

# China to pass anti-secession law aimed at Taiwan

By P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE, DEC. 18.** China's draft law against secession, seen by the international community as a move to ban "Taiwanese independence," will be considered during the next session of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee.

The 10th NPC Standing Committee's 13th session is scheduled to take place in Beijing from December 25 to 29.

The Standing Committee would also consider a draft resolution on the convening of third full session of the 10th NPC.

## Adverse reaction

The move, officially announced in Beijing, has drawn adverse reaction from the au-

thorities in the non-sovereign territory of Taiwan and a comment from the U.S. State Department that "neither side [China and Taiwan] should do anything to unilaterally change the status quo."

## Topical importance

China's latest announcement acquires much topical importance in the context of the latest setback suffered by the Taiwan President, Chen Shui bian, an 'independence' protagonist, and his political allies in the non-sovereign territory's parliamentary polls.

China's legislative move, however, predates Mr. Chen's latest political troubles.

In May this year, the Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, had said that the Central Gov-

ernment in Beijing would "seriously consider" any proposal, including that of an anti-secession law, that could be "conducive to the complete reunification of the motherland" — a transparent policy of reunifying Taiwan with mainland China. The new draft anti-secession law is seen in China as a move towards "national reunification."

## U.S. for dialogue

The U.S. State Department spokesman, indicating that Washington had already held "some conversation with the Chinese" about this anti-secession bill, said that both China and Taiwan should "focus on dialogue" and "it is not time to harden positions or take unilateral stances."

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THE HINDU

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## China Must Rethink Industrial Growth Strategy

By SP SETH

China's top leadership is starting to worry about the country's declining food production. Both President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao now see a link between food security and social stability. They might as well because, in the years to come, this would be a major concern. Grain production in China has fallen from a record 510 million tonnes in 1998 to a little over 400 million tonnes and is starting to hover around this figure. China's population is still growing, though at a lower rate due to its stringent population control policies.

### City against village

Back in the mid-nineties when the Worldwatch Institute highlighted the potential future gap between China's grain production and consumer demand, Beijing reacted rather angrily. Its then environmental spokesman, Xie Zhenhua, said tersely "we have been successfully using the world's seven per cent cultivable land to feed 22 per cent of the world's population". He added, "Science and technology and economic growth will see us through".

Apparently, they are not so sure now. China has only seven per cent of the world's arable land supporting the world's largest population mass. In its mad rush for industrialization at all cost, it has allowed further encroachment on its already limited arable land for industrial use and requirements of urban living. The city is gradually eating up the countryside in more than one way.

According to Liu Binyan and Perry Link, China is losing its arable land "at an annual rate of 0.5 per cent to erosion, construction of buildings and roads, and the encroachment of deserts". Writing in 1998, they pointed out that, "China now has two-thirds of the arable land it had four decades ago, and 2.3 times as many people". According to a recent estimate, the amount of arable land in China has shrunk by 6.7 million hectares since 1996.

China's growing industrialisation and consequent urbanisation is proving ruinous for the countryside where the bulk of its people live and work. The depressed rural economy (with artificially low prices for rural produce to support urban industrial economy), with its push for urban migration, is not only causing economic distress but also social disharmony and dislocation. With 10 million rural workers every year joining an al-

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ready 100 to 150 million floating migrant population looking for work in China's cities, it is not difficult to imagine the potential for more trouble and social chaos; especially when there are not enough jobs to go around.

According to the UN data, China's urban population will increase from about 38 per cent in

2002 to 53.6 per cent in 2020 and 70 per cent in 2050. If these future projections are right, China will become a predominantly urban industrial economy. Which raises important questions: First, will there be jobs for rural folks seemingly moving en masse to the cities, as well as for the urban unemployed? Two, how will the authorities deal with all the resultant social pressures, including crime, from such turbulent change? Three, who will feed millions upon millions of new urbanites?



2002 to 53.6 per cent in 2020 and 70 per cent in 2050. If these future projections are right, China will become a predominantly urban industrial economy. Which raises important questions: First, will there be jobs for rural folks seemingly moving en masse to the cities, as well as for the urban unemployed? Two, how will the authorities deal with all the resultant social pressures, including crime, from such turbulent change? Three, who will feed millions upon millions of new urbanites?

