the planned high-rises would be visible from the doorstep of the First Congress

SPOTLIGHT

Meeting Hall, the current name of the building where the first Chinese Communists met.

The view will be blocked by the second-story roof lines of the surrounding buildings, deliberately preserved to give the impression

of an intact neighborhood. The contradiction is not lost, though, on many of the residents being forced to make way for the urban renewal. Just one block from the site of the founding meeting, Song Houfu, a laid-off factory worker, sat in his shabby, one-room apartment on the second floor of a half-demolished building and groused about how the party had changed.

"I'm a true Communist," Mr. Song said, combing his long, yellowed fingernails through his shoulder-length gray hair. "I've been trying to join the party for 20

years, but they say my opinions are too far from the party line."

Mr Song, 55, lives with his wife and 20-year-old daughter in a 24-square-metre room. He said it was wrong to surround such an important party shrine with so much capitalism, though he does not oppose development in general.

He concedes that his neighborhood could use some improvements.

"We still wash our chamber pots out on the street," he said. "That doesn't look very good when the leaders come to visit the First Congress site."

BEIJING'S TRIUMPH AND CHALLENGE

FROM THE TIME of the ancient Olympics, politics and sport — always deemed to be far apart with little in common by the idealists — have indeed mixed with explosive effect. And, in the modern era, there has always been a political undercurrent to many major issues involving the Olympic Games. Yet, never have conflicting political ideologies been locked in such a public battle on the Olympic stage as in recent months with Beijing clearly becoming a front runner in the race to host the quadrennial summit games 2008. Perhaps there might have been less said, for and against, had China bid to host a symposium on parliamentary democracy in Beijing! But, then, there is so much prestige attached to the Olympic Games, and politicians of all hues — big and small — have been so keen on associating themselves with them for a variety of reasons, that it was hardly surprising that Beijing's bid, which finally turned out to be successful at the International Olympic Committee's Moscow meeting last weekend, should have been as widely debated as it was from Washington to Tokyo and London to Delhi.

That Beijing won the vote with a lot to spare, taking more than twice as many votes (56) as the runner-up Toronto — Paris, Istanbul and Osaka were left far behind — goes to prove that a majority of the IOC members were not only impressed with China's credentials but also, more importantly, wanted to distance themselves clearly from the school of thought that believes Beijing did not deserve to host the games because of China's human rights record. On the face of it, there can be little doubt that the Asian giant, a country of 1.26 billion people with a proud sporting heritage, and one that has meticulously planned its bid for the 2008 Games after a humiliating defeat in 1993 when Sydney won the right to host the 2000 Games, has both the necessary infrastructure and the administrative set-up to successfully host the most prestigious of all sporting events. And, judged on its sporting culture alone, China

certainly deserved to get the nod from the IOC members. At Sydney, Chinese athletes scooped up 28 golds, 16 silvers and 15 bronze medals as the country finished third behind the United States and Russia.

NO-12 1872
Then again, sport is more than just sport when it comes to the Olympics. And Beijing's critics were armed with both political and sporting weapons, so to say. The chief political issue concerned the large nation's record on the human rights front. And these concerns took on a new meaning when it was reported in the Western press that China had resorted to rather novel means to clean up Beijing — with thousands of street urchins and urban poor being rounded up and packed off to make-shift camps without adequate facilities in freezing winter temperatures — ahead of the IOC team's visit earlier this year. Apart from this, the other brand of critics was quick to point out that Chinese athletes were the worst offenders in the murky world of drugs in sport with the systematic abuse preached and perfected by the administrators themselves.

But the outgoing IOC President, Mr. Juan Antonio Samaranch, had always maintained that the members of international sport's most powerful ruling body should not concern themselves with so-called political issues and should strictly judge Beijing's merits in terms of how well it was equipped to run the Games. In the end, of course, Mr. Samaranch's stand seems to have been vindicated. To now believe that Beijing would not use the Games to project the country's "successful" political system as well as its culture would be rather naive. Every nation that has hosted the Olympics has done this at varying levels. In the event, what matters is whether Beijing's success will see China open up over the next seven years and finally, once the Games are on, allow local protests and grant the foreign media complete freedom, as the Bid Committee promised in Moscow last week.

Falungong men, state play deadly game on Great China Firewall

BY CRAIG S. SMITH
New York Times Service

AA
Beijing, July 6: Tapping away at one of his computers in a cramped two-room apartment in western Beijing, Lloyd Zhao is engaged in an extraordinarily dangerous endeavour — searching through the night for holes in the electronic wall that the government has built to keep Chinese from seeing websites of Falungong, the outlawed spiritual movement.

Periodically, firewall programs that Mr Zhao has installed on his computer detect a signal from another computer in China that is trying to identify him. The string of numbers from the snooping computer that appear on Mr Zhao's screen can invariably be traced to a branch of the Public Security Bureau. "They look for anyone who tries to reach Falungong websites overseas," says the shaggy-haired Mr Zhao, 33, a fervent Falungong follower and an advanced computer technician. When the surveillance becomes too intense, he switches internet accounts, operating systems, even hard-disk drives and telephone lines to mask his online identity.

Mr Zhao says the threat of detection will not dissuade him from his self-appointed mission to keep open the lines of communication between the discipline's US-based founder, Li Hongzhi, and followers here, where a government campaign to eradicate the movement has entered what Beijing hopes is the endgame.

Since China set out nearly two years ago to crush Falungong, as many as 200 people have died, including at least 14 in a labour camp two weeks ago, either in a mass suicide or from torture.

Thousands of members are said to have been beaten or tortured, and millions of people have been cowed into renouncing their faith in Mr Li's apocalyptic cosmology.

But Mr. Zhao and hundreds like him continue to elude China's internal security forces, using temporary cell phone numbers, encryption programs and obscure internet services based abroad to keep the remaining network of followers connected.

That makes Mr Zhao one of the "most dangerous" of Falungong's remaining proponents, according to He Zuoxiu, a physicist and a Communist Party member who has played an integral role in having the movement banned.

The physicist says Falungong is an evil cult that, unchallenged, could threaten China's tenuous stability, should it galvanise the millions of people disenfranchised by the transition from a centrally planned to a market-driven economy. He said people like Mr Zhao should be hunted down and locked up until they recant their beliefs.

The two men are separated not only by age but by spiritual beliefs. Mr He, 74, is an avowed atheist while Mr Zhao believes in multiple Gods.

China's government, which promotes atheism, feels so threatened by Falungong that it has marshalled the full force of its police power to bend the members to its will.

"The number of followers is getting smaller and the crackdown is growing fiercer, but it's going to end with our victory soon," Mr Zhao said during one of many recent interviews. Mr Zhao said he decided to speak out because the Falungong leader says followers should step forward to "validate" the movement.

Under attack, Falungong has evolved from a well-regulated movement with a structure not unlike that of the Communist Party into a nonhierarchical mass movement whose structure mirrors that of the internet, on which it depends.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Riots rock British base in Cyprus

Cyprus, July 4

THIRTY ONE police officers on a British military base in Cyprus were taken to hospital last night after a riot at the compound over the arrest of a Cypriot member of parliament.

Hundreds of demonstrators stormed the police station at the southern base of Episkopi in an attempt to release Marios Matsakis, who was arrested earlier in the day for leading a protest against the base's construction of a network of communications antennae in an environmentally sensitive area.

One hundred British troops were deployed alongside the police who fired tear gas and used clubs to disperse the crowd of up to 500 Cypriot nationals, who torched vehicles, ransacked offices and destroyed building equipment during the riots which were continuing early this morning.

Thirty one police officers, two British nationals and 29 Cypriot nationals, were wounded in the clashes

The Guardian

Falun cries foul as 14 commit 'suicide'

Beijing, July 4

FOURTEEN IMPRISONED followers of the banned Falun Gong sect committed suicide in a north China labour camp, making ropes from sheets and hanging themselves from bunk beds, a n official said on Wednesday.

Falun Gong, however, blamed camp authorities, saying in a statement on Tuesday that at least 15 women followers were tortured to death at Wanjia labour camp in the northeastern province of Heilongjiang around June 20. The statement cast doubt on the official claim of a mass suicide, saying the victims were watched around the clock.

The reported suicide at Wanjia would be the most deadly involving Falun Gong practitioners confirmed by the government since it banned the spiritual movement in July 1999.

Lan Jingli, director of the Heilongjiang government's judicial bureau, said that another 11 followers were rescued by camp guards. In all, 25 Falun Gong members tried to kill themselves on June 20 in Wanjia labour

camp, he said.

Lan said guards watched the practitioners closely, patrolling every five minutes. But the followers took advantage of a gap in patrols to hang themselves from their cell beds with sheets, he said.

"One minute is enough to kill," Lan said. "While 11 of them were immediately rescued by the camp guards, 14 others died."

China's government says Falun Gong is a cult that has led more than 1,600 followers to their deaths, mostly by encouraging practitioners to use meditation instead of medicine to cure medical ailments. Officials claim followers also have killed themselves in the belief they will go heaven when they die.

Falun Gong, however, says its teachings forbid all forms of killing, including suicide. The group disputed government claims that five people who set themselves on fire on Tiananmen Square in Beijing earlier this year were Falun Gong practitioners.

AP

'Sect members killed in labour camp'

49-16
SHANGHAI (CHINA), JULY 4. At least 10 followers of the banned Falun Gong spiritual movement were reported on Tuesday to have died at a labour camp in north-east China last month, either in a group suicide or from torture.

The Hong Kong-based Information Centre for Human Rights and Democracy said 10 women killed themselves to protest their treatment at the Wanjia labor camp outside Harbin in Heilongjiang province. A government spokesman in Beijing said early on Wednesday that 14 followers had committed suicide at the camp. Another 11 attempted suicide but were stopped by camp guards, he said.

The Falun Gong web site (www.minghui.org), based in the United States, was quick to denounce the rights group's report on Tuesday of a mass suicide, saying that 15 women at the camp had been tortured to death and that the camp had labelled their deaths suicides to cover up its crime. Thousands of Falun Gong adherents have been sent to labour camps since the movement was banned two years ago, arguing in

part that it was a dangerous cult that had persuaded people to forgo necessary medical care or even kill themselves. Since the ban, there have been persistent reports of torture and deaths of followers by the authorities. The Falun Gong web site says 236 followers have died as a result of confrontations with the police or prison guards.

The Government has acknowledged a handful of deaths but has attributed them to natural causes or to suicide. And it says it thwarted several group suicide attempts by followers. In May, the Government took a group of Western reporters on a tightly controlled tour of Masanjia labor camp in north-eastern Liaoning Province, where Falun Gong said its followers had been tortured. The reporters saw nothing unusual.

Without independent reporting it is impossible to determine which accounts are factual, and independent reporting on the subject is strictly forbidden. Western reporters are regularly detained and deported from areas where cases of torture or death have been reported.

The Falun Gong's founder, Mr. Li Hongzhi, has spoken out against suicide in the past, though he has been silent on the subject following recent suicide reports, most notably the self-immolation of five followers on Tiananmen Square in January. Other Falun Gong members have denied on the web site that the five who set themselves on fire were actually followers, and charged that the Government staged the event. Meanwhile, his cryptic exhortations to followers on the Falun Gong Web site have grown increasingly strident, chastising people who cannot take torture or even death in defence of his cosmology, which holds that Falun Gong is engaged in a struggle with evil beings for the redemption or destruction of the universe.

"Even if a Dafa cultivator truly casts off his human skin during the persecution, what awaits him is still Consummation," Mr. Li wrote a few days after the deaths in the labour camp. Dafa means great law or dharma, and refers to Falun Gong, which can be translated as law wheel practice. — *New York Times*

Mao was a capitalist...before 1949

OLIVER AUGUST
THE TIMES, LONDON

BEIJING, July 3. — When it comes to rewriting history, nobody does it better than the Chinese Communists. After claiming that the 1989 Tiananmen massacre was caused by foreigners and that golf and the flushing toilet were invented in ancient China, the Communist party is now suggesting that Mao Zedong was a capitalist.

The controversial notion surfaced at the weekend at the party's 80th anniversary celebrations, at which it revealed that it welcomes private businessmen into its ranks. The announcement is seen as an effort to attract China's growing army of private entrepreneurs.

According to one of the party's top academics, Mao had been fond of free markets, unregulated prices and private ownership long before China's neighbours embraced capitalism. The Chairman changed his

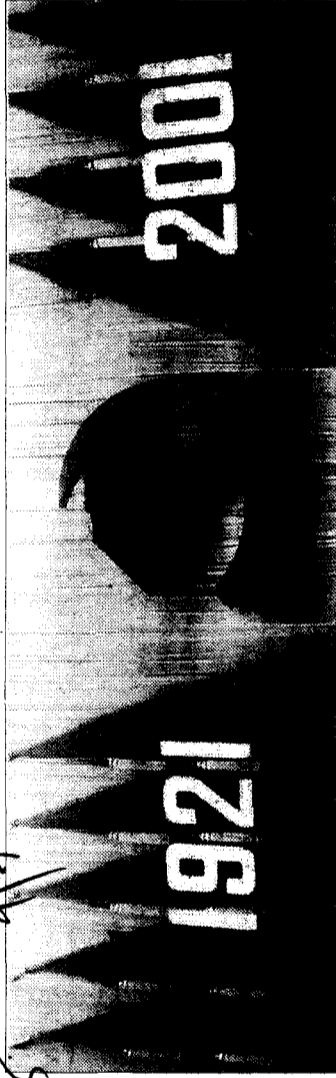
mind when proclaiming the People's Republic in 1949, after which most capitalists were killed, jailed or exiled. New his successors are using Mao's "original" thoughts to justify recent economic reforms and opening party doors to China's newly rich.

Liu Jingfeng, a history professor at the party school, told an online forum run by the official *People's Daily*. "Mao Zedong did not oppose capitalism all the

time. At the Seventh Party Congress, Mao Zedong fully endorsed the idea that China should develop capitalism."

The comments made by Professor Liu are believed to be part of a wider campaign. The South China Morning Post reported that the Central Institute of Archives and the State Bureau of Archives have produced a television documentary focusing on the party toying with capitalism.

The party's long march. — AP/PTI



with Nationalist and US military leaders to coordinate the war against the Japanese. At the same time he was made chairman of the party's central committee and the politburo.

Four years later, Mao became the first emperor in China's Communist dynasty.

The fact that the party is now trying to highlight Mao's supposed capitalist leanings hints at the immense opposition among some cadres to recent reforms. By enlisting the chairman himself for their crusade, the reformers hope to win over doubters and party elders.

Last weekend, President Jiang Zemin virtually issued an open invitation to capitalists to join the party that only 25 years ago had incarcerated all "capitalist roaders".

An estimated 113,000 entrepreneurs are believed to belong to the party, whose firms contribute more than 20 percent of China's \$ 1 trillion gross domestic product.

The 27-part documentary called *Since There is a Communist Party* will cover the 1945 party congress and discuss early ideas for the realisation of a market-based system in China.

Western historians have generally viewed the 1945 party congress as the point at which Mao consolidated his power inside and outside the party by adopting an unusually conciliatory stance.

He agreed to a rare meeting

Jiang ticket for 'exploiters'

Beijing, July 1 (Reuters): Chinese President Jiang Zemin marked the Communist Party's 80th birthday today vowing to fight rampant corruption threatening the regime and throwing open the party's doors to China's newly rich.

