

Russia snubs China over ²⁶⁹oil pipeline route

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THE TIMES, LONDON

MOSCOW, Sept .25. — Russia has chosen to build a key oil export pipeline from its eastern Siberia to a Pacific port, favouring Japan over an alternative route into China, Russia's ambassador in Tokyo said yesterday.

The decision to build the \$10 billion pipe from Taishet to Nakhodka came as an embarrassing snub to Chinese Prime Minister Mr Wen Jiabao, who arrived in Moscow yesterday for talks about energy links between Russia and China.

Speaking to the Japanese media, ambassador Mr Alexander Losyukov said the 4,000 km route had been chosen and an official announcement would be made in coming months. "It's settled. There was a decision taken in our government. The pipeline will go to Nakhodka," he said.

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The apparent rejection of the southern route could lead to a diplomatic row as Beijing has lobbied hard for a link between Siberia and Daqing, an oil town in north-eastern China.

Moscow attempted to play down its ambassador's remarks, suggesting the China link was not ruled out. Mr Viktor Khristenko, the energy minister, said the Japan route would have priority but added: "We could end up building a branch line to China from the Taishet-Nakhodka pipeline."

The supply of Russian crude oil to China was threatened earlier this week when Yukos, the embattled Russian oil company, said it would suspend rail shipments from September 28. However, the threatened loss of about 100,000 barrels per day of crude was removed on Thursday.

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'Meddling' by US ^{Hf. 11} irks China _{28/4}

Agence France-Presse
Beijing, April 27 _{Simu W}

CHINA ON Tuesday said a letter from US lawmakers to President Hu Jintao that warned of potential trouble in bilateral relations over human rights issues was unacceptable interference in its internal affairs.

About 67 members of Congress issued the warning in a letter to Hu as they marked the second year in detention of US resident Yang Jianli, a leading Chinese dissident.

"The letter, if true, is interference in the judicial system of China and China is opposed to this", foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan said. "China is a country that's ruled by law and it's completely normal for the judicial department and authorities of China to pass sentences on those who break the law". Yang, 40, was detained on April 26, 2002, when he travelled to China on a friend's passport in an attempt to observe the ongoing labour unrest.

The US embassy in Beijing has spoken directly with the Chinese government about Yang's case, Republican Party lawmaker Christopher Cox said, citing Vice-President Dick Cheney's visit to China earlier this month. "We object to your government's harsh treatment of Yang Jianli", the legislators said in the letter to Hu, in which they expressed "serious concern" over the imprisonment and "outrage" over "inhumane treatment" of the dissident.

Meanwhile, China has fired another shot in a visa row with the US, with officials saying on Tuesday that a US embassy-run visa consulting service in Shanghai has been shut down.

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China scoffs at US, UK stand on Hong Kong

Hong Kong\Washington: China has told the United States and former colonial master Britain to mind their own business over its refusal to allow full democracy for Hong Kong any time soon.

"We are Chinese," foreign minister Li Zhaoxing told reporters in Shanghai on Tuesday after Washington and London criticised Beijing for blocking political reform.

"Are you clear on that? Hong Kong is China's Hong Kong," Li said. The United States has expressed disappointment at China's ruling that Hong Kong cannot directly elect its next leader and reaffirmed its support for universal suffrage in the territory.

"We're disappointed by the decision, as we believe it doesn't adequately reflect the expressed wishes of the Hong Kong people for universal suffrage and democracy," state department spokesman Richard Boucher

said. He said international confidence in Hong Kong is based on its rule of law and the high degree of autonomy. "The United States will continue to watch the situation closely with the goal of supporting democracy," Boucher said.

He said the people of Hong Kong have taken to the streets three times to express their desire for electoral reform and universal suffrage.

"The United States believes that the Hong Kong people's aspirations should be given priority in determining the pace and scope of democratisation in Hong Kong," Boucher said.