### Migration effects

According to the British newspaper *Guardian's* China correspondent, "In the first six months of the [current] year, the value of food imports surged 62 per cent to \$14.4 billion... Soyabean imports, which doubled last year to 20.3 m tonnes, are expected to double again this year". Jonathan Watts further reports that: "Such is the demand from China that Thai farmers report entire crops being bought long before harvests. Vietnamese authorities blame food-smuggling [into China] for a record 20 per cent increase in the price of rice. In one novel experiment the Chongqing municipal government is leasing land in Laos to grow food". Because of the growing demand for grains from China, there is a surge in global food prices. For instance, "grain

futures are up 30 per cent this year thanks largely to the China factor". What does it mean for both the world and China? The growing demand for food in China, and its inability to meet this demand from within the country, would mean a continuing upward pressure on world prices.

This would further impoverish the world's poor earning \$1 or thereabout a day. Besides, it will lead China to use its political and financial clout to lease, occupy or buy out food supplies from other countries, especially from its weak Asian neighbours.

We know that China has territorial demands on its neighbours. Internal pressure on food supplies and other resources could easily propel it to expand outward, as Japan did in the thirties and forties. Therefore, if Communist China maintains its economic growth trajectory in a stable environment under its Communist leadership (a big if, considering the potential for serious social strife in the years ahead), it will seek to secure its Asian neighbourhood under a tight embrace. Taiwan, for instance, is already being targeted. Any success there would have a ripple effect, making China's neighbours accommodative to its hegemonic ambitions.

Within China, its growing urbanisation will be socially extremely disruptive. In an old civilisation like China, agriculture is not just an economic activity but a whole way of life binding people together in kinship, culture, traditions and in so many other ways. The large-scale migration of rural population to cities will tend to destroy the age-old social structures rooted in the land. And these can't be trans-

planted in an impersonal urban environment. The resultant alienation of millions of people from their new urban environment will be a time bomb waiting to explode.

At the same time, employment opportunities will never keep pace with mass migration from the countryside. Large-scale industrialisation is not the answer to China's massive employment problem, made worse by rural migration. The effective answer to China's massive unemployment problem, existing as well as potential, is to make agriculture lucrative by reducing economic and social disparities between rural and urban sectors.

### Stormy times ahead

And that can only be done by not using the rural sector as a subsidiary of its urban/industrial economy. Otherwise, China is in for serious social strife. In fact, the much-touted claim of social stability under the communist rule will not stand the test of time if Beijing remains obsessed with economic growth to the exclusion of its social aftermath.

China wisely undid its communal farming under Deng Xiaoping, releasing farmers' immense energy and initiative to boost agricultural production. But since then the rural sector has been treated as a poor cousin to China's industrial economy, and it has lost momentum.

It is not suggested that China is facing any immediate problem of food shortage. But the long-term prognosis is not good. For a country traumatised by droughts and famine (the famine of early sixties led to deaths variously estimated between 30 and 40 million), any idea of food insecurity can be pretty scary.

The demand for food will keep growing not only because of population pressure, but also because China's prospering urban middle class is eating more and richer food. For instance, there is now greater demand for meat in the people's diet. And to grow meat requires much greater use of water, a scarce resource likely to become scarcer in China and elsewhere in much of the world. To quote Liu Binyan and Perry Link, "In the 1950s the water table in Beijing was sixteen feet below the surface; today [in 1998] it is more than 150 feet down".

Therefore, China's food situation is potentially perilous. Unless the power-hungry and money-hungry party elite and their hangers-on seriously re-think their country's industrial growth strategy, China might be in for stormy (not the rain producing kind) times ahead.

# China rejects HK's referendum plea

BEIJING, Oct. 25. — China has rejected pleas of Hong Kong's pro-democracy legislators for a referendum on whether local residents should be granted full democracy to choose their leader from 2007.

The rebuff to the pro-democracy lawmakers came in a statement carried by the official Xinhua news agency late last night in which an unnamed official from the liaison office of the Chinese government in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region said that Beijing will not allow violations of the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini constitution after the former British colony was handed over to China in July, 1997.

Hong Kong chief secretary for administration Mr Donald

## Powell's assurance

BEIJING, Oct. 25. — Secretary of state Mr Colin Powell, who met Chinese President Mr Hu Jintao, Premier Mr Wen Jiabao and foreign minister Mr Li Zhaoxing emphasised that the US will unwaveringly pursue the one-China policy and oppose any action aimed at "Taiwan independence", the official Xinhua news agency said. Earlier, Mr Hu had told Powell that its opposition to "Taiwan independence" and curbing risky activities of "Taiwan independence" forces are in common interests of both China, the United States, and the Asian-Pacific countries. — PTI

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Tsang on 19 October had said that the HKSAR government won't conduct a referendum as it was not "practical".

## North Korea talks

China and the US today agreed to work jointly to re-energise the six-party talks mechanism aimed at dismantling

North Korea's nuclear programmes while Washington urged Beijing to resume talks with arch rival Taiwan to ease tension in the cross-Straits ties.