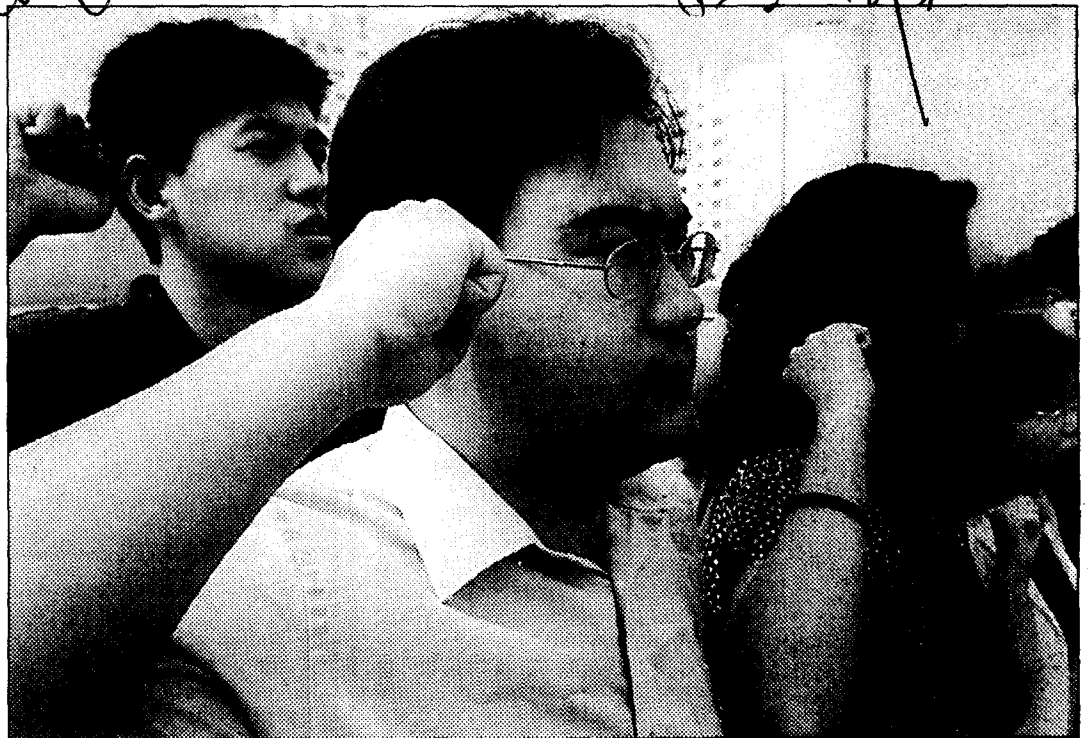
In a nearly two-hour speech, Jiang, who is also party general secretary, trumpeted the party's achievements in revolutionary warfare and in post 1980s economic development, but made no mention of party-led tragedies or of political liberalisation.

"While avoiding reflection on party errors, Jiang made a clear effort to remove political hurdles to accepting as members private business owners, classified as "exploiters" under the Marxism-Leninism the party formally still espouses. Two decades of economic reform had raised living standards, created an economy of varied forms of ownership and generated disparate levels of wealth — "circumstances far different than those the founders of Marxism faced and analysed", Jiang said.

"Under these circumstances, whether or not one has wealth or how much one has cannot crudely be used as the standard for whether that person is politically progressive or backward," he said. "What is important is the state of political ideology, how wealth was obtained, and how it is managed and utilised and what contribution has been made to socialist modernisation," he said.

Jiang's renewed pledge to clamp down graft drew the largest applause from party cadres, soldiers and ethnic minorities in national costume who filled the Great Hall of the People.

"Every corrupt act and every corrupt element must be thoroughly investigated without



Chinese youth take an oath as they become members of the Chinese Communist Party in Beijing. (Reuters)

pause and without tolerance," Jiang said, stressing that members of the world's largest Communist Party must be accountable as public servants.

"The party must not be a haven for corrupt elements," he said to waves of applause. His speech was broadcast live on state television as part of an 18-hour party birthday marathon.

The crowd's enthusiasm for a speech largely devoted to justifying party rule in the 21st century also surged when Jiang said "no person or force can stop" China's reunification with Taiwan, the unfinished business of the civil war the Communists won in 1949.

In the weeks building up to the anniversary of the founding of the

party by Mao Zedong and others in Shanghai in 1921, state media and museum displays have selectively focused on the party's heroic early days and the economic achievements since the 1980s.

No mention has been made of the 1989 Tiananmen massacre of pro-democracy protesters. Also ignored were the Mao-inspired Great Leap Forward in the 1950s, when millions starved to death, and the tumultuous 1966-76 Cultural Revolution.

In a reminder of the Communists' penchant for ruthless campaigns against its foes, as Jiang spoke, outside at Tiananmen Square two Falun Gong protesters were detained after unveiling the banner of the spiritual group

Jiang outlawed two years ago.

Jiang devoted a large section of his address to the "Three Represents" theory, which analysts say is his effort to keep what is formally a workers and peasants party relevant in the era of multinational firms, entrepreneurs and a shrinking state sector.

The theory holds that the Communist Party represents the interests of advanced productive forces, advanced culture and a wide sector of the population.

Workers and peasants — upon whom the pain of economic reform has fallen most heavily — now make up just over 49 per cent of the party's 64.52 million members, Jiang reached out to traditional supporters.

Chinese Communist Party, at 80, debates future

By C. Raja Mohan

At its expansive 80th anniversary celebrations today, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has put across one simple but dramatic claim — that the fate of the people and the Party in China cannot be separated. Neither the creation of a new China over the last eight decades nor its future advancement can be imagined without the CCP, the leadership has declared.

No one in China, and very few outside, will quibble with the CCP's justified claims about its crucial role in transforming China from a shambles at the turn of the 20th century to the second most powerful nation in the world today.

At the same time, there is a fascinating debate within the CCP on how to remain at the cutting edge of China's future in an uncertain world. Rising to the political challenge, the President, Mr. Jiang Zemin, has come up with a new theory, called the 'Three Represents'.

To remain relevant in China, Mr. Jiang suggests, the CCP must unswervingly represent the advanced forces of production, the progressive course of China's culture and the broad interests of the majority of the Chinese people. The theory of 'Three Represents' will dominate the political discourse for sometime to come.

With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy for the Party to pronounce on the past. Overcoming imperialists, feudals and

petty capitalists, the CCP has united the nation and lifted it to unprecedented prosperity in a very short span of time. The CCP ended China's humiliation at the hands of foreigners and put Beijing at the top table in world affairs. There were mistakes and yes, blunders too. But they pale, the CCP says, in comparison to what it has done for China.

In reflecting on this great miracle, the CCP will highlight the contributions of three generations of its leadership. The revered first generation led by Mao Zedong liberated China and defined an independent revolutionary path for it. The second generation, centred

NEWS ANALYSIS

around Deng Xiaoping, opened China to the world and accelerated its economic modernisation.

The third generation of leadership, with Mr. Jiang at the core, is at the helm today. It naturally takes full credit for the great history and brilliant achievements of the CCP, including its success in maintaining the heady pace of Chinese economic development.

But Mr. Jiang also has the unenviable task of defining a strategy for the uncharted waters ahead. The world acknowledges the CCP's unique role in building modern China. But it also looks sceptically at the prospects of the Party dominat-

ing its future. At a time when most Communist regimes in the world have collapsed, questions on the CCP's future may not be irrelevant. The CCP itself has over the last decade encouraged its ideologues to deliberate on the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Communist regimes in East Europe.

The CCP examined the history of various ruling Communist parties — their successes and failures in coping with the imperatives of the modern world. Instead of resting on its laurels, the Party was determined to learn from the mistakes of others.

The leadership was also keen to figure out, how the Party could be adapted to cope with the challenges of economic globalisation, the internet, the rapid advances in science and technology and the sharpening politics of the global balance of power.

At the end of this debate late last year, Mr. Jiang came up with the theory of 'Three Represents'. The CCP believes an effective representation of the imperatives of modern technology, China's culture and the general interests of the masses will make it undefeatable for a long time to come.

The theory is likely to be adopted formally by the CCP at the crucial quinquennial Congress next year. Meanwhile, 'Three Represents' is being hailed as Mr. Jiang's contribution to the ideology of the CCP. It is being compared by some

official commentators to the Communist manifesto of Marx and Engels as the new guide to the future.

As the CCP takes up the tasks of implementing three represents, there will be an inevitable battle for correct interpretation of its premises. Would representing the advanced forces of production imply putting greater value on professionals and hi-tech experts at the expense of blue collar workers? Would it imply raising the new economy sectors above smokestack State enterprises?

Does representing progressive direction of Chinese culture mean a return to the traditional Confucian ideas or adapting the best ideas from the West? Does it demand a stress on Chinese nationalism or an openness to the global village? Does representing the broad interests of the Chinese masses suggest a willingness to let greater participation of ordinary people in political decision-making or in re-educating the Party to remain the elitist vanguard of the masses?

Clearly, there are more questions than answers in the current political debate. But the debate itself points to a healthy political churning in China.

Above all it reflects the political self-confidence of the CCP, which is today proud of its past achievements and ready to reinvent itself for the future.

Doctor reports organ removal before Chinese executions

ASSOCIATED FREE PRESS
WASHINGTON, JUNE 28

A Chinese doctor, seeking political asylum in the US, has alleged that as a physician in China, he took part in removing corneas and harvesting skin from more than 100 executed prisoners, including one who had not yet died, media reports said.

Wang Guogi, a 38-year-old burn specialist, said in a statement yesterday that he also saw other doctors remove vital organs from executed prisoners.

Wu's report says that young and healthy death rowisners often undergo pre-execution health checks and then are shot in the head so that death will be induced through damage to the brain and leave the lungs, heart, liver and kidneys intact.

Wang said one particular incident in Hebei province in October 1995 "tortured my conscience no end." He said he saw three doctors remove the kidneys of a prisoner who was not yet dead: "when they finished the prisoner was still breathing and his heart continued to beat," he said.

But China rejected as "sensational lies" that Chinese doctors regularly removed skin and other organs from executed prisoners without their prior permission even as the US state department deplored the alleged organ harvesting.

"With regard to trade in human organs, China strictly prohibits that. The major source of human organs is voluntary donations from Chinese citizens before their death," Zhang asserted.

NOIAN EXP...

What Mao never predicted, local liberalisation

PETER WONACOTT
CHANGZHOU, CHINA

A SIGN outside the government offices of the Changzhou industrial district reads "Liberate the Mind," in stark white characters that connote Maoist ideals.

But the liberation under way in Changzhou is not what Mao had in mind.

Officials inside this building—and others who govern the burgeoning factory towns in the Yangtze River delta—are finding creative ways to dismantle decades of state planning. "Why did we fall behind other countries? The planned economy," declares Yu Zhiping, Changzhou's vice mayor and one of the new breed of communists-cum-business boosters.

That assessment isn't news to China's masses, who launch more than 800 private companies a day. But it is a remarkable admission for Chinese officialdom. From the start of reforms two decades ago, communist China has regarded capitalist China warily. Private companies, known as "red-hat firms," were grouped under the label "collective enterprises" to maintain the fiction of dominant public ownership.

Now, those red hats are coming off, and nowhere is it more evident than along China's ancient Grand Canal, where local officials like Yu have unloaded government stakes in thousands of collectives. The moves have been replicated by growing numbers of local governments across China in a slap at the

poor efficiency and profits of state-run firms. Scores of state companies are disappearing; few are being created, and some provinces even prohibit new ones.

"We are seeing mass privatisation," says Barry Naughton, an economist at the University of California San Diego's Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies. "It's advancing on so many fronts it can't be rolled back."

Nationally, Naughton says, the trend is difficult to quantify. Linger-ing sensitivities connected with the concept of privatisation produce misleading data, he argues. Still, official figures offer an indication of how the state sector is shrinking. Individually owned companies produced 18 per cent of China's output last year, up from 5 per cent in 1990. Output from companies with "other types of ownership," such as foreign joint ventures, rose to 26 per cent of national output from 4 per cent in the same period. Both those gains have come at the expense of state companies, which in 1990 accounted for more than half of output and now produce less than a third.

Central-government officials insist state enterprises will hold at this level for years to come. They also claim more than three years of reforms have made state companies stronger and more profitable. Li Rongrong, director of the State Economic & Trade Commission, said state companies would report a 20 per cent increase in total profits for the first half, after record earnings last year.

But Beijing's attachment to its behemoths, even the money-losers, contrasts with drastic changes at the local level. Especially in China's prosperous coastal cities, privatisation is moving ahead full steam, fuelled by officials whose careers are tied to their economy's performance. Last year, Jiangsu province's economy grew 10.6 per cent and its exports surged 41 per cent.



ran a wood-crate factory near Changzhou. Huang then diversified, and after buying out the government stake, business for his Changfa Group took off. He boasts that he exports at half the price of his Japanese and European counterparts. Changfa's success also prompted official overtures about buying out two state-run competitors. "They're almost dead," he says.

For centuries, Jiangsu has spearheaded economic

on the back of nimble companies. In Changzhou, 98 per cent are deemed shareholding firms, nearly all of which are privately controlled. In the city of Wuxi, it's 70 per cent. In Wujiang, outside the ancient silk capital of Suzhou, it's close to everything.

Officials in Wujiang say they raised roughly \$100 million from government stake sales. In contrast to years past, many no longer offer tortured ideological explanations for what they do. "Marx hadn't

President Jiang Zemin declared support for "multiple forms of ownership" in a 1997 speech, it sparked a wave of asset dumping and a subsequent crackdown on such selloffs. But two years later, a meeting of the Communist Party's top echelons gave privatisation another push. According to the meeting documents, participants decided state enterprise reforms hinged on "promoting various forms of ownership, fair economic competition and equal development."

Still, privatisation required a leap of faith for officials. After Sunshine Group, a maker of wool garments outside Wuxi, got the go-ahead to turn private, it took the politically sensitive step of announcing the layoff of half its 8,000 workers. Founder Lu Keping entered talks with the government to evaluate the assets and buy out its interests. As part of the deal, he promised to find jobs for excess workers at other firms while some would retire early.

The leap of faith is paying off: just down the superhighway from Sunshine, polyester maker Yingxiang Group is hiring more workers and finalising terms for buying out local-government interests. To company Chairperson Xu Guangxiang, the factory is growing just like the rice shoots he tended as a youth. Then as now, privatisation was a turning point. "When we gave what we grew to collectives, our stomachs were empty," he recalls. "When we could sell it ourselves, we had all we could eat."

(From The Wall Street Journal)

cent, well above national averages. Untangling vague ownership claims has led to an upsurge of investment and spurred new growth. Just ask Huang Xiaoping, a former bee farmer and now owner of one of China's most profitable makers of diesel generators. For years, he

thought about the current economic situation," shrugs Wu Hiaobao, Wujiang's vice mayor. The leeway for these sweeping changes lies with vaguely worded directives issued from Beijing which local officials interpret to serve their needs. When Chinese

economic change in China. Since around 800 A.D., its trading ships applied a network of canals to spread commerce and wealth into China's heartland and leave cities in their wake. Nowadays, with help from Shanghai nearby, these linked economies are racing ahead again

THE 12th anniversary of the Beijing massacre was on 4 June. Almost 50,000 people flocked to Victoria Park to attend the annual candle-light vigil to commemorate the violent crackdown on the pro-democracy movement.

The massive turnout shows that in spite of the Central government's disapproval, many Hong Kong people will not forgive nor forget the bloodshed in 1989. The outbreak of peaceful protests in many cities throughout the country in 1989 vividly demonstrated the Chinese people's desire for clean, transparent and accountable government. The fact that no pro-democracy force emerged to challenge the Communist leadership is another big tragedy.

At the beginning of this year, a book called *The Tiananmen Papers* was published in the USA. It contains private communications, speeches, notes, memos and secret documents, covering a period beginning with the death of disgraced general secretary of the Communist Party of China, Hu Yaobang, on 15 April 1989, and ending with the fourth plenum of the Central Committee on 24 June which

the new party leadership under Jiang Zemin was approved.

The documents were purportedly smuggled out of China by a disaffected official who uses the pseudonym Zhang Liang. A Chinese version of the book which contains many more documents was published in May. As expected, the book has been banned by the mainland authorities.

Comparing the two versions, there is no doubt about it that the English version is much better edited and presented, stating clearly the sources of information. Hence it is more authoritative and readable. This is mainly because of the efforts by three American academics. One of them is the book's editor, Andrew Nathan, who is professor of political science at Columbia University.

He collaborated with Perry Link, professor of Chinese language and literature at Princeton University and Orville Schell, dean of Journalism School at the University of California at Berkeley.

On the occasion of the 12th anniversary of the Beijing massacre, "The Tiananmen Papers" is a distressing reminder of how the situation got out of

Do the Chinese deserve the Communist Party?

23/6
On the 12th anniversary of the Beijing massacre, *The Tiananmen Papers* is a reminder of how the situation got out of hand. The book provides insights into how the fate of a nation of more than 1.2 billion hung on the decisions of a handful of people, says EMILY LAU

hand. The book provides painful but fascinating insights into how the fate of a nation of more than 1.2 billion people ultimately hung on the decisions of eight frail Communist Party Elders.

These Elders were Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Li Xiannian, Peng Zhen, Yang Shangkun, Bo Yibo, Wang Zhen and Deng Yingchao. All but one of them have passed away.