But Li told reporters, "Do you think Hong Kong was democratic under British rule? Did the British raise concerns about that? Did the Americans raise concerns? No. Why don't you take a look at this double standard?" AP

No free Taiwan: China

Press Trust of India

BEIJING, April 14. — Mounting pressure on USA to accept the "One China" policy, senior Chinese military and political leaders told US Vice-President Mr Dick Cheney that Beijing will not allow "Taiwan independence" and Washington must not send any "wrong signals" to the separatist forces on the island.

On the second day of the maiden official visit to China, Mr Cheney, met separately with Chinese President Mr Hu Jintao, Chairman of the Central Military Commission Mr Jiang Zemin and Premier Mr Wen Jiabao and dis-

Fingerprint plan flayed

BEIJING, April 14. — China today criticised a Taiwanese plan to fingerprint Chinese visitors, calling it discriminatory and an affront to the "warm welcome" given to Taiwanese on the mainland. A Taiwanese official said on Monday the plan, due to take effect on the last week, had been postponed because the Immigration Bureau hadn't acquired the necessary equipment. "We oppose this discriminatory measure toward mainland compatriots," said Li Weiyl, a spokesman for Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Office, which handles relations with the self-ruled island. — AP

cussed bilateral ties, especially the Taiwan issue, a major irritant in Sino-US relations.

"The splitting activities by the "Taiwan independence" forces constitute the biggest threat to the peace and stability of the Taiwan straits," Mr Hu told Mr Cheney before he

wording or action by the Taiwan leaders attempting to change Taiwan's status quo, and not to send wrong signals to the Taiwan authorities," Mr Hu was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua news agency.

Mr Hu, also general secretary of the ruling Communist Party of China, said the Chinese government adheres to "peaceful reunification, and one China, two systems", and is committed to the peaceful solution of the Taiwan issue, but China will not allow "Taiwan independence".

Mr Cheney said that the US government will continue to adhere to the 'One-China' policy, which

was based on the three joint communiqués between the USA and China, not support "Taiwan independence" and oppose any unilateral action to change the status quo of the Taiwan straits.

The Taiwan issue also figured during Mr Cheney's meeting with the Chairman of the Chinese Central Military Commission, Mr Jiang Zemin, who expressed Beijing's willingness to "exert the utmost sincerity and the utmost efforts to realise peaceful reunification."

At the same time the former Chinese President asserted that Beijing will not "allow anybody to separate Taiwan from the motherland in any form."

US radar for Taiwan irks China

China Daily/ ANN

BEIJING, April 1. — China today denounced a US plan to sell radar systems to Taiwan, saying it broke its commitment to the one-China policy and sent the wrong signal to Taiwan independence seekers.

China has taken notice of relevant reporting, but will ask USA to clarify, foreign ministry spokesman Mr Kong Quan told reporters here. "We have always opposed US sales of advanced weapons to Taiwan."

Taiwan is the most sensitive and important question in Sino-US ties. US arms sale to Taiwan is not in line with its one-China policy and the three joint communiqués on bilateral relations, the spokesman said. "Especially under the current complicated and sensitive situation across the Taiwan Strait, we ask the USA to be faithful to what it says and abide by its promises, and not send the wrong signal to Taiwan's independence (seekers)."

Washington is Taiwan's biggest arms supplier. The Pentagon announced on Wednesday it planned to sell Taiwan long-range early-warning radar system that would detect ballistic or cruise missiles. The arms sale could worth as much as \$1.78 billion.

Yesterday, China's foreign minister Mr Li Zhaoxing met US Secretary of State Gen. Colin Powell here to discuss bilateral and international issues.

Mr Li urged the USA to adhere to the one-China policy as well as the three joint communiqués on

Chen harps on independence

TAIPEI, April 1. — President Mr Chen Shui-bian has reiterated his belief that Taiwan is independent from China and said he plans to press ahead with a referendum on constitutional reform, positions that will anger Beijing.

"Taiwan is an independent sovereign country," Mr Chen said in an interview with the BBC posted on the broadcaster's website.

Beijing criticised Mr Chen for making similar comments to the *Washington Post*.