"We agreed to the need for the six-party framework to continue," US secretary of state Mr Colin Powell said after meeting Chinese leaders. — PTI

THE STATESMAN

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# China in landmark free-speech ruling

Beijing, Oct. 18 (Reuters): A Chinese court has cleared a magazine of libel charges filed by a state-owned real estate developer in what is seen as a landmark ruling for freedom of speech.

All Chinese media are state controlled and expected to sing the praises of the government and play down bad news. The constitution enshrines freedom of speech, but defendants rarely win libel lawsuits.

The People's Intermediate Court in Tianhe district in the southern city of Guangzhou ruled on October 12 against Guangzhou Huaqiao Real Estate Development Co., which had sought 5.9 million yuan (\$711,000) in damages from *China Reform* magazine.

The July 1, 2003, edition of the monthly said Guangzhou Huaqiao had been stripped of its assets, posted losses and laid off workers as a result of

its ownership changing hands several times. The news was sourced to company and official documents.

The court ruled that journalists enjoyed legal immunity if news was backed up by a source which was reasonable

and believable, and not based on rumours or fabrication, according to a copy of the verdict seen by Reuters today.

"Room for freedom of speech has been expanded," libel lawyer Pu Zhiqiang said.

"In the past, if you say I'm

no good and I'm unhappy, I can sue you," Pu said. "The ruling, at the very least, does not consider a fair commentary to be infringement."

An employee of Guangzhou Huaqiao said the firm had not received a copy of the verdict and declined further comment. It has 15 days to appeal.

"The things the plaintiff discussed were all facts, maybe various factors (made the court) give consideration to the magazine first. I don't know why it's like this," Yang Jianguang, lawyer for Guangzhou Huaqiao, said by telephone. "I don't want to answer questions. Media issues are very complicated."

In its complaint, Guangzhou Huaqiao said the magazine had "dealt a heavy blow to a large-scale state-owned enterprise with hopes of soaring, and caused huge economic losses".

## Engineers stop Pak work

Islamabad, Oct. 18 (Reuters): China today voiced concern over the safety of its workers in Pakistan as Chinese engineers working on a dam project in a tribal region suspended operations after a colleague was killed in a hostage-taking drama last week.

Militants linked to al Qaida abducted two Chinese engineers working on the Gomal Zam dam project in the South Waziristan tribal region, near the Afghan border, on October 9.

China supplies Pakistan with military hardware and hundreds of millions of dollars in finance. Islamabad is concerned that the threat of Islamic militants, many of whom are hiding in tribal areas, could undermine economic ties with a major ally.

Chinese vice-foreign minister Wu Dawei said he hoped the killing would not affect China's relations with its long-time ally, but said Beijing was concerned for the safety of its nationals in Pakistan.

# DRAGONFIRE IN THE NORTH

## The inscrutable bamboo curtain

The Chinese are unlikely to be swayed by anything but aggressive self-interest when it comes to border talks with India

P STOB DAN

VERY little is being made public about the third round of the Special Representative-level talks held recently in New Delhi. Understandably, the contents of the talks have been kept under wraps by both the sides—the decision not to hurry through with an agreement was quite clear. Even prior to the talks, Chinese As-

pirations”, a euphemism for India’s dominance in South Asia, modernisation of the Indian Navy perceived to control the Indian Ocean, and India’s “Look East” policy. Chinese neither talk about open borders nor economic benefits of it. In fact, the Chinese showed misgivings about increased activity along the Indo-Tibetan frontier. They have been, however, pushing for border trade along Yatung for the obvious

ambassador to India and currently an Adviser to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, states the following non-negotiable positions: (a) In the eastern sector, India illegally occupies 90,000 sq km of Chinese territory; (b) In the western sector, India illegally claims 33,000 sq km of Chinese territory; (c) In the middle sector, India similarly occupies 2,000 sq km of Chinese territory; (d) The 1962 war was a Chinese counter-at-

Secondly, the Chinese official position remains that Sikkim is a historical issue between India and China and “hopes” it will be resolved as bilateral relations improve. Interestingly, the Chinese have not yet raised the border issue in the Sikkim portion, which they might bring up. It is quite clear that the recognition of Sikkim as part of India will depend on the demarcation of this boundary to the satisfaction of the Chinese. Similarly, the trade agreement between Sikkim and Tibet is also without prejudice to the status of Sikkim.

Thirdly, China may eventually also raise the question of the Indo-Bhutanese Treaty on Bhutan’s Defence and Foreign Relations. The Chinese have been asking the Bhutanese to get rid of Indian military presence on their soil in order to gain full diplomatic recognition by China. These issues qualify for China’s perception of India’s assertive nationalism and, hence, are obstacles for border settlement.