The book portrays the secretive decision-making process in the CPC and is required reading for students of contemporary Chinese history. Although some of the materials have been published before, the book has presented a powerful picture of the sequence of events leading up to the massacre. The feudalistic and authoritarian way in which the Communist leadership operated was breathtaking.

Looking to the future, I am deeply worried because there is little evidence to suggest that very much has changed. Several weeks before the massacre, the CPC general secretary, Zhao Ziyang, told the visiting Soviet Union President Mikhail Gorbachev that although Deng had retired, his guidance was sought on important matters.

The only official position which Deng had not relinquished was the chairmanship of the Central Military Commission. Mao Zedong had also relied on this position to maintain his ultimate authority when many senior leaders turned against him, the party and state apparatus crumbled during the Cultural Revolution.



Bodies of civilians lie among mangled bicycles near Beijing's Tiananmen Square on 4 June 1989. Tanks and soldiers stormed the area, bringing a violent end to student demonstrations for democratic reforms in China. — AP/PTI.

Learning from Mao and Deng, President Jiang Zemin is trying to retain the chairmanship of the Central Military Commission after he retires from his party and state offices in 2002-2003.

As for Deng's special status in the party, *The Tiananmen Papers* revealed that in October 1987, the Politburo had resolved to give him power to approve or overturn decisions of the party leadership. The Politburo gave two elders — Yang Shangkun and Bo Yibo — the right to attend Politburo and Politburo Standing Committee meetings as observers on behalf of Deng and the other two senior Elders, Chen Yun and Li Xiannian.

According to the book, Deng and the other seven Elders participated in every important decision during the 1989 crisis. Further, all big decisions were made by the party Elders in Deng's home, and not made by the Politburo in Zhongnanhai, which is the CPC's official sanctum of power.

It was Deng's idea to label the student demonstrations "turmoil." His views were published in the People's Daily's editorial on 26 April, which sparked nationwide protests. On 18 May, the eight Elders decided to declare martial law in Beijing.

The meeting was also attended by four Politburo Standing Committee members — Li Peng, Qiao Shi, Hu Qili and Yao Yilin. By then Zhao Ziyang was on his way out and did not attend the meeting.

On 21 May, Deng and the party Elders met again to take charge, because they

felt the younger generation of leaders were unable to manage the situation. They decided to sack Zhao Ziyang and his Politburo Standing Committee ally Hu Qili.

The Elders passed over Li Peng as a successor to Zhao, vetted the names of several candidates and began to form a consensus for the Shanghai Party Secretary Jiang Zemin.

Six days later on 27 May, the eight Elders met again and decided to appoint Jiang Zemin the new general secretary. They also decided the Politburo Standing Committee would consist of six members — Jiang Zemin, Li Peng, Qiao Shi, Yao Yilin, Song Ping and Li Ruihuan.

According to the CPC's constitution, it is for the Politburo Standing Committee to appoint the party general secretary and members of the Standing Committee. Thus, the eight Elders had usurped the functions of the Standing Committee and violated the party constitution.

On 2 June, six Elders met in a fateful conclave with the three remaining members of the Politburo Standing Committee. Because the Elders felt the demonstrations had been used by actors hostile to the regime and

that continuing instability would damage economic reform, they decided to send in the People's Liberation Army to clear Tiananmen Square.

Deng then ordered Yang Shangkun to pass the decision to the Central Military Commission for execution.

As the troops entered Beijing, they encountered anger and violence. The party Elders' hopes of avoiding bloodshed foundered on the people's resistance and the PLA's emotional reactions to it. After initial clashes, the leaders decided they were confronted with a "counter-revolutionary riot" that would have to be put down by force.

In the past 12 years, every time one looks at the tragic events in 1989, one cannot help but ask: How can the Communist Party,

which boasts to have 65 million members, allow important decisions to be taken by a small handful of party Elders?

Why was there no mechanism for check and balance within the party?

Why did the people tolerate the party Elders behaving like an imperial emperor? And why does history keep repeating itself?

Last but not least, how much more agony and deaths must the Chinese endure before they can be governed by a civilised regime?

As the saying goes, the people get the government they deserve. Do the Chinese deserve the Communist Party?

(The author is a member of the pro-democracy group, *The Frontier*, in Hong Kong.)

'Danger' of rich-poor divide in China

110-17
2/2/8

BEIJING, JUNE 21. The income gap between China's rich and poor has reached dangerous levels, a senior official has admitted.

Mr. Gao Hongbin, of the State Council's poverty alleviation office, described the growing divide as "a very serious problem" and confirmed that the level of inequality had crossed a danger line recognised by economists worldwide.

Two decades of economic reforms have transformed China, ending the drab, enforced equalities and famines of Chairman Mao's era but, for many, absolute poverty has been replaced with relative poverty and that is proving hard to bear.

Crime is rising fast, though unvarnished figures are hard to come by. The cities are protected by internal migration laws, which give the police powers to round up peasants and migrant workers, fine them, and send them back to their hometowns.

Su Hainan and Xu Zhenbin, academics with the central government's Labour and Wage Research Institute, gave warning last month that "the gap between the rich and the poor will inevitably get even wider in the coming years".

The World Trade Organisation entry would make inequality worse, they wrote, as companies fight to woo well-qualified staff with high salaries.

The much-touted policy of urbanisation, under which hundreds of millions of surplus farmers will be moved into cities and new towns in a few years, would lower the cost of urban labour, widening the income gap further.



A Chinese girl carries water to irrigate a dried up field on the outskirts of Linzhou city, Henan province, China, recently. Over the past seven months, continuous drought has been plaguing northwestern and northern China, destroying a large part of this year's crops and affecting more than 23 million hectares of non-irrigated farmland in the area.

— Reuters

In the countryside, police checkpoints and roadblocks are a common sight, as officers try to crack down on theft and violent crime. Violent protests are also endemic, though rarely reported, as over-taxed farmers or laid-off workers take their grievances to the streets.

Economists measure inequality with the "Gini co-efficient", in which nought represents perfect equality, and one would mean a single individual received all available income.

Mr. Gao admitted that China's Gini co-efficient had surpassed the danger level of 0.4, but denied reports in China's own state media that it had reached 0.458.

"The highest I have learned of is 0.45," he said. "But if it is as high as 0.45, nobody would dare to go outdoors. On average, it ranges between 0.4 and 0.43. This is a very serious problem in society." The country's largest cities — the China most often seen by awe-struck foreign visitors — teem with new cars, well-stocked department stores, private restaurants and karaoke parlours.

But according to World Bank figures, there are still about 120 million Chinese living in abject poverty, defined as an income of no more than one U.S. dollar a day.

The very richest Chinese — which means those with the best connections — send their children to private schools in the West, then to Ivy League universities for MBAs. Their Mercedes, and Buicks honk and barge their way through the streets of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, protected by military number plates secured for a suitable fee.

Lower down the scale, bribery and abuse of power are rampant, allowing officials and managers to line their pockets, while such groups as teachers, factory workers and pensioners are owed months of unpaid wages and pensions. Tax evasion is near-universal. Local protectionism and state monopolies also enrich the powerful, while raising the price of goods for the less fortunate majority. — © Telegraph Group Limited, London, 2001

China's Communists worried over reforms

OLIVER AUGUST
THE TIMES, LONDON

BEIJING, June 6. - China's Communist Party has said social discontent over free market reforms can undermine its rule. The warning, coming in the week of the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, is an unusually frank admission of social tension as China prepares for the opening of its economy that will accompany WTO membership.

The China Investigation Report 2000-2001: Studies of Contradictions Within the People under New Conditions refers to forces of instability that could undermine the party, from angry farmers to laid-off workers. "Our country's entry into the WTO may bring growing dangers and pressures and it can be

HISTORIC US-CHINA LETTER AUCTIONED

NEW YORK, June 6. - A 179-year-old letter from US President James Monroe to China's emperor seeking the return of a damaged vessel pillaged on southern Chinese shores, sold for a higher-than-expected \$ 19,150, New York auction house Sotheby's said.

The 1822 letter, thought to be the first direct communication between a US President and the emperor of China, was bought by an absentee bidder yesterday for a price well above the auction house's \$ 8,000-12,000 estimate.

Aside from its historical significance, the letter was interesting for its modern parallel - Washington's request that Beijing return a damaged US spy plane held on China's Hainan Island, Sotheby's said. - Reuters

predicted that in the ensuing period the number of incidents may jump, severely harming social stability and even disturbing the smooth implementation of reform," it says.

Much to the surprise of China-

watchers, the study is on sale in bookshops. It is expected to ignite public debate over how to deal with China's capitalist transformation and the resulting unemployment.

The study, produced by a party

research group headed by Mr Zeng Qinghong, an adviser to Mr Jiang Zemin, is seen as an unofficial reply to an earlier book that criticises hardliners in the current regime for their conduct during the 1989 student protests. The Tiananmen Papers, published earlier this year, is banned on the mainland, but copies have been smuggled in from Hong Kong recently.

The government said originally that it didn't want to dignify "lies" with a response. Propaganda departments have, however, been striving to blunt the impact of the Tiananmen Papers, a collection of secret party documents from 1989. As well as the new party report on unrest, ideological treatises will be published this summer for the party's 80th birthday.

Tiananmen haunts leaders, not people

Beijing, June 4 (Reuters): Twelve years after Chinese troops mowed down student protesters around Tiananmen Square, memories of the infamous massacre have faded with the Chinese public but continue to plague China's leaders.

The anniversary passed quietly today with no hint of public protest save the vain annual appeal by relatives of the victims for an official investigation into the killings. But the ghosts of June 4, 1989, have returned to haunt the leadership this year following publication of a book claiming to document the internal debates which led to the crackdown.

And as Beijing buffs up its image for its campaign to host the

2008 Olympic Games, Chinese officials are especially anxious to bury the incident in the history books.

Last week, authorities detained six dissidents to warn them not to take part in commemorative activities, the Hong Kong-based Information Centre for Human Rights and Democracy reported. Yesterday, a foreign ministry official telephoned foreign news organisations to warn them against "illegal reporting" — which strictly speaking covers visits to Tiananmen Square and unapproved interviews.

Political comments were quickly removed from Internet chatrooms and bulletin boards today. Beijing's Olympic bid or-

ganisers, anxious to divert attention from the issue before a July vote on the host city, marked the anniversary by taking journalists on a tour of sports facilities.

The only protest in mainland China came from the mothers of demonstrators killed in the massacre.

They renewed their appeal for an investigation into the role of then Premier Li Peng, now China's parliament chief and number two in the Communist Party hierarchy. "The identity of those who bear criminal responsibility for the bloody massacre has been revealed to the public eye: their names will live forever as symbols of infamy in the annals of history," the Tiananmen Mothers said.



A girl in a rally at Tiananmen Square, Beijing. (AFP)

THE TELEGRAPH

Official China report warns of growing discontent

BY ERIK ECKHOLM
New York Times Service

Beijing, June 3: A startling new report from the Communist Party's inner sanctum describes a spreading pattern of "collective protests and group incidents" arising from economic, ethnic and religious conflicts in China and says relations between party officials and the masses are "tense, with conflicts on the rise."

The unusually frank report, produced by a top party research group and released quietly in the past week, describes mounting public anger over inequality, corruption and official aloofness. And it paints a picture of seething unrest almost as bleak as any drawn

by dissidents abroad.

The report warns that the coming years of rapid change, driven by China's planned opening of markets to foreign trade and investment, are likely to mean even greater social conflict.

It makes urgent but vague recommendations for changes to save the party and the nation through "system reforms" that can reduce public grievances.

"Our country's entry into the World Trade Organisation may bring growing dangers and pressures," the report states, "and it can be predicted that in the ensuing period the number of group incidents may jump, severely harming social stability and even disturbing the smooth implementation of

reform and opening up."

The report, "China Investigation Report 2000-2001: Studies of Contradictions Within the People Under New Conditions," was compiled by a research group of the party's department of organization, which runs key party affairs including promotions, training and discipline.

The department is headed by Zeng Qinghong, a powerful and secretive adviser to President Jiang Zemin who is widely believed to seek higher office. It appears to represent an attempt by Mr Zeng or other senior officials to set a reform-oriented agenda for party deliberations and leadership changes in the next few years.

The report, published as a book by a party

press, cites growing inequality and corruption as overarching sources of discontent. The income gap is approaching the "alarm level," it says, with disparities widening between city and countryside, between the faster-growing east coast and the interior, and within urban populations as well.

The report describes official corruption as "the main fuse exacerbating conflicts between officials and the masses."

Protests of all kinds have become more common as China pursues a wrenching change from the old state-run economy, a risky course the leadership feels is necessary to China's future growth, and as the public becomes more assertive about perceived rights.

Lei Feng hailed as jou against Falungong

China resurrects soldier of legend propaganda once again

BY ERIC ECKHOLM
New York Times Service

Beijing, June 1: Lei Feng to the rescue, once again! Ever since he was lauded by Mao Zedong himself in 1963 with the inspired call "Learn From Comrade Lei Feng!" this selfless, wise soldier, killed in an accident, has been held up as a model for the Chinese people.

Now his sturdy ghost has appeared once again, the Liberation Army Daily reported on Monday — this time in the battle to purge "heresies" of the banned Falun Gong spiritual sect from the minds of wayward citizens. Lei Feng's unparalleled concern for his fellow man, documented in an amazing diary filled with purity and good deeds, reportedly discovered after his death, has more than once been specially featured in a time of uncertainty. His steadfastness was loudly proclaimed, for example, after Army killings

of demonstrators around Tiananmen Square in 1989. And a couple of years ago, he was resurrected to help the millions of newly laid-off workers to keep upper lip stiff and chin high, and avoid causing any "social contradictions."

These days, Lei Feng's spirit has reportedly met one of the most demanding challenges yet. Over the last year, the Army newspaper said, about 500

"deeply poisoned" followers of the banned

spiritual sect were taken from their nearby "re-education through labour camp" to visit the Lei Feng Memorial Hall in Liaoning province. Guided by soldiers from Lei Feng's very own unit, these strayed citizens "increased the pace of their mental transformation and shortened the time it took to return to their families and society." As every child has been taught for the last 38 years, Lei

Feng was an orphan who was raised by his local Communist Party branch. He served nobly in the military until the fateful, rainy day in 1962 when a truck knocked over a telephone pole, which hit him on the head and killed him.

From his astounding diary and comrades' testimonials, the propaganda mavens soon announced, Lei Feng was clearly a Communist icon. He

SPOTLIGHT

was so altruistic, a typical story held, that

when a comrade was ill and needed transfusions, Lei Feng donated no less than three litres of his own blood — and then spent the entire \$7 fee he received on gifts for fellow soldiers. Once Mao gave his endorsement, Lei Feng became a fixture of party exhortations, surviving right through China's recent decades of dazzling economic and social change, even as the public became more worldly

and Lei Feng became a standing joke. "This kind of propaganda may seem ridiculous," said Wu Guoguan, a political scientist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. "But praising Lei Feng remains a way to show loyalty."

"Even as the leaders praise economic liberalisation and the Internet, the Communist Party can't change its basic nature," said Mr Wu, who in the 1980s dispensed the party line himself as an editor at *People's Daily*. "And the propaganda machine is an essential part of it."

Any doubts about the party's core were dispelled this week. A front-page editorial in *People's Daily* emphasised the need to observe the "Four Cardinal Principles." These guiding standards, propounded by Deng Xiaoping, are: adhere to the socialist road, people's democratic dictatorship, leadership of the Communist Party, Marxism-Leninism.

THE ASIAN AGE

1997

Pragmatism Pays ¹¹⁻¹⁰

China Fast Forwards to the Future

By V V RAMANAN

THE last I visited China was in 1986, in the early days of liberalisation. Now, thanks to a business assignment, I could see for myself the dramatic changes of the last decade.

As my flight touched down, I saw the same old buildings, great monoliths that I have to come to associate with Beijing. It was a different story once we entered the airport terminal. It was modern, large and spanking clean, in parts like Singapore's Changi airport. In 20 minutes I had cleared immigration and customs. Definitely more business-friendly than Indian airports. On the expressway into the city (speed limit 110 kmph) cars whizzed past, while there was barely any sign of the once ubiquitous bicycle.

The first hurdle came at the hotel. Or so I thought. The in-house services directory said I could not connect to the Internet from my hotel room. However, the friendly service representative at the plush business centre downstairs arranged for me to access the Net from my room and gave me a local number to dial. This was a facility I was to get at every hotel I stayed in China. The connections were consistently very fast indicating large bandwidth availability. A great boon to the business traveller.