Mr Chen said the 20 March election, which he narrowly won, showed his belief was shared by the people of Taiwan. "As we can see from the election this time, even the Opposition parties cannot oppose the mainstream value, the will of the people, (who) oppose unification of the two sides and insist on Taiwan being an independent sovereign country." — ANN

bilateral relations and oppose Taiwan independence.

Gen. Powell said the USA will continuously uphold the one-China policy, abide by the three Sino-US communiqués and not support any form of Taiwan independence.

Beijing and Washington have planned a series of high-level exchanges this year. US Vice-President Mr Dick Cheney is to visit China this month, while Chinese Vice-Premier Mr Wu Yi is to travel to the USA to attend a meeting of a US-Chinese trade commission.

China not to join U.S.-led security plan

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, FEB. 23. China has expressed its disinclination to associate itself with the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative [PSI]. Both China and the U.S. have agreed to sustain discussions on the PSI.

The PSI has been projected as a mechanism to control and prevent the transfers of technologies and equipment related to the production and deployment of all categories of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The objective is said to be a

multilateral non-proliferation effort from any state or person to any other country or non-state actor. It is also portrayed as an anti-terror initiative. Several countries, including Australia and Japan in China's Asia Pacific neighbourhood, have joined hands with the U.S. under this initiative.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman, Zhang Qiyue, responding to questions at a briefing in Beijing last week, indicated that the reluctance was traceable to certain serious concerns. China, she said, "is still concerned about the

legal foundation and consequences therefrom of the PSI interception".

This relates to the field-level objective of intercepting ships within or outside the territorial waters of any participant-country for WMD. The U.S. and its associates have also plans to cover interceptions on land and in airspace.

On the permissibility of such interception techniques under the international law, she said that "this is also an issue drawing extensive concern from the international community". India is among the countries that have drawn atten-

tion to the controversial aspects of the PSI.

Referring to the meetings the U.S. Under Secretary of State, John Bolton, had with Chinese officials, Ms. Zhang said: "Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing and Vice-Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui expressed China's understanding for the concern of the PSI participant-countries on the proliferation of WMD and vehicles (or missiles)".

She drew attention to "the importance of non-proliferation through political and diplomatic means".

THE HINDU

JAN 2004

U.S. remarks on Hong Kong irk China

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, JAN. 6. China has asked the United States to refrain from making any statement or indulging in any activity that would harm Hong Kong's political stability and economic prosperity.

Commenting on the reported remarks of a U.S. State Department spokesman on Hong Kong, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Kong Quan, said Beijing 'hopes' that Washington "could keep its promises," made repeatedly, about its policy of non-interference in China's internal affairs.

Mr. Kong's comment is in re-

sponse to the reported remarks by the U.S. spokesman that the Hong Kong Government should move towards electoral reform as also universal suffrage besides sustaining a process of democratisation.

Mr. Kong said on Sunday that Beijing hoped that Washington would refrain from any "behaviour that would harm the stability and prosperity in Hong Kong."

He recalled that the U.S. had repeatedly expressed its willingness to support the Chinese Government in implementing its policy of "one country, two systems" as regards Hong Kong.

Affirming firm opposition to any form of interference by foreign Governments in the affairs of China's Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, he emphasised that the territory's stability and prosperity were issues entirely under the internal jurisdiction of the Central Government in Beijing.

China, Mr. Kong said, was "highly concerned with" and "seized of" the evolution of Hong Kong's political system.

Beijing's "clear stand" was that Hong Kong's political structure would "develop in a gradual and orderly manner." The two parameters governing such evolution were the Basic

Law and the actual circumstances in Hong Kong.

The Basic Law outlines the equation between Beijing and Hong Kong, a former British colony that returned to Chinese sovereignty over six years ago.

It is considered significant in the Asia-Pacific diplomatic circles that the Chinese spokesman should have admonished the U.S., asking it to adopt a hands-off policy in regard to Hong Kong, even as he expressed, during the week-end, Beijing's willingness to give a push to ties with Washington by acting in concert with the American authorities.