A perception has gained currency in India that China has not agreed to border trade in Ladakh because of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) has not been demarcated there. The LAC has not been demarcated anywhere, yet there are two other border trading points. In reality, China recognises Kashmir as disputed territory. The Chinese have been deliberately avoiding official dealings with India in Jammu and Kashmir because they could be interpreted as China’s acceptance of Indian sovereignty of Indian side of Kashmir. This was the precise reason given by the Chinese when the Commander of Lanzhou Military Region backed out from a visit to Leh, although this visit was agreed upon under the 1996 CBMs. In recent years, Pakistan has been dissuading the Chinese against venturing into any kind of major economic, transport projects with India involving Ladakh. Chinese have also been lukewarm about India’s suggestion of an oil pipeline through the Xinjiang-Ladakh corridor.

JASJIT SINGH

THE speculation going on for months about Jiang Zemin being replaced by President Hu Jintao finally came true, with Jiang handing over the chairmanship of the Central Military Commission of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party), the highest military command body in China. What attracted less attention are the other changes in the Central Military Commission effected on September 19. These have to be seen in the context of the Chinese system where the military continues to be an instrument of the party rather than that of the State. And the party’s Central Military Commission (CMC) is the ultimate authority for policymaking and operational control of the Chinese military. The Chairman of the CMC is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

Yet, one thing is clear. The new CMC would have, as per the 1982 constitution, one chairman (President Hu), three vice-presidents, and seven members. What can be gleaned from sketchy reports is that in accordance with the ongoing modernisation and change in China, the average age of the new members of the CMC is down from 71 years to 61. The commanders of the four branches of the military are even younger now. There must be some lesson somewhere for us here.

Four members of the CMC head the four departments: the general staff, logistics, armament and political departments under the CMC. What is more significant is that perhaps, for the first time, all four commanders of the four wings of the military—that is, the ground forces, air force, navy and the nuclear-missile forces (designated as Second Artillery)—have been made members of the CMC. Closer scrutiny would show that this is in response to the needs of planning and fighting a modern high-technology war, where air power, space and information warfare (including

## Young, communist, modern and high-tech

As China modernise its military, India should step up efforts at bilateral ties to ensure no misunderstanding crops up



The passing of the baton from Jiang to Hu was accompanied by changes in military command

network-centric warfare) capabilities assume importance.

The new composition of the CMC indicates a more balanced generation of capabilities of different branches of the military. For example, while the size of the ground forces has been reduced by almost one-third, that of the air force has been increasing. The air force is no longer seen merely as a supporting service for the ground forces.

The Chinese military doctrine aims to generate “integrated fighting power” and not merely integrated structures and forces. The basic principle expressed in typical Chinese characteristics is that “one plus one exceeds two”. This has come together in the Rapid Reaction Forces, to undertake intense high-technology “quick fighting, quick resolution” under conditions of high-tech regional warfare.

China’s military modernisation recognises the limitations of economic and technological resources, and hence has been highly selective in its focus and priorities. The annual report of the US Secretary of Defence to the Congress has been emphasising that “The principal area where China appears to be making advances in coercive military capabilities involves airpower, to include missiles and information operations”. More than a decade of access to Russian design technology and expertise has already almost dramatically altered the operational capabilities of the

Chinese air force and space capabilities. Compared to the non-use of its air force in 1962, or the very marginal use of its air force in the brief war with Vietnam in 1979, we are already witnessing the emergence of completely different aerospace capabilities along with the changes in military leadership towards much greater professionalism.

On the other hand, the

space would impact on our land forces in the battlefield far more than the other two services. The Pakistani army certainly learnt the lesson five years ago in the Kargil sector. And the answer does not lie in structural ownership of capabilities but, as China is demonstrating, in corporate collegiate planning and management. China has imbibed the lessons of recent wars, especially the focus of US military strategy, since any armed conflict over Taiwan could bring the US military power into confrontation with the Chinese military. But the real impact of military modernisation is on China’s neighbours.

But all this does not add up to what has been argued erroneously as the “China threat”. Changes in China’s military organisation, weapons and doctrine only reflect the changes taking place worldwide. Our own interests require friendly relations with China without ignoring our future capabilities, in harmony with the bilaterally agreed principle of “mutual and equal security” to ensure peace and tranquillity between the two Asian giants whose bilateral relations would have a profound impact on world affairs in the 21st century. What we need to ensure is that while both China and India modernise their military forces and systems, we also should step up bilateral military-to-military contacts and exchanges to ensure that no misunderstanding crops up.