Outside, a happy surprise was the brand new subway, cheap and sparkling clean. The passengers, all local Chinese, looked well-fed and clothed. There were amazing changes on the culinary front as well. On my last trip I could only eat in restaurants earmarked for tourists. Not anymore, with a range of very upscale Chinese, American and Italian restaurants to choose from. I found an Indian eatery within two blocks of the hotel, not to mention three McDonald's, one Pizza Hut, one KFC and two Starbucks and several more down-scale but seemingly very clean Chinese restaurants.

Could Beijing be an exception? The showcase city that attracted the West? I got my answer soon. My consulting assignment was with a large manufacturer of cellphones in Hangzhou, a city of about 1.7 million in South-east China. I flew the state-owned Air China. The aviation scene in China is similar to that in India, with 8 to 10 airlines, soon to consolidate into three major airlines. The other two besides Air China are 100 per cent privately owned. The quality of service on Air China is comparable to Indian Airlines. However, the flight departed and arrived exactly on time.

Hangzhou is impressive, its airport once again exceptionally clean and well organised. For a city its size, Hangzhou has excellent infrastructure: A large fleet of electric buses supplement the 5,000 taxis, all with radio communications and digital meters. There are over- and under-passes everywhere, several hundred very large new buildings and a newly built athletics stadium.

The company I am consulting with used to be 100 per cent state owned. The state has divested a majority of the shares, which now trade at the Shanghai stock market in two forms — one for domestic investors and the other exclusively for foreigners. Like India. But unlike India, the facilities at the manufacturing site of this \$1.5-billion company just took my breath away. I have been to advanced electronics manufacturing sites in the US and Singapore but I was unprepared for the scale and sophistica-

the ring volume, and spoke very softly. Incidentally, there will be over 100 million cellphones in China by end-2001 (compared with around 4 million in India).

I get the sense that the Chinese are very closely studying the successes of the Indian software industry and have every intention of surpassing India in this field. While much has been written about the growth of their hardware exports, their achievements in garnering export business in software has largely been ignored. China is hard at work neutralising India's key competitive advantage i.e. English language skills. For a year now I have been trying to convince a very large division of a US Fortune 100 company to move their offshore software development from China to India, but they are disinclined because of the high quality of work, lower cost and superior infrastructure in China.

Edward and I went sightseeing on the last day. We visited an absolutely stunning Buddha temple from the 4th century founded by an Indian monk and targeted for demolition during the Cultural Revolution. Former premier Chou En-Lai intervened to save it.

Edward was eloquent on a range of topics from the economy to unification of China and Taiwan. The latter, he was certain, would be resolved: Because the people of Taiwan now see no difference between China and Taiwan in economy, business conditions, personal freedom, and living standards. Indeed, many Taiwanese businessmen are migrating to China. Unbelievably, a business associate from Taiwan expressed similar views.

Old China shows up every now and then. The food in the cafeteria at the cellphone company was indifferently served and unappetising. The Chinese paranoia about security can suddenly throw you off balance. At the Forbidden City, the guard said a firm no to even my copy of 'China Daily'. The Chinese are not savvy about Western concerns like pollution. Beijing itself seems swathed in a brown blanket.

But for every rewind to the past, there's a fast forward to the future. China will pull out all stops for business. As Edward succinctly summed up: "You can get away with anything here as long as you have money and do not bother the government with protests and demonstrations."

(The author is a US-based business consultant and founder of a software start-up)

IN BRIEF

- Today's China is a transformed country
- The Chinese clearly believe in business first
- They are determinedly taking on the Indian lead in English and software

tion of the operation here. Their competitors apparently have better facilities.

Just when I thought nothing could go wrong, I came upon a hurdle. Language, of course. For all their efforts to go global, the Chinese grasp of the English language is very poor. The business card of one of the executives described him as "Execution Vice President", while the sign on the toilet of a train I took said, "No Occupying While Stabling". My translator Edward, a smart youngster with a degree in English language, was the only person I could communicate with directly.

At the meeting, an elaborate affair, the atmosphere was very Indian, with heavy-duty protocol and speechmaking to boot. Scenes I remember from my last trip. Some things never change, I suppose.

This time, though, everyone carried a cellphone. People placed their cellphones on the conference table as soon as they came in (much like folks did in the American Wild West, with their guns!). While I found this somewhat disconcerting, I did like their cellphone etiquette. They turned down

Arrests mark Falun rally anniversary

Beijing, April 25

26/4 China HC-11
POLICE DETAINED at least six people on Tiananmen Square today, the second anniversary of the outlawed Falun Gong sect's first large demonstration.

"Falun Gong is good!" one man shouted before uniformed and plainclothes police shoved him and two female companions into station wagon. Police then surrounded nearby groups of American and German tourists with cameras, forcing them to expose film and record over video tape. Later, a policeman grabbed another woman by her arm and pulled her into a van. At least two other women were also detained, one of them screamed as police dragged her by her hair.

Dozens of police watched thousands of Chinese and foreign tourists who gathered at China's most famous public place. Columns of plainclothes police marched into the crowds before dispersing.

Overall, the square was calm. That was in contrast to previous national holidays and significant anniversaries in the crackdown on Falun Gong, when hundreds of demonstrators forced police to shut the square.

Protests by the movement have dropped off since five purported members lit themselves on fire on January 24 at Tiananmen Square. Falun Gong organisers in the USA deny the five were members.

AP

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

25 APR 2001

SF-12 22/4

Jiang talks tough

THE CHINA DAILY
ASIA NEWS NETWORK

BEIJING, April 21. - The Chinese President, Mr Jiang Zemin has stated that China will never yield on issues relating to sovereignty, territorial integrity and national dignity.

Meeting with relatives of Wang Wei, the pilot presumed dead after his fighter jet was rammed into by US spy plane on 1 April over the South China Sea, Mr Jiang said confrontation is not what China wants, but China will not yield on matters of principle.

He added that China cherishes relations with the USA and handles Sino-US relations from a strategic point of view.



Mr Jiang Zemin

Mr Jiang, also general-secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and chairman of the Central Military Commission,

said the incident is not closed and the USA should bear responsibility for the incident.

"The USA must stop sending surveillance flights close to China's coast, and only in this way can such incident be prevented from happening again," he said.

Mrs Ruan Guoqin, wife of Wang Wei, his six-year-old son Wang Zi and his father Mr Wang Ming and his mother Wang Yueqin were present at Friday's meeting in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Mr Li Peng, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and Premier Mr Zhu Rongji, were present at the meeting there.

THE STATESMAN

22 APR 2001

Red Stars over China

Science Lessons from Supernovas

By J V NARLIKAR

ONE of the most spectacular celestial events is an exploding star, or a supernova, seen from a reasonably close but safe distance. Close, because, the nearer it is the more spectacular is its appearance. But safety is also important. For, at its peak, the exploding star outshines the whole galaxy empowered with the brilliance of over a 100 billion normal stars. And amongst the radiation issuing from it are highly energetic cosmic rays which are fast moving atomic nuclei. If the supernova were located closer than, say, 30 light years, the flux of cosmic ray particles would cause irretrievable damage to the earth's protective atmosphere, leading eventually to the extermination of all life.

Ancient Chinese records dating back to the 11th century tell us of a supernova in these words: "On a Chi-Chhou day in the fifth month of the year of Chi-Ho's reign, a guest star appeared at the south east of Thien-Kaun,... After more than a year it faded away." Thanks to the old but detailed records, today's scholars can put a date to the event. It was on July 4, 1054, that the Chinese saw a 'guest star' in the heavens, a star that was so bright that it could initially be seen in daylight. It was certainly brighter than planet Venus. As per the Chinese records, the star eventually disappeared from the sky, which explains why they gave it the appellation of 'guest'.

It is interesting to know why the Chinese kept such meticulous records. They did so because their emperors believed that warning signs would appear in the heavens if they strayed from the path of righteousness. Which is why royal courts had observers for keeping tabs on the sky. It was their duty to alert the ruler if they saw anything unusual in the sky.

That event of stellar explosion left behind a spectacular debris which, under the name of the Crab Nebula, are of interest to astronomers even today, some nine and a half centuries later. For, the location of the event, specified by the old records can be compared to the relic in the present sky viewed with modern techniques. Techniques much more sophisticated than the visual sightings of the 11th century tell us that the visual fade-out did not mean that the 'guest' went away. The debris seen today contain the remnant of explosion in the form of a pulsar, that is a

regularly pulsating extremely compact and dense star largely made of neutrons. Indeed it is generally believed that a supernova leaves behind a compact dense remnant, which can be a tiny star known as white dwarf or a more compact one called the neutron star or the even more dramatic black hole.

An interesting handle on these spectacular events has recently emerged from X-ray astronomy. Gerhard Borner and Bernd Aschenbach from Germany in collaboration with Li Quibin of China have examined the images taken by the X-ray satellite ROSAT, looking for the debris of other similar supernova explosions. In a typical star explosion, a shock wave is generated, which heats up the surrounding gas, to the extent that it can radiate even X-rays. The mechanism, though complex can be reasonably well understood by the mathematical discussion by the

star (identified with the star Antares)." Now the direction given in this record matches with the present day position of the X-ray source, as does the era of the inscription tally with the estimated age of the explosion. These scientists point out that inscriptions on tortoise shells or bones were a common practice in the Yin dynasty some 3,300 years ago.

This work holds out the possibility of understanding the long-term evolution of astronomical events by comparing old records with modern data. It is, therefore, very important to find old records in different civilisations around the earth, for the same celestial event would have been witnessed by them. In the case of the Crab Nebula, supporting evidence of the sighting of the event from other parts of the earth has indeed emerged.

Sadly, attempts to discover evidence of the event in contemporary Indian manuscripts have so far drawn a blank. In a project sponsored by the Indian National Science Academy, this author and Saroja Bhate of Pune University department of Sanskrit and Prakrit studies had searches for pertinent descriptions carried out in manuscripts from important libraries all over India. The precision with regard to chronology and location found in Chinese records can nowhere be matched. A similar lack of reference to the event in the European records where the tradition of writing and preserving information in manuscripts has been commented on by two scholars, science historian George Sarton and astrophysicist Fred Hoyle. Both have independently suggested that with the notion of a universe created once and for all by God at a specified time, there was no place in the medieval Christian belief for a new or guest star to appear. So the event was quietly ignored.

Could one argue somewhat differently for the Indian absence of records? In a largely oral tradition, ancient knowledge was passed down from generation to generation, virtually unchanged. Unlike the Chinese case, where the emperor needed the information, there was little incentive for fresh observations and even less for recording them. Astronomical observations coupled with archaeological ones can, therefore, make a significant comment on the social history of a civilisation.

IN BRIEF

- The Chinese kept meticulous records of celestial events
- Old records compared with modern data can help us understand the evolution of astronomical events
- India does not have the kind of records China has because of its largely oral tradition

plasma physicist Sedov. Using Sedov's method, the history behind the observed present state of the debris can be traced back to the epoch of explosion. Carrying out such an analysis on the X-ray images of three such supernova debris, these authors are able to estimate approximately the time elapsed since the explosions. Having worked out approximately when the explosion might have taken place, these authors then proceeded to find old Chinese records to match them.

For example, in the oldest of the three cases, the X-ray source RXJ1714-3939, the explosion is dated to have taken place about 3,000-5,000 years ago. This age estimate they were able to match with an old event recorded in 14th century BC inscriptions on tortoise shells or bones. The inscription reads: "On the Jisi day, the seventh day of the month, a big new star appeared in the company of the Huo

THE TIMES OF INDIA

21 APR 2001

New edition of *The Tiananmen Papers* dredges up details of military's actions

MATT POTTINGER
HONG KONG

NEW Chinese-language editions of *The Tiananmen Papers* sold out at Hong Kong bookstores over the weekend, foreshadowing an uphill battle for Beijing as it tries to thwart distribution and stifle a domestic debate about the book's incendiary topic: the leadership's decision to crush pro-democracy demonstrations in 1989.

Timed to coincide with the April 15 launch of the student-led protests 12 years ago, the release of the Chinese edition has apparently raised alarms in Beijing, where current leaders, including President Jiang Zemin and head of parliament Li Peng, are targets of its allegations.

Like the English edition that preceded it, the two-volume set purports to reveal official day-by-day transcripts of the leadership's debates over how to cope with the seven weeks of protests that culminated in bloodshed in Tiananmen Square in the capital on June 4, 1989.

The documents were compiled and brought to light by someone claiming to be a Communist Party official, but whose identity has been kept secret. Two respected American Sinologists worked with him and edited the book.

The book, which Beijing has branded a

"fabrication" is banned in the mainland, and three pro-Beijing bookstores in Hong Kong have refused to carry copies. But sales were brisk at independent bookshops in the Chinese territory, which still guarantees free speech rights established when it was a British colony.

What is more, many people who purchased the book said they intended to deliver copies to friends and relatives in the mainland — just one of the challenges Beijing faces to keep the book from rekindling a debate on the military's quelling of the demonstrations.

Ho Pin, head of New York-based Mirror Books Inc. and the publisher of the book, said the original run of 10,000 copies has already sold out and that he expects to sell an additional 20,000 sets by the end of April. "Most of these books will end up in mainland China," he said, surmising that visiting Hong Kong residents and returning mainland Chinese would bring copies back as gifts.

The scene at stores selling the Chinese edition — which goes by the title *June Fourth: The True Story* — seemed to support his prediction. At one street corner, several people who thronged round a table where the book was on display snapped up several sets at a time.

"I bought one set for myself, and two sets for my friends in the mainland," said Wong Kai-hon, a Hong Kong electrical equipment

dealer who travels frequently to China. A customs official in Guangdong province across the border from Hong Kong said she was unaware of special penalties associated with bringing the book into China, but said carrying "subversive" publications into the mainland could lead to a prison sentence.

The documents in the books portray a leadership divided over whether to use force against the students. Legislative chairman Li, then China's premier, is depicted in a negative light; he was a staunch supporter of a tough line

against the students from the start. Jiang is shown coming to power based on an unconstitutional vote by party elders.

The US editors, Andrew Nathan and Perry Link, say the Chinese version will dispel doubts about the authenticity of the documents.

For starters, it will supplant poorly pirated versions that are based on translations from the English edition. It also contains three times more information than the English version, much of it descriptions of simultaneous pro-democracy demonstrations in other Chinese cities.

But China's leadership is more concerned that the book's release will rekindle discussions nationwide of the June 4 crackdown, a subject it has sought to bury.

In the past several years, other politically sensitive books have managed to weave themselves into popular perceptions of China's recent history.

One such book was the wildly popular Chinese version of *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*, a memoir of the Communist leader written by his personal physician.

Despite being officially banned, copies of the book were pirated in Inner Mongolia and other remote areas of China, gradually making their way to bookshelves in college dormitories and homes across the country. The book's depictions of Mao as vengeful and insatiably promiscuous, now stand for

common knowledge in China.

Meanwhile, there is growing evidence that suggests Beijing has gone out of its way to contain potential fallout from the release of the Chinese edition of *Tiananmen Papers*. Since the English version's release in January, some Chinese officials have said they were required to watch a four-hour government-produced documentary on the 1989 demonstrations and read an accompanying essay linking the events to Western efforts to destabilize China.

"The leadership says the book is false, but we sure felt reverberations after its release," a mid-ranking People's Liberation Army officer who saw the documentary said by telephone. Officers were required to mouth the party line on the events of June 4.

Chinese security forces have also inexplicably stepped up detentions of Chinese scholars who have spent time overseas. While there is little evidence to suggest a direct connection with the book's publication, many China watchers believe it reflects Beijing's sense that forces are conspiring to undermine its leadership.

Ho, the publisher, says that while it may take months, he is confident the book will burrow its way into the mainland. "We think it'll be the best-selling Chinese-language book since *The Private Life of Chairman Mao*."

(From *The Wall Street Journal*)



When students took over the Tiananmen square

The documents in the books portray a leadership divided over whether to use force against students

INDIAN EXPRESS
18 APR 2001

China blast suspect gets death term

19 1-3
Beijing, April 18 (Reuters): The man who confessed to setting a series of dormitory blasts which killed 108 people in northern China last month, was sentenced to death today, Xinhua news agency reported.

Three other people arrested for providing Jin Ruchao with the explosives and detonators used in the blasts were also condemned to death in the case, which highlighted lax controls on explosive materials in China despite repeated government crackdowns.

"Jin Ruchao, who bought all the explosives and ignited them on March 16, confessed to all the crimes charged against him," the agency quoted a court in the northern industrial city of Shijiazhuang as saying.

The brief Xinhua report did not say whether Jin would appeal against the conviction, which was seen in China as a foregone conclusion after state media highlighted his confession upon his arrest.

The trial, which began yesterday in Shijiazhuang intermediate people's court, was attended by relatives of the victims, Xinhua said. Jin, who is reported to be deaf, was arrested in the southern beach resort of Beihai on March 23 after a nationwide manhunt in which a record bounty of 150,000 yuan (\$18,000) was placed on his head.

THE TELEGRAPH

17 APR 2001

'China preparing for n-test'

By Sridhar Krishnaswami

WASHINGTON, APRIL 9. China is getting ready to conduct a small underground nuclear test, *The Washington Times* has said. The preparations were apparently noticed some two weeks ago at the Lop Nor testing facility, and the American spy plane, now stranded on the tarmac in Hainan Island with a crew of 24, was gathering electronic intelligence related to the impending test.

The report quotes two versions of what the Chinese could be up to. One intelligence official has said Beijing may be in for yet another round of "sub-critical" tests, while other intelligence officials familiar with the goings-on say the Chinese have covert programmes that rely on low-yield tests.

Although China became a signatory to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1996, Washington has never been comfortable with its testing programme. Intelligence agencies have concluded that China has purchased special nuclear containment equipment from Russia to "mask" the seismic fallout of a nuclear blast.

The test preparations have been going on even before the latest flap in U.S.-China relations has come about; but *The Times*, based on officials' estimate, says that there is a connection between the test and the harassment of American intelligence. Further, unnamed officials have said a nuclear test during the current standoff will signal China's growing nuclear power.

One assessment is that the Chinese President, Mr. Jiang Zemin, being a moderate, will not allow the nuclear testing to proceed during the current period in bilateral relations. At the same time it is surmised that if the test did occur, it will show that Mr. Jiang is not in full control. The U.S. has small "sniffer" planes that can apparently detect any nuclear particles after a test.

The preparations for an underground test have been picked up by spy satellites as well. But the

EP-3E Aries II plane is capable of picking up communications even thousands of miles interior, and signals from Lop Nor.

China wants anti-dumping talks

By Our Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, APRIL 9. China today warned that Indian anti-dumping action against imports had affected bilateral trade and suggested consultations before any such action is taken. The Chinese Ambassador, Mr. Zhou Gang, has proposed that India should register objections on imports of Chinese goods initially and follow it by consultations before launching any anti-dumping proceedings.

Addressing a meeting organised by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), he stressed that Chinese enterprises and products have met with unfair treatment in India with the authorities frequently taking action by carrying out anti-dumping investigations into commodities of Chinese origin.

He insisted that the anti-dumping action had not only affected bilateral trade but had to some degree, impeded further development of Sino-India economic and trade cooperation. He felt problems in bilateral trade should be resolved through consultations and exchanges.

Mr. Gang pointed out that the current trade volume of \$2.91 billions between the two countries was far below the potential as India was the largest trading partner of China in South Asia. The bilateral trade between India and China touched \$1.98 billions in 1999 as against \$265 millions in 1991.

Regarding the potential of bilateral trade, the FIEO president, Mr. K.K. Jain, said it could touch as much as \$10 billions in the next four years.

THE HINDU

10 APR 2001

Details of China's killer blasts out

REUTERS

BEIJING, March 27. - The man arrested for a string of explosions that killed 108 people in the Chinese city of Shijiazhuang has detailed how he single-handedly coordinated the almost simultaneous blasts, the *People's Daily* said today.

Jin Ruchao placed explosives in bags marked 'chicken feed' in four workers' dormitories around the city in the early hours of 16 March and rushed between his targets by taxi to detonate the blasts personally, the newspaper said.

Official reports say Jin acted alone and was driven by personal grudges against people connected to the four dormitories but many local residents say they doubt that one man, said to be deaf, could have masterminded the blasts.

US-BASED SCHOLAR ACCUSED OF SPYING

BEIJING, March 27. - China today levelled accusations of spying against a detained US-based Chinese scholar at the centre of a diplomatic row between Washington and Beijing.

"Evidence has shown that Gao Zhan accepted missions from overseas Intelligence agencies and took funds for spying activities," a foreign ministry spokesman said.

He gave no further details, saying only his information came from "relevant authorities". - Reuters

Jin told police he bought ten bags of explosives made of ammonium nitrate for 950 yuan (\$115) from an illegal explosives factory outside Shijiazhuang.

Jin, a convicted rapist, was picked up in the southern beach resort of Beihai on Friday after a nationwide manhunt in which a bounty of 150,000 yuan was put on his head.

China has released details of the police investigation with

unusual speed, reflecting the need to ease public fears that the blasts were linked to deep-seated social problems, including high unemployment, corruption and gangs.

Jin had purchased fuses and detonators from a miner near Shijiazhuang last year and hidden them under a pipe in a city suburb, the newspaper said.

The day before the blasts he hired several vehicles and drivers to help transport the bags of

explosives. He placed six bags around a dormitory complex at the number three cotton mill.

Xinhua has said Jin (40), once lived in one of the mill's dormitory blocks and quarrelled with a neighbouring family. He had threatened several times to kill the family by blowing up the building.

After sleeping for a few hours in a heating pipe at a power station on the night of 15 March, Jin returned to the mill to make final preparations for the blasts.

The first of explosions flattened a five-storey dormitory housing 48 families.

The official death toll is 108, with 38 injured, but unofficial estimates go much higher.

Other damaged blocks housed Jin's stepmother, his ex-wife and her husband and her parents.

THE STATESMAN

23 MAR 2001

Chinese blast suspect driven by hatred

■ Suspect had a fascination for dynamite ■ Reflection of the deep-rooted malaise in Chinese society

REUTERS

BEIJING, MARCH 25

THE captured suspect behind a string of explosions that killed 108 people in the Chinese city of Shijiazhuang acted alone and was driven by personal hatreds, *Xinhua* news agency reported on Sunday.

Each of the four dormitories blown up by Jin Ruchao was connected to people he held grudges against, including his ex-wife, step-mother, sister and former neighbours, *Xinhua* reported, quoting police interrogators in the northern city. A week before the blasts on March 16 he travelled to the southern province of Yunnan and killed a former live-in lover who had stolen 600 yuan (\$72.50) from him, *Xinhua* said.

Jin's sister told police he had a long fascination with dynamite and taught himself how to make it at home, the official news agency said.

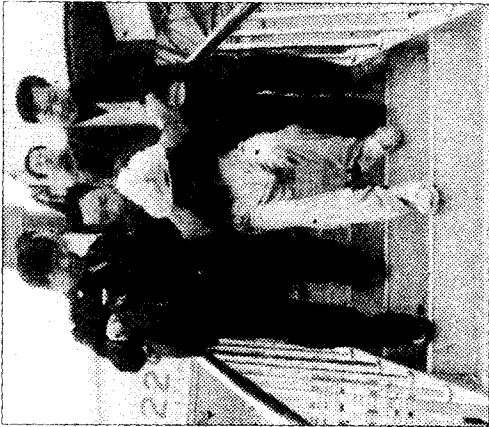
The convicted rapist, said to be deaf, was picked up in the southern beach resort of Beihai last Friday after a nationwide man-hunt in which a bounty of 150,000 yuan was put on his head.

The speed with which police have released details of their investigation appears to indicate a desire by authorities to lay to rest a widespread belief that the blasts were somehow linked to deep-seated problems in Chinese society, including high unemployment, corruption and gangs.

Many residents of Shijiazhuang, a depressed centre of China's cotton manufacturing industry, doubt one person could have planned and executed a series of coordinated explosions that went off within an hour of each other just before dawn.

Rumours have been swirling around the city that laid-off workers were to blame.

Others suspect the blasts were linked to feuding between gangsters and city officials over the corrupt spoils from state enterprises



Jin Ruchao, a suspect in the Shijiazhuang explosions that killed 108 people, is escorted down a flight of stairs on Saturday in Beihai for transport to Beijing — AP/PTI

being sold off amid industrial restructuring.

Judging from what Jin has confessed and the evidence the police collected at the venue of the crime, the conclusion can be drawn that Jin Ruchao is totally responsible for the fatal explosions, *Xinhua* quoted police as saying. The official death toll is 108, with 38 injured, but unofficial estimates go much higher. *Xinhua* said Jin, 41, once lived in a five-storey dormitory, flattened in the blasts and feuded with a neighbouring family. He had threatened several times to kill the family by blowing up the building owned by the Number 3 cotton mill.

Other damaged blocks housed Jin's step-mother, his ex-wife and her husband and the parents of his ex-wife, *Xinhua* said.

An apartment in a two-storey block had been previously owned by Jin's mother, but was sold by Jin's sister, *Xinhua* said. Jin was unhappy because he had only received 10,000 yuan from the proceeds, the agency said.

China bans officials' kin from business

Beijing, March 21

CHINA HAS banned spouses and children of Government officials from a range of businesses — from property development and consultancy to saunas and karaoke bars, in a bid to quash corruption.

“Those already in these businesses should either quit or their parents resign as leading officials, or face punishment by the department concerned,” the People’s Daily, the Communist Party newspaper, said on Wednesday.

The rules ban officials’ spouses and children from property development and management, working as commercial agents or consultants, and acting as lawyers in areas under their spouse or parent’s jurisdiction, the People’s Daily said. “They are not allowed to run entertainment businesses like karaoke bars, dancing halls, night clubs, bath houses and saunas, and other businesses that may cause conflicts with public interests,” it said. According to Hu Angang, director of the Centre for Chinese Studies of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, between 1995 to 1999 China suffered economic losses to the tune of 1.27 trillion Yuan (\$153 billion), around 17 per cent of the average gross domestic product, during the period.

Lawmakers signalled their anger at official corruption last week, when more than 30 per cent withheld support for reports by the Supreme Court and the chief prosecutor at the annual session of Parliament, the National People’s Congress. The law enforcers vowed to work harder in 2001 to wipe out rising organised crime and corruption that Beijing fears is eroding Communist Party rule.

China executed scores of Government officials, including a former NPC vice chairman, for corruption last year.

Further executions are expected from a multi-billion dollar smuggling scandal based in the Eastern city of Xiamen — the biggest corruption case under Communist rule — and investigations into huge tax fraud in southern China. The edict from the party’s Central Commission for Discipline Inspection turns up the heat in a campaign against institutional corruption, which siphons off billions of dollars every year and is undermining faith in the Government.

Relatives of Government officials in China often use their influence to either arrange business deals in exchange for kick-backs or open businesses which profit from Government contracts.

Reuters

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

22 MAR 2001

WHEEL OF ENERGY

Killing Spiritualism By Force In China

By R BRAHMACHARI

ACCORDING to China's official news agency Xinhua, on 23 January this year, five members of the banned Falun Gong (FG) set fire to themselves at the Tiananmen Square in Beijing. On that day, at about 2.40 pm, four women and a man soaked themselves in gasoline and set themselves on fire. One of the women succumbed to the injuries while the rest were taken to a hospital by the police. All this was meant to protest against the brutality the Communist government of China has unleashed against them.

Ten days earlier, about 20,000 FG followers gathered at Victoria Park in Hong Kong and staged a peaceful sit-in. They also held a meeting at Hong Kong's city hall and demanded lifting of the ban. Though FG spiritual exercises are banned in the mainland, it has not been declared illegal in Hong Kong.

But the incident of 13 January displeased the mainland regime. Secret instructions were sent to the pro-Beijing forces in Hong Kong to launch a campaign against FG and to adopt indirect measures to suppress the movement.

FALUN BELIEF

So in the third week of January, while addressing the Legislative Council of Hong Kong, Mr Tung Chee-hwa, chief executive of Hong Kong, echoed Beijing's assertion and said that FG is basically an evil cult. On the other hand, Mr Anson Chan, Hong Kong's seniormost civil servant, had to resign as he refused to obey the mainland instruction and denounce FG publicly. In fact, many of Hong Kong's top officials are sympathetic to FG and carry *Zhuan Falun*, the FG bible, in their briefcases.

As a doctrine, Marxism is materialistic and strictly atheist. Hence there is no scope in it for spiritualism in any form. During the days of socialisation of agriculture through collective farming in Russia in the 1930s, Stalin had declared that, along with the sense of private property, the notion of God and religious belief were to be wrung out from farmers like water from wet clothes.

To carry out the task he created a regiment of 20,000 trained urban workers, popularly known as "twenty thousands" and sent these loyal workers to villages across Russia. *Virgin Soil Uplifted* by Mikhail Sholokhov narrates how they prevented the farmers, through coercion and torture, from attending churches.

They also picked up farmers reluctant to adopt collective farming; they were subsequently branded as anti-revolutionaries and enemies of socialism. It is now well known that millions of those unfortunate farmers were then transferred to concentration camps, called Gulags, in Siberia where they were butchered. But Stalin could not wipe out spiritualism from the hearts of the people. As soon as Communism collapsed, people,

freed from the clutches of dictatorship, revived their churches and started attending services.

One cannot stop people asking perennial questions like, "Who am I? From where have I come here and where shall I go after death?" and so on. Marxism forbids, along with freedom of speech and other vital human rights, spiritual freedom as well.

Approval of these freedoms

females and unemployed youths. FG disapproves of habits like smoking and drinking. Through FG exercises its followers could find an escape from Communist jargon and the crass materialism of today's China.

The rise of FG in China has been dramatic. Within the past five years the number of its followers has grown at a fantastic rate, from two million to nearly 100 million. A Beijing-based academic, Mr Sin Ming says

that, beneath China's impressive economic growth lies a deeply troubled, aimless and frustrated society. As a doctrine, Marxism is entirely foreign to China and Mr Sin is convinced that the implementation of that European creed in China has damaged its age-old values. "In the 50 years of Communist rule, nearly every Chinese value has been savagely trampled on. Today nobody knows what is precious in life except money", adds Mr

Sin. In such a situation of moral vacuum the forceful but simple message of FG provided an opportunity for the Chinese to fulfil their spiritual as well as psychic needs. "Thus FG is trying to revive the traditional Chinese spiritual and moral values crushed by Communism and as a result, people are gathering under its banner in thousands", says Mr Sin.

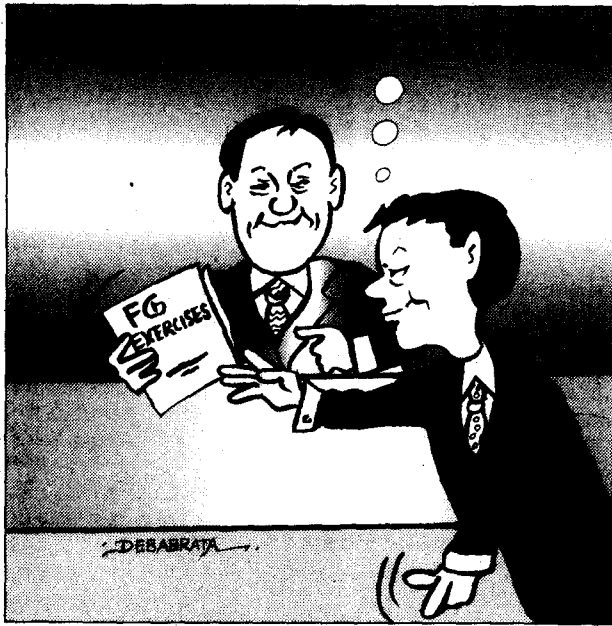
REPRESSION

Communist leaders of China have the means to suppress any movement they apprehend as a threat. So disparaging remarks started coming out from the government-controlled press and the leaders began to paint FG as an anti-Communist conspiracy. An investigation was immediately ordered. Meanwhile security guard infiltrated FG's operating mechanism and secretly videotaped its exercise sessions.

At last on 25 July 1999, the government banned the movement on the allegation that it is a pseudo-science like witchcraft. The government also banned traditional QG exercises and nearly two million books and instruction tapes were seized and burnt. Li was declared a criminal and the government sought the assistance of Interpol to get him arrested.

Nearly 1,200 key members were sent in captivity to a northern city and police started stopping common people in the streets for interrogation and searching their bags for FG texts.

But despite all such efforts the government has so far failed to discover a political conspiracy or a plot to overthrow the present government in FG. According to the New York based Falun Gong Research Society, 120 FG leaders have so far been killed in police custody, several thousands are missing and several hundred thousands are serving jail terms in cities across China. But though the crackdown has scared everyone in China and followers of FG no longer dare to perform their exercises in public parks, it remains to be seen whether the movement can be killed by brute force.



would jeopardise the doctrine itself, ultimately leading to its collapse. And that is the reason why the Communist government of China is relentlessly attacking the Buddhists and their faith in Tibet, has gunned down thousands of students demanding freedom at the Tiananmen Square in June 1989, and very recently, on 22 July 1999, banned the FG spiritual exercises.

The words Falun-Gong literally mean the "law of the wheel of breathing exercises". In fact, it is an improved version of the traditional Chinese breathing exercise *Qui Gong* (QG) and the improvements have been carried out by the 50 year old guru of the movement Mr Li Hongzhi, who left China in 1994 and is now staying in New York.

He has also written many books on FG exercises and claims that his system is a more powerful healer of a wounded soul than QG. The basis of both FG and QG lies in the belief that there is a wheel of energy in the lower abdomen of every human being and it remains in a dormant state. Some special exercises stimulate that wheel to rotate leading to a manifestation of that spiritual energy in his daily life giving him courage and peace of mind.

MORAL VACUUM

One may notice the striking similarity between this concept and the Indian concept of *kundalini* which believes that the dormant *kundalini* can be stimulated with the help of some yogic exercises like *dhyana*, *pranayama* and so on. The traditional Chinese exercises called *Qui Gong* may be of Indian origin and later on the Buddhist monks, like Kung Fu and other martial art forms, took it to China. The belief gains ground when Mr Li confesses that his teachings are based on the Buddhist concept of *karma* and compassion with the final goal of attaining enlightenment (*bodhi*) and divine bliss (*ananda*).

Before the ban, the followers used to assemble every morning under the red-yellow banner of FG in parks. They were mainly middle aged males and

The author is a Reader in the Department of Applied Physics, Calcutta University.

Falun Gong exhibition

HONG KONG, March 17. — A three-day exhibition aimed at portraying the Falun Gong movement as an evil cult, opened today in Hong Kong.

The movement is legal here but outlawed in mainland China.

More than 200 pictures and photographs have been displayed alongside some of the world's deadliest cults, such as Japan's Doomsday, Aum Shinri Kyo. The exhibition is being organised by pro-Beijing groups.

"We hope Hong Kong citizens, through this exhibition, can increase their understanding of cults. This can help maintain Hong Kong's stability," Mr Jiang Enzhu, head of China's Liaison Office in Hong Kong, said.

Falun Gong claims to have millions of followers in China and has shocked the Communist Party by its persistence to organise mass protests despite a nationwide crackdown.

A Falun Gong practitioner inside the exhibition hall showed a booklet containing pictures of fellow adherents being tortured. Security guards swiftly asked her to leave. "Look at these pictures, [mean] these people are tortured to death, to such an extent that it is really horrible," Fiona Ching said. — Reuters



Visitors watch a video of a Falun Gong member burning himself in China recently, at the anti-cult exhibition in Hong Kong City on Saturday. AP/PTI

THE STATESMAN

18 MAR 2001

59-12 China blast suspect named 183

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SHIJIAZHUNAG, March 17.

— Chinese police today named a deaf murderer as the chief suspect behind the four huge explosions in the northern Chinese city of Shijiazhuang which hospital sources said killed at least 110 people.

A police spokesman in the city said 41-year-old Jin Ruchao, on run for the murder of his girlfriend, was being sought in connection with yesterday's explosions around a complex of cotton factories.

However, some workers at the state-owned factories targeted by the blasts said they believed disgruntled workers carried out the coordinated attacks because of fears over mass lay-offs.

The *Legal Daily* and the *China Police Daily* carried black

and white photos today of Jin along with details of an arrest warrant and a \$6,000 dollars reward.

Jin is wanted for the 9 March killing of his girlfriend Wei Zhihua in Maguan county, in the southern province of Yunnan, said the warrant.

The suspected bomber had two rooms in the 15th and 16th dormitories of Shijiazhuang No 3 cotton factory's residential area where one of the major blasts occurred, the papers said.

Sun Wanglin, a police officer in Manguan county near the Cietnamese border, said Jin killed his lover after she refused to return home with him to Shijiazhuang.

A toll compiled after contacting nine hospitals in Shijiazhuang today showed 110 people dead. However, the city's No 3 hospital, where most of the victims are believed to have been taken, refused to comment.

Xinhua has put the toll at 18, which hasn't been updated for more than 24 hours. Residents in the city said as many as 200 people died in the blasts. The explosions occurred yesterday in the capital of Hebei province, the China News Service reported.

THE STATE

All aboard! China plans railroad to Tibet

JEREMY PAGE
GOLMUD, CHINA

FROM the edge of this desert outpost in China's far West a single railway track shoots in a straight line to a spot where the flatland meets a row of snow-capped peaks. And then it stops.

Ahead is Tibet, the Roof of the World, a land so remote and inhospitable it is the only part of China where the rail network dies.

Yet, under plans just approved by the National People's Congress, or parliament, Chinese railway engineers are set to attempt one of the greatest construction feats of all time, extending the track from Golmud in Qinghai province all the way to Lhasa 1,100 km away.

Cutting across the Tibetan plateau at altitudes of 13,000 feet, the railway will be the world's highest. And, the most controversial.

Tibetan activists overseas see it as a ploy to tighten Beijing's grip on the region its troops occupied in 1950. When it is finished in 2007, it will be the first year-round land route into Tibet, and will bring a new torrent of Han Chinese settlement and investment.

Already, sleepers are piling up in its rail yard, and trains that rattle into the station are jammed with migrant workers. "It's not going to be easy," admitted Tang Lizhi. "The terrain is harsh, the air is thin and the Tibetans don't like us, but the money should be good."

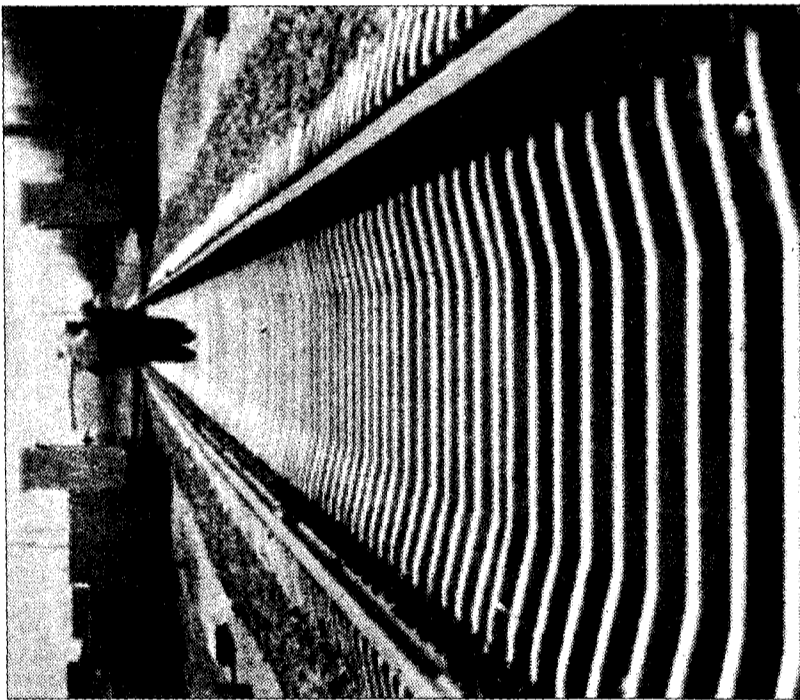
The \$2.5 billion railroad is a key part of a drive to bring jobs and investment to China's impoverished West, and was one of five major projects tabled at the annual session of parliament.

China says the railway will provide an economic lifeline to Tibet, where per capita income is only half the national average despite more than 50 years of Chinese rule.

With little agriculture or industry, the tiny Tibetan economy relies almost entirely on supplies brought in from Golmud. Every day, trucks piled with everything from cement and tyres to washing powder and noodles set out on a two-day journey along the treacherous road.

Military convoys have to snake their way over 5,000-metre passes to supply the garrison which patrols China's border with India and enforces Beijing's rule in Tibet.

The railway will make that jour-



The railway track in Golmud in Qinghai province, China. Reuters

ney safer, faster and much cheaper. "The railway is of strategic significance and will have an impact in political, economic and military terms," said Vice-Minister of Railways Sun Yongfu.

Vice-President Hu Jintao told Tibetan lawmakers last week development was key to stability in the restive region. "Speeding up Tibet's development has a very important significance for improving the living conditions of people of all ethnic groups in Tibet and for strengthening national solidarity and safeguarding the unification of the motherland," said Hu, a former Communist Party Chief in Lhasa.

But activists say the railway is the next step in the economic colonisation of the region. "We feel this will bring in more Chinese settlers to Tibet and alter the demographic composition in favour of the Chinese," said Thubten Samphel, a spokesman for the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamsala.

The project would "increase the economic exploitation of Tibet's untapped mineral resources by Beijing," Samphel said.

There are also widespread concerns about the environmental im-

pact on the fragile ecosystem of a region that is the source of two of China's major waterways — the Yangtze and Yellow rivers.

Chinese officials have promised to relay turf alongside the railroad and build culverts under the tracks to let animals pass. "We'll try to protect natural resources, though it may slow down construction," Sun said. Eventually, the railway will extend to Tibet's second city of Shigatse and China's southwestern province of Yunnan.

Before construction starts in July, Chinese experts are examining railways built on frozen soil in Russia and Canada. In Golmud, new shops, restaurants and hotels have sprung up to cater for an influx of engineers, officials and labourers with money jangling in their pockets.

Tang hopes to earn 400 yuan a month on the railroad — more than he would make in a year in his village. He has joined 400 other workers living in a ramshackle collection of houses on the outskirts of Golmud. They are hiring themselves out as a work team through a local agent, and are ready for a long haul.

"Next stop Lhasa," Tang joked. (REUTERS)

INDIAN EXPRESS

17 MAR 2007

China lawmakers vent anger on graft, budget

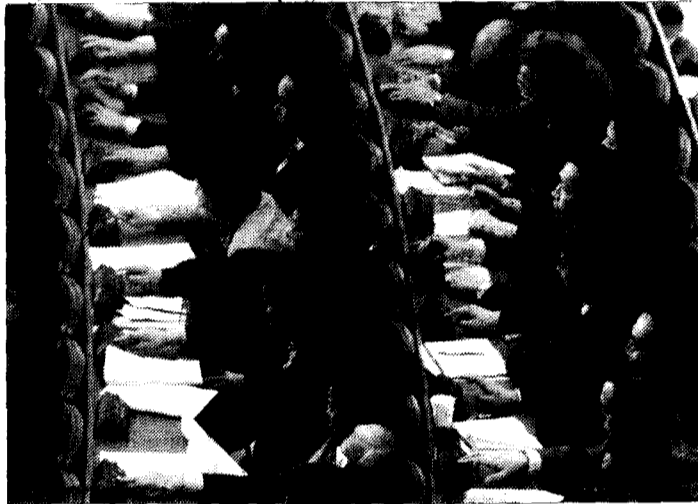
REUTERS

BEIJING, March 15. — Chinese lawmakers today signalled growing anger at rampant official corruption by giving work reports by the Supreme Court and the chief prosecutor a tough passage through the annual session of Parliament.

Delegates voting on the last day of the National People's Congress also showed reservations about state spending plans, with more than 20 per cent withholding support for a 2001 budget that promises a 17.7 per cent hike in defence expenditure.

More than 30 per cent voted against or abstained in polls on reports by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate, which vowed last week to wipe out official graft, organised crime and the Falun Gong in 2001.

China's Parliament has never rejected a Communist Party proposal, although secret voting has emboldened dele-



Delegates push buttons to vote during the final session of the National People's Congress in Beijing on Thursday. — AP/PTI

gates who are anxious to send powerful signals to the government and party.

The votes in this year's two-week NPC session showed an increase in dissent over last year, when 29 per cent of delegates voted against or abstained from voting on the

two documents.

This year, 530 delegates voted against the Supreme Court's report, while 337 either abstained or did not vote and 1,953 backed it. The prosecutor's report got the thumbs-down from 584 with 346 not voting or abstaining.

THE CHINA PRESS

10 MAR 2001

55-12
11/3
China

China vows to wipe out graft, Falun Gong

REUTERS

BEIJING, March 10. - China's lawmakers have pledged to wipe out corruption, which it fears is undermining the Communist party rule, rising organised crime and the Falun Gong movement.

China's top prosecutor and the Supreme Court chief today highlighted the fight against bribe-taking, abuses of power and neglect of duty in reports to Parliament.

"The crime of bribery corrodes our cadre ranks, shatters the mood of society and undermines fair competition

and should be punished according to law," Supreme People's Procuratorate president, Mr Han Zhubin told the NPC. He said bribery cases shot up by 28 per cent last year while cases of officials abetting counterfeiting, smuggling, tax evasion and other crimes rose by 45 per cent.

Mr Zhubin cited a case made public last year, believed to be biggest corruption scandal since the Communist party took power in 1949. Probes into a scandal in Fujian province, involving the smuggling of luxury goods, oil and raw materials worth \$ 6 billion,

were completed, he said.

Mr Zhubin and Supreme People's Court president Mr Xiao Yang highlighted the trial of former deputy national police chief Li Jizhou for taking bribes from Fujian smugglers. China has already executed seven of 18 officials sentenced to death in the case. Mr Yang said China's courts tried 847 smuggling cases in 2000, an increase of 122 per cent over 1999. Mr Li Peng yesterday warned the Assembly: "If we fail to do a good job of fighting corruption and building a clean government, we'll risk the future."

THE STATESMAN

11 MAR 2001

Zhu presents cautious blueprint for economy

FROM PAUL ECKERT

Beijing, March 5 (Reuters): With major leadership changes coming up next year, Premier Zhu Rongji set out a cautious blueprint for China for the next five years today, balancing economic reform with concerns for social stability.

In an opening address to the annual two-week session of parliament, Zhu set a comparatively modest economic growth target of around seven per cent a year for the 2001-2005 period.

That compares with blistering growth averaging 8.3 per cent over the past five years. Zhu focussed on many of the destabilising side-effects of breakneck development, warning of rising joblessness, unpaid pensions, corruption and environmental ruin.

He also took aim at the Falun Gong, lumping the banned spiritual movement with terrorists, ethnic separatists and religious extremism as threats to order and security. Behind the caution of Zhu's broad-brush speech was next year's pivotal 16th Commu-

nist Party congress, when five of the seven members of the all-powerful politburo are set to step down.

"In the lead up to next year's party congress, the idea is: 'Let's maintain unity, otherwise we could lose the plot,'" said a Western diplomat. "It's about not rocking the boat this time," he added.

Said a second foreign diplomat: "If they come up with anything too adventurous now, they'll need to show concrete results before the congress."

Zhu promised continued state spending to bolster economic growth, a cleaner environment and close attention to improving the quality of growth and addressing social security issues. "Arduous efforts have to be made to attain this target through better economic performance," he said. For the short term, China would continue heavy state infrastructure spending and try to spur consumption, Zhu said.

Zhu's 90-minute address acknowledged the limits of state planning in a society which has

changed radically since it began market economic reforms 20 years ago.

The five-year plan "contains fewer specific targets and sets more tentative ones adjustable to structural changes", he said. Underscoring Beijing's risky embrace of a strong catalyst for change, he said: "We must lose no time in preparing for China's entry into the World Trade Organisation".

And he broke new ground with a "green" five-year plan stressing the need to clear choking air pollution, clean up foul rivers and lakes and pursue sustainable development.

Zhu reiterated China's hard line against the outlawed Falun Gong spiritual movement and the government's blunt rejection of international concern over religious and civil rights violations committed under state efforts to eradicate the sect. Falun Gong was a "cult which has become a tool for domestic and overseas forces hostile to our socialist government", Zhu said.

THE TELEGRAPH

MAR 2001

Chinese PM mum on Falun Gong role in HK

Beijing, March 5

CHINESE PREMIER Zhu Rongji lashed out hard at the outlawed Falun Gong spiritual movement on Monday but avoided criticism of the group's role in Hong Kong, which would have fuelled anxiety there.

Falun Gong is legal in Hong Kong, and the territory had been watching to see if Zhu's speech would add to concerns about Beijing's commitment to its promise of a high degree of autonomy to the former British colony.

Senior Chinese officials accused the Falun Gong last month of using Hong Kong as a platform to "point its spears" at China's ruling Communist Party, the most recent cause for alarm.

Analysts said any such criticism from Zhu would have stoked fears of an erosion of the autonomy Hong Kong was promised under the "one country, two systems" deal that returned the territory to Chinese sovereignty in 1997. Its conspicuous absence triggered a sigh of relief.

"That says Beijing is letting the Hong Kong government take care of its own problems," said

Allen Lee, a Hong Kong delegate to the National People's Congress (NPC), China's parliament.

Political scientist Sonny Lo of Hong Kong University said: "It gives the impression that the central government is avoiding interfering in Hong Kong affairs."

In a speech opening the annual two-week session of the NPC, Zhu reiterated Beijing's hard line against Falun Gong, which he called a "cult, which has become a tool for domestic and overseas forces hostile to our socialist government". "We need to mete out severe punishment to the small number of criminals while making unremitting efforts to unite, educate and rescue the vast majority of people who have been taken in," he said of the movement China banned in July 1999.

He lumped Falun Gong together with terrorists, ethnic separatists and religious extremism as "criminal activities that pose a threat to social order and national security". By avoiding the issue, Beijing was telling the world it would keep its promise of giving Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy.

Reuters

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

MAR 2001

China frees dissident as it bids for Olympics

REUTERS

HONG KONG, March 4. - China has freed a leader of the 1989 Tiananmen democracy movement six months before the end of his stated sentence in a move that might be related to Beijing's bid to host the Olympic games in 2008, a Hong Kong human rights group said today.

Mr Guo Haifeng was released on 5 February from a prison in the central province of Henan, the Information Centre for Human Rights & Democracy said in a statement.

His term was to end in August. "As he is a prominent dissident

of international concern, his release may be related to the Olympics bid," the Centre said. China has faced criticism for human rights as its bids to be the venue of the 2008 Olympics.

Activists have urged the International Olympic Committee, which will decide later this year where the games are going to be held, to push for political reform in China and improve human rights.

Mr Haifeng received a five-year jail sentence in August, 1996 for "hooliganism" when he tried to promote democracy in a university, the group said, adding the charge was "made-up."

It was the dissident's second incarceration.

The centre said he had been released early from his first sentence in 1993 at a time when China was bidding to hold the 2000 Olympics, which were eventually held in Sydney.

Mr Haifeng had been sentenced to four years jail after Beijing cracked down on the student-led protests in and around Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Meanwhile, Harvard University has accepted US-based Chinese dissident Mr Wang Dan, another student leader in the 1989 movement, as doctorate-degree student to read history.

THE STATESMAN

5 MAR 2001

The Statesman

Incorporating and directly descended from
THE FRIEND OF INDIA — Founded 1818
Printed from Kolkata, New Delhi and Siliguri

14 FEBRUARY 2001

Vol. CXXXV 38

TWISTED FREEDOM

China grapples with the Falun Gong ^{SF-6} _{19/2}

IT is significant that while China's dissidents attract little or no attention, the Falun Gong, an international cult with Chinese roots, which is said to have addled the brains of 70 million people worldwide, is causing concern in Washington, Amsterdam and other Western capitals. Why? Simply because the dissidents no longer have any organised following worth the name, while the Falun Gong can assemble 10,000 people on Tiananmen Square at a moment's notice, and some of these are willing to set fire to themselves along with their children, as in the last week of January. Of course, the Western concern is motivated by a bigger picture of potential and actual persecution of religious denominations such as Tibetan Buddhism to evangelical Protestantism, first of which is a mandatory liberal cause, while the second has direct and powerful links with lobbies and constituencies, mainly in the United States. One doesn't get the impression, though, that the Chinese are too bothered about the spread of Christianity, maybe because of its limited success, or maybe because it brings in an additional input of westernisation to which the CPC is not at all averse.

The Falun Gong is a different kettle of fish altogether. Why the CPC thinks its existence is a direct challenge to its own authority is pretty clear. The cult has a philosophy with roots in China's own native religions — taoism and such — and also borrows some features from Buddhism whose history in China is long enough to make it Chinese. In other words, this is a mainstream challenge, it is addressed to all Chinese. That bothers the CPC which would prefer an ideological vacuum filled by commerce and industry, rather than other-worldly discontent which it was supposed to have got rid of in 1949.

Apart from ideological concerns, there is, above all, the memory of Tiananmen, 1989. The Chinese may defend that course of action endlessly, but they certainly do not want another bloodbath, especially when business is so good and WTO is round the corner. Which makes the situation all the more difficult, since ordinary repression is ruled out. Besides, they are not dealing with students or with an alternative political vision, but with ordinary working men and women, well-entrenched in their own society. The self-immolations did draw some criticism, but the basic issue is something that has the potential to unite lots of people at a time when some kind of a return to religion is underway — the right to a private life free from official interference. It is obvious that the CPC is not yet ready to recognise this principle, or to tolerate other influences in society. The contradiction is that such influences are inevitable. The Falun Gong is a primary expression of traditionalist culture and identity as also a depoliticised sense of solidarity in a society from which politics and critical tendencies in culture, vital components of modernity, have been banished. The CPC sees the threat. Long may it endure!

THE STATESMAN

Falun Gong creates ripples world over

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BEIJING, Feb. 8. - China's crackdown on the Falun Gong movement sent ripples as far away as the Hague and Ottawa this week. It showed that Beijing's harsh line on the spiritual group is becoming more and more of a diplomatic liability, analysts said.

Dutch foreign minister, Mr Jozias Van Aartsen, cancelled his trip to China and Hong Kong after Beijing objected to a meeting between a Dutch human rights official and Falun Gong members.

Meanwhile, Canadian officials said Prime Minister, Mr Jean Chretien, would raise human rights issues, including the Falun Gong crackdown, in the course of a huge trade mission due to leave for

MOVEMENT MAY BECOME BURDEN FOR CHINA

China later this week.

"It has attracted wide international attention. It highlights the diplomatic costs of the crackdown on the Falun Gong," said Mr Joseph Cheng, a China expert at city university of Hong Kong.

Analysts said it was no coincidence that the 18-month-long repression of the sect, which claims 70 million members on the mainland, was suddenly moving towards the top of the agenda for several foreign governments.

Mr George W Bush had been in the White House for only four days when in late January his administration cleared that it did not approve the way Falun Gong was being treated.

"I would renew our condemnation of China's crackdown on Falun Gong," the US state department spokesman, Mr Richard Boucher said, calling on Beijing to release all group members detained for peacefully exercising rights to "freedom of religion, freedom of belief and freedom of conscience."

"These things sometimes have a bandwagon effect," said Mr Cheng.

"When one country, such as the USA under the new administration, takes a strong stand, other countries feel an urge to follow," he added.

The publicity created by some of the Falun Gong's recent actions may have dubious value, such as an attempt

ted mass suicide on Tiananmen on 23 January, when seven followers tried to burn themselves to death.

But Falun Gong is not the first spiritual group to suffer persecution in China, as Tibetan Buddhists and underground Christian churches have been the targets of periodic crackdown.

While Mr Chretien may be willing to talk about human rights with his Chinese hosts, the main purpose of his trip is to head the largest trade mission in Canadian history, analysts pointed out.

The USA, which exported \$ 22.4 billion worth of products to China last year, is not going to sacrifice its business interests over Falun Gong, Mr Peter Baehr, of Hong Kong's Lingnan college.

THE STATESMAN

- 9 FEB 2001

China Falungong line a liability

Beijing, Feb. 8: China's crackdown on the Falungong movement sent ripples as far away as The Hague and Ottawa this week, showing that Beijing's harsh line on the spiritual group is becoming more and more of a diplomatic liability, analysts said.

Dutch foreign minister Jozias Van Aartsen made a last-minute cancelation of a planned visit to China and Hong Kong after Beijing objected to a meeting between a ranking Dutch human rights official and Falungong members. Meanwhile, Canadian officials said Prime Minister Jean Chretien would raise human rights issues, including the Falungong clampdown, in the course of a huge trade mission due to leave for China later this week. "It highlights the diplomatic costs of the crackdown on the Falungong," said Joseph Cheng, a China expert at city university of

Hong Kong. "It has attracted wide international attention, and the Chinese government has a lot of explanation to do." Analysts said it was no coincidence that the 18-month-long repression of the sect, which claims 70 million members on the mainland, was suddenly moving nearer the top of the agenda for several foreign governments. Mr George W. Bush had been in the White House for only four days when in late January his administration made clear it did not approve of the way Falungong was being treated. "I would renew our condemnation of China's crackdown on Falungong," US state department spokesman Richard Boucher said, calling on Beijing to release all group members detained for peacefully exercising rights to "freedom of religion, freedom of belief and freedom of conscience." (AFP)

THE ASIAN AGE

29 FEB 2001

29 FEB 2001

Will Net lead to a social change in China?

By TYLER MARSHALL and ANTHONY KUHN

BEIJING: Call it the ultimate test of Internet freedom: the world's largest state security network deployed to police cyberspace in the most populous nation on Earth, where the number of online users is growing exponentially. The outcome will dictate how one-fifth of mankind relates to a technology many are convinced owns the future.

Most of those watching the struggle unfold in mainland China believe that the sheer growth of online users in the country - expected to top 100 million well before mid-decade - will eventually overwhelm even the most comprehensive authoritarian efforts to control it. But they note two important caveats: If it does come, a free Internet in China will, in all likelihood, not lead to political upheaval and democratic revolution, as some in the West assume. Instead, it will be a vehicle for gradual, quiet yet profound social change.

And contrary to the belief of many Americans who smirk at the very idea of any government trying to control the Internet, the battle now underway in China is no laughing matter for the forces of free expression.

Just ask Lin Hai Lin, a 31-year-old computer engineer from Shanghai, was jailed for 18 months in early 1999 for passing e-mail addresses to a banned Chinese Web site. He's far from the only such victim. A young Web site owner in Sichuan province named Huang Qi was arrested last June for allegedly posting articles about the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre on the Internet, and human rights advocates in Hong Kong say he remains in custody awaiting trial. As police descended on his home, he signed off with the matter-of-fact

message: "Thanks to everybody devoted to democracy in China. They are here now. So long."

Ironically, some of America's most successful high-tech companies are selling the Chinese government software that helps its security forces troll cyberspace for material deemed subversive or antisocial. Beijing also has other formidable weapons of control in its arsenal.

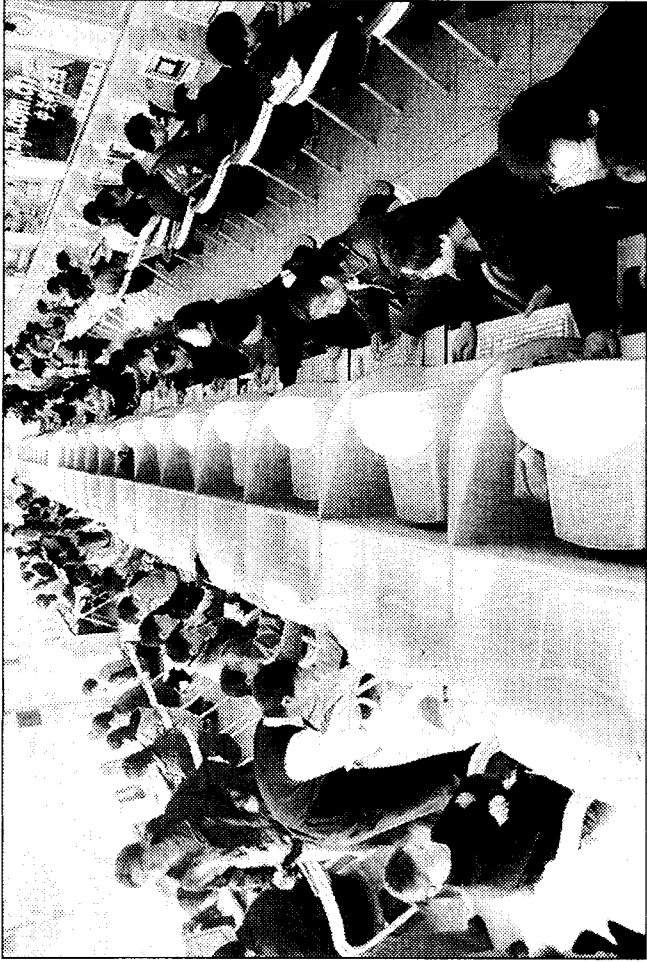
Among them:

- Employing raw intimidation, such as high-profile arrests of Internet users and police raids on Internet cafes, where large numbers of Chinese sign on.
- Closing down suspect Web sites inside China and blocking foreign ones that carry material critical of the government.
- Invoking strict limits on online news, including requiring Web sites to get their news from state media.
- Outlawing material judged a threat to state security or harmful to national unity.

In December Beijing imposed its latest wave of restrictions - including a ban on using the Internet to organize or coordinate the activities of what it termed "evil cults," a measure apparently aimed at containing the activities of such groups as the Falun Gong spiritual movement.

Even with these measures, China's cyberscops can't claim total control. But so far it seems enough.

With the notable exception of one large street demonstration staged in Beijing by the members of the since-outlawed Falun Gong in April 1999, there is little evidence that dissidents or other groups have successfully used the Internet to organize anti-government activities.



21.4 million.

The great enemy of those seeking to control the Internet is its growth - a growth fueled largely by the recognition among China's reformers that they have no choice but to embrace the Internet if they are to compete in the global marketplace.

Olan Xiaoqian, head of the Internet Affairs Office at the State Council's Office of Information in Beijing, offers some startling figures: From only a few thousand online users when the Internet first became available in China five years ago, the number has risen to

21.4 million.

Moreover, the number of domain names registered in China has quadrupled during the past three years to 115,000, while the number of active Web sites increased from 1,500 to 33,050 during the same period.

If this growth continues at its current pace, China will have an online population of more than 100 million within a few years and become the world's largest user nation soon after that.

Security agencies are spending millions of

dollars to buy the latest technologies, but how can they keep track of volumes like that?" asked Sin Chung-kai, a member of Hong Kong's Legislative Council who represents the territory's information-technology industrial sector. "When the number of users goes over 100 million, the political environment will change."

In a study of dictatorial governments in the digital age appearing in the online publication iMP: The Magazine on Information Impacts, a trio of American scholars found little evidence that the Internet has undermined authoritarian regimes.

One of the authors, Shanthi Kalathil of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, D.C., said "it's partly wishful thinking and partly anecdotal knowledge that people have used fax machines to organize and they figure the Internet is a much more powerful tool."

Popular belief has led some to falsely credit the Internet with an important role in such events as the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe or the student protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, both of which occurred in 1989. The Internet played no significant role in either.

Western political analysts also frequently share another false belief: that the Internet everywhere is just as it is in the US, a symbol of freedom of expression and a tool of empowerment.

The history - and the image - of China's Internet development could not be more different. In China, the Net was born under state control and remains very much there - despite its impressive growth and its increased commercialization. (LAWP/Sve)

Falun denial over Tiananmen suicide bid

BEIJING, Jan. 31. — The Falun Gong today denied allegations by China that the seven people who tried to burn themselves to death here last week belonged to the sect.

The group's US-based members issued a statement in this regard after the Chinese media yesterday launched a new anti-Falun Gong campaign, detailing the alleged circumstances surrounding the mass suicide attempt on 23 January.

The teachings of the group consider as sin any form of killing. Hence, the seven people, including a 12-year-old girl, couldn't possibly have been Falun adherents, said a spokesman. — AFP

THE STATESMAN

1 FEB 2001

Beijing uses fiery ploy to discredit Falun Gong

Beijing, Jan. 31 (Reuters): Beijing's intensified bid to discredit the Falun Gong spiritual movement using gruesome pictures of a fiery group suicide attempt appeared to resonate on the streets of Beijing today.

Especially effective were pictures of 12-year-old Liu Siying, her face burned away and a hand turned into a blackened claw after she, her mother and three others doused themselves in petrol and set fire to themselves in Tiananmen Square last week.

Liu's mother was the only fatality in the most dramatic of hundreds of Falun Gong protests in the square. But she got no sympathy from people reading newspapers posted along the street.

For 60-year-old retiree Yu Changhe, the pictures supported the government's assertion that

"Falun Gong is poison".

"That woman was influenced by Falun Gong leader Li Hongzhi and went on to poison her daughter," he said. Another bystander, a woman surnamed Lan, agreed.

"What a pity that that could happen to a child. Falun Gong really is harmful," she said.

China's Communist rulers are using the plight of Liu Siying, now lying critically injured in hospital with burns over 40 per cent of her body, to generate sympathy for an anti-Falun Gong campaign known mostly for police brutality and crude propaganda.

Major newspapers and state television were plastered today with grisly images of the girl, who they said was persuaded by her mother to join the self-immolations on the eve of Lunar New Year.

Overseas Falun Gong organisations say they doubt seriously the five were Falun Gong members, insisting the movement forbids all killing, including suicide. They demand independent proof that the five were real believers.

But diplomats who monitor China's 18-month-old crackdown on Falun Gong — which has provoked condemnation from many Western capitals — say this time the Communist Party may succeed in capturing some moral high ground from the beleaguered sect. "If those persons are Falun Gong, and most indications are that they were, the authorities are handling it right," said a Western diplomat. "It's ugly seeing them exploiting the little girl, but they are saying 'Look, they burn children and how can you support a group that burns children?'"

THE TELEGRAPH

1 FEB 2001

Stick for Falun, wink for Buddhists

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BEIJING, Jan. 25. — Thousands of Beijingers flocked to temples today to pray for good luck and prosperity in the new lunar year, despite more than 50 years of officially-backed atheism.

The estimated 100,000 people who visited the Lama temple today were a reminder that religion is returning to China as Communism loses its power over the hearts and minds.

As the crowds were thronging the Lama temple, to the delight of incense and snack vendors standing by the long walkway leading to the main complex, little more than 4 km to the south on Tiananmen Square the situation was a markedly different one.

Hundreds of police were maintaining

tight security around the square, an indication that Chinese religious tolerance comes only in degrees and does not cover the outlawed Falun Gong movement.

Worshippers at the Lama temple would rather not be identified with the Falun Gong, which, they said, had made a fatal step across the border between religion and superstition.

"Our kind of faith and the Falun Gong are two completely different things," said Zhu Taohui, a Buddhist aviation worker. "If it becomes too confused, it's superstition." Zhu (33) spent the second day of the new year visiting the Lama temple, the largest dedicated to Tibetan Buddhism in the capital city, along with his wife and two-year-old son.

"We're here because we're Buddhists,"

he said. "We want to express our hopes that the year ahead won't bring too much trouble."

During lunar new year, the largest festival in Chinese communities from Shanghai to San Francisco, it becomes particularly clear that religion is reemerging as an increasing number of Chinese seek their cultural roots. "Every year, we seem to be getting more people coming here during lunar new year," said Meng, a Buddhist monk.

Beijing police today maintained nearly unprecedented-levels of surveillance for followers of the banned Falun Gong in Tiananmen Square, as the USA renewed its condemnation of the

crackdown on the spiritual movement.

Large numbers of policemen patrolled in and outside the square following Tuesday's self-immolation of one follower of the group and similar suicide attempts by four others in the middle of the vast square.

A few Falun Gong followers were seen being apprehended by police on the square today morning, as security forces continued to question all Chinese entering the square and inspecting identification papers and bags.

The USA, meanwhile, renewed its condemnation of China's crackdown on the movement yesterday and urged Beijing to release all group members detained for peacefully exercising rights to "freedom of religion, freedom of belief and freedom of conscience."

5/7 Falun watch *China*

THE STATESMAN

26 JAN 2004

China's path beyond Tiananmen

10-12 2071
By P. S. Suryanarayana

THE TIMING of the latest attempt in the West to rake up 'The Tiananmen Papers', presumptive documents of historical source material, is certainly intriguing. An artistic impression, in fact, is that the Chinese leaders find themselves cruising quite comfortably along a political avenue beyond the once-desecrated Tiananmen Square. The hallowed Square in the Chinese capital, Beijing, was the scene of a military crackdown against the perceived uprising by a motley crowd of alleged "counter-revolutionary" agents of "turmoil" in 1989. Significantly, Tiananmen is also the famous venue where Mao Zedong had affirmed the revolutionary establishment of a communist state in the name and style of a People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. As a mute witness to several historical events, the Square had also seen a politically momentous mourning of Zhou Enlai, a long-serving Prime Minister of China, in 1976 — an event linked to the latter-day rise of Deng Xiaping as the 'paramount leader'.

The 'Tiananmen Papers', though, are said to pertain only to the suppression of the dramatic "pro-democracy" movement by an informal alliance of students as also intellectuals and workers in 1989. These 'Papers' chronicle the purported confabulations of China's highest authorities concerning a decision which they eventually made, based on the assessment by a "majority" among them, to order the People's Liberation Army to quell the protest. While official Beijing has now lost no time to characterise these 'Papers' as fake, reputed American Sinologists have found them to be suffused with a high degree of credibility that does not amount to an absolute authenticity nonetheless.

The initial assessment of some Sinologists is that these 'Papers', attributed to a source known only by the pseudonym of Zhang Liang, confirm much of what is already taken for granted in the West and elsewhere. One such re-confirmed 'historical fact', rooted in the circumstantial evidence available in Beijing of May-June 1989, is that Deng, the 'paramount leader' of the time, had indeed overruled Mr. Zhao Ziyang, then Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), in order to decree military action against the ordinary political dissidents assembled at Tiananmen.

An aspect cited in the West in commendation of the 'Papers' is that the purported documentation seems to be as reliable as the circumstantial evidence — for most part until now, the primary window on the political happenings behind China's Bamboo Curtain.

With Deng passing away in 1997 and Mr. Zhao still believed to be under comfortable house arrest, the obvious question is whether the 'Papers' will make any difference to the international perception of China. Contrary to the conventional political-diplomatic wisdom of the First World, China has not really found itself hampered by the stigma of its draconian action against the "pro-democracy" activists in 1989.

The puzzle, with no possible answer at this moment, is whether the 'Tiananmen Papers' have been 'leaked' in a bid to influence the current course of China's politics.

The speculation, therefore, centres on the likely impact, if at all, of the 'Papers' on the political stature of Mr. Li Peng, Prime Minister in 1989 and now the second-ranking leader within the powerful CCP hierarchy. However, the fact remains that the 'Papers', believed to have been "leaked" by a "representative" of the political-reformists within China, are not known to paint Mr. Li in any of the worse colours than those reserved for him in recent times in the West. Mr. Li's political future will, of course, be determined by China's evolving internal dynamics of governance. The puzzle, with no possible answer at this moment, is whether the 'Papers' have been "leaked" in a bid to influence the current course of China's politics, although the documents are considered to be short on extraordinary new revelations.

Can the 'Papers' do any damage to the internal prestige and international standing of Mr. Jiang Zemin? As a protege of Deng, Mr. Jiang is China's current supreme leader who presides over the state-civilian apparatus, as also the party pyramid and the military command structure. An interpretation doing the rounds in international circles is that the 'Papers' disclose a "new fact" that Mr. Jiang, still a provincial leader in the early part of 1989, was perhaps confirmed for a

top position at the national apex level ahead of the Tiananmen crackdown. The point laboured is whether Mr. Jiang was also privy to the decision about the crackdown. This aspect is regarded important, if only because Mr. Jiang succeeded Mr. Zhao, a late convert to the cause of political reforms if not also democracy, as the party chief immediately after the Tiananmen massacre.

Seen from a Chinese standpoint, a poser is whether the 'Papers' have been publicised to coincide with the prospective inauguration of Mr. George W. Bush as the U.S. President. He has already surrounded himself with advisers who tend to advocate a U.S. military posture that is likely to

enter the World Trade Organisation, revolves around patently proto-capitalist practices (and increasingly the core stuff of capitalism as well) in regard to such aspects as the propagated imperative of making the country rich. Above all, however, the country's political culture is now derived from a somewhat non-ideological variant of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The perceivably less strident emphasis in recent years on the ideological dogma has, however, compelled some veteran China-watchers to focus a greater attention instead on the "Stalinist" characteristics of the functional structure of Government.

As the first Western communicator of Mao's ideas, Edgar Snow had indeed quoted the Chinese helmsman as saying, nearly a decade before the PRC was established, as follows: "We are always social revolutionaries; we are never reformists". While this can explain the mass-based movements that Mao subsequently organised under the banner of the PRC, including the highly controversial Cultural Revolution, he never fully anticipated Deng's later-day reinterpretations, not to mention Mr. Jiang's world view. The most striking feature of these redefinitions of the founding principles of the PRC pertains to the reality of a state-sponsored development of the national economy on virtual capitalist lines. This is deemed to be consistent with the rationale of the PRC on the ground that such development is supervised under the auspices of the CCP as the sole repository of political-state power.

It is the sovereign right of the PRC to reorient its internal policies in tune with the changing realities in global politics. Indeed, the Chinese economy has registered spectacular macro-level progress quite consistently since the Tiananmen episode of 1989. Yet, as pointed out by Mr. Maurice Meisner, a China-historian, the Chinese leaders may need to guard against creating an ironic discontent among its proletariat in the zeal to modernise the economy by transparent capitalist practices without changing the basic political structure of the state itself. The political question, therefore, is whether China requires a post-modern variant of its ancient text, 'The Book of Lord Shang' on statecraft.

THE HINDU

20 JAN 2001

110-17
1671

Tiananmen Papers may affect Li Peng

By F.J. Khergamvala

TOKYO, JAN. 15. The closer China gets to the 2002 Communist Party Congress the closer the China watchers might see the real impact of the just released Tiananmen Papers. At the moment, a process of elimination suggests no specific purpose was attached to either the timing or the purpose of their semi-clandestine publication.

Most of the main figures of that era, 1989, are history and unless the Chinese Communist Party publishes its own credible account of Tiananmen, in place of the "fake," the fate of the three remaining leaders will be debated through the prism of the developments as reflected in the just released papers. Mr. Zhao Ziyang, who advocates a course of reasonable compromise could be rehabilitated. The reformists could force the retirement of Mr. Li Peng, whose manipulated interpretation of events and reports from the field opportuned a tough line by the elders. The papers also show how the President, Mr. Jiang Zemin was illegitimately planted to fill a vacuum. This factor could influence party debate on his burning ambition of remaining as Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Party, or de facto Emperor of the Middle Kingdom.

Time and logic rule out some suspicions about the purpose and timing of the present release of the new papers. Had these papers been published in English in the summer of last year, they could have borne the motive of trying to scuttle the U.S. Congress vote in favour of giving China Permanent Normal Trading Relations status. Now, once Beijing joins the World Trade Organisation, such status is automatic. Nor could the present release be motivated by the need to embarrass China at the annual March meeting of the United Na-



tions Commission on Human Rights. China has won that war decisively.

What adds to the fact that this was a chance publication, is the oddity that the first publicly documented record of the events known as the Tiananmen Square "incident" or massacre, should be translated in English and not in the language in which the diskettes, text etc., were smuggled out, by whatever means by an official carrying the pseudonym Zhang Liang. It has been announced that the Chinese text will be released later. But why later?

On its part, the Communist Party leadership and bureaucracy has been typically ham-handed in its reaction. On Tiananmen, as in Taiwan or Falun Gong, the party just does have fundamental skills of credible denial. A claim of the Tiananmen papers being fabricated should have been appropriately followed by the purported genuine version or by official corrections to the "fabricated" version. Alternately, Beijing could have finessed the papers by confirming the authenticity, and then challenged the U.S. to prematurely release its archives, such as minutes of White House, State Department meetings and reports

of its mission in Beijing.

Contrary to some comment that it is these recently released Tiananmen Papers that prove the earlier accounts true, the reverse seems to be true. Nobody can rule out forgeries but any doubts are resolved by the fact that papers get their legitimacy from their great similarity to already known accounts. Tokyo is full of journalists who covered Tiananmen and almost everything in the new papers has long been bar talk all over east Asia.

Oddly enough, neither these 15,000 pages of records, selectively translated into English, nor the previous accounts over the past 11 years gives any uniform figure of the number of casualties, students, civilians or soldiers, except to cite an official by the Beijing Party Secretary's report a fortnight after the June 4 events, that there were 218 civilian deaths, all outside the Tiananmen square.

There are two other facts contained in the papers, at variance with past accounts. One is the official record which shows that the demonstrations were so widespread as to cover 341 cities, perhaps the real cause for panic among Mr. Deng Xiaoping, Mr. Li Peng and party elders who ordered the armed clampdown by over-riding the tie-breaker at the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee of the Politburo was split two by two and one abstention on whether or not to use force. The other is that these papers show that troops did not disobey orders to move to Beijing, disproving past accounts.

It no longer matters what the U.S. debates about what happened during Tiananmen. China has grown and prospered and the West has fought the West for the Chinese market. What matters is how the Chinese people debate the documents when they are published in their own language in the run up to 2002.

THE HINDU

15 JAN 2002

Beijing steps up campaign against Falun Gong

THE TIMES, LONDON, & REUTERS

BEIJING, Jan. 15. — China has ordered its state-controlled media to continue vilifying Falun Gong, while 1,000 of its supporters from around the world, attending a conference in Hong Kong, yesterday urged President Jiang Zemin to halt the crackdown.

The government has defended its crackdown on the Falun Gong, saying the 18-month drive, condemned abroad for its "ruthlessness", enjoyed widespread public support and was based on Chinese law.

Mr Ding Guangen, Beijing's hardline propaganda chief, said at the weekend that China faced a "long-term and arduous" struggle against the group. "Efforts should be made to expose the political nature and the danger that the cult

MISSILE BASE

TAIPEI, Jan. 15. — China is building a base in a south-eastern city for advanced long-range ground-to-air missiles, a move feared to weaken Taiwan's air defence capabilities, the United Daily News reported today.

— AFP

poses to society," he said.

Members of Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, insisted, however, that it had no political agenda. "This is not a political fight," said Ms Hui Han Yee, spokeswoman for the Hong Kong Falun Dafa Association.

Falun Gong preaches a mixture of Taoism, Buddhism and traditional Chinese physical exercises. Beijing has

outlawed Falun Gong, but it remains legal in Hong Kong.

The meeting on Chinese soil, the third in Hong Kong but the first in a government building, has angered Beijing. Xinhua, official Chinese news agency, lashed out at Falun Gong's Hong Kong and Macau followers, saying the "notorious cult" was responsible for the deaths of many people. The People's Daily branded the movement and its leader a "cheap tool" of Western forces trying to topple the Communist Party.

The State Council information office said Falun Gong was a "social cancer". The statement said 242 organisers of the sect had been jailed and some "stubborn elements", who had broken laws against illegal demonstrations, had been sent to labour re-education camps.

THE STATESMAN

16 JAN 2001

Beijing climbdown on one-China policy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BEIJING, Jan. 6. — Beijing has softened its “one China” policy slightly by agreeing to discuss establishment of direct trade, transportation and communication links across the Taiwan straits as soon as possible.

The move came after two separate meetings here between Chinese mainland officials and members from two Taiwanese pro-reunification party delegations, *The China Daily* reported today.

“As long as (the three links are) conducted as internal affairs within one country, we will take pragmatic steps to work with them,” Mr He Shizhong, the head of the economic department of Taiwan affairs office under the state council, was quoted as saying.

The new overture could

push forward more direct contact between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland following the formal start of the mini-three links between the outlying Taiwanese islands of Jinmen and Mazu and Xiamen and Fuzhou in Fujian province on Tuesday.

The paper noted that China, which views Taiwan as a rebel province that must be reunified with the mainland, has always demanded explicit acceptance of the “one China” principle from Taiwan before the big three direct links — full-blown trade, transportation and postal service — or talks can resume.

In Washington, a newspaper quoted the Chinese deputy Prime Minister, Mr Qian Qichen, as saying that Beijing has reformulated its “one China” policy by offering Taipei “co-equa” status.

Mr Qian urged the incoming Bush administration in the USA not to view China as a strategic competitor.

The Washington Post said Mr Qian’s statement was made in an interview to coincide with the formation of the new administration.

To a question whether China would be willing to accept a loose confederation with Taiwan, Mr Qian said: “Anything can be discussed.”

China’s “emergence as a regional Asian power is irresistible”, he warned the USA against selling advanced Aegis radars to Taiwan.

Chinese official said Beijing’s three key principles on the direct cross-strait links are: they should be operated as the domestic matters of one country instead of as state-to-state affairs; they should be direct and bilateral.

THE STATESMAN

7 JAN 2001