The Dalai Lama and his followers in India are going to come up in the talks

sistant Foreign Minister for South Asia Shen Guofeng had cautioned mediapersons that as the two sides proceed deeper into the issue, there will be more problems.

India’s new interlocutor, J N Dixit, provided the spin that the issue must have a political solution, but an agreement at any cost and compromise are not the ends that are sought. The new argument of some Indian opinion makers is that we must move away from the “peasant mentality” of holding on to territory and instead talk about the metropolitan culture of focusing on trade and economic relations with China. In this connection, China’s border-negotiating tactics with three Central Asian states are worth understanding.

China’s official mouthpiece, the *People’s Daily*, recently cautioned that the outcome of the border negotiations depended on larger political, diplomatic and strategic dimensions. The article contested what it called “India’s assertive nationalist

**Having obtained India’s yes to Tibet Autonomous Region being a part of China, Beijing is now building up a case that the Dalai Lama and his followers here are sending terrorists into Tibet**

reasons of getting access to India’s vulnerable east.

China’s position of not accepting the McMahon Line by name is understandable since the matter impinges upon its sovereignty over Tibet. Interestingly, Chinese pre-positioning points are being articulated through a recent article by Cheng Ruisheng, published in Chinese Foreign Ministry-sponsored journal *International Studies*. Cheng, a former

tack in self-defence.

The Chinese are masters at obfuscation. In boundary negotiations with the Soviet Union, China presented three obstacles and insisted to Moscow that these be sorted out first before any meaningful progress could be made. What are the issues which China might portray as main obstacles for border negotiations with India?

Firstly, it is quite clear that the Chinese are going to raise the issue of the presence of the Dalai Lama and his Tibetan followers in India. Having obtained India’s endorsement of Tibet Autonomous Region as part of China, Beijing is now building up a case that the Dalai Lama and his establishment in India are sending saboteurs and terrorists into Tibet. Chinese assert that the Dalai Lama is acting on the advice of the US and India. The Chinese intention is to compel New Delhi to dismantle the in-exile Tibetan Government in Dharamsala and eventually expel the Dalai Lama from India.

**The China syndrome**

# Who is Hu

## He Marks a New Phase in China's Politics

By K Subrahmanyam

The king is dead; long live the king. That monarchist continuum has found an echo in contemporary China. In a process of seamless succession, Hu Jin Tao, till now the head of state of China and secretary-general of the Chinese Communist Party, became the country's unquestioned supremo by taking over the chairmanship of the Central Military Commission (CMC) this month. The CMC chief's post was so far held by Jiang Zemin, who was president and secretary-general of the party till March 2003, and chairman of the CMC till a few days ago. Hu's rise to the top is indicative of a change in China's political culture and style of governance.

In the 16th party congress held in March 2003, Jiang handed over the first two posts to Hu but kept the CMC chairmanship. In doing so, he was attempting to follow the example of Deng Xiao Peng who permitted Jiang to be president and party secretary-general even while keeping the chairmanship of CMC with him for over two decades. Deng was recognised as the paramount leader, though he kept with him only one of the three power centres. But Jiang failed when he tried to replicate Deng's formula. He bargained hard to fill important posts in the government and the party with his followers after his formal retirement, besides keeping the chairmanship of CMC with himself. But now he has been forced to hand over the most powerful post in China, carrying with it the nuclear button, to Hu.

Deng nominated both Jiang and Hu as his successors in that order. But Jiang and Hu are a striking contrast. Hu derives his legitimacy from Deng's nomination 10 years ago; both Jiang and Hu were brought into the standing committee of the Politburo at the same time, though the latter is more than 20 years younger. Hu is also the first leader to have risen to the top after joining the Communist Party after the revolution, in the seventies. While Jiang, Deng, Zhou Enlai and many of the first, second and third generation Chinese leaders were educated in France and Russia, Hu was educated in Qinghua University in China. While Jiang is trained in communication engineering in the Soviet Union, Hu is a hydraulics engineer without foreign education.

The differences do not end here. Jiang's career was based in Shanghai with his power base in the eastern industrial belt. Hu has spent most of his career in China's poorer hinterland. He was a party secretary of the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Though known for his moderate views, he did not hesitate to carry out the political crackdown in Tibet in 1989. Presumably

this combination of moderate views and ability to crack down when required recommended him to Deng, who earmarked him as Jiang's successor.

In the last year and a half, Hu has strengthened his position and made friends with the nominees of Jiang in the expanded standing committee of the Politburo. Zeng Qinghong, a Jiang nominee in the standing committee, was considered the most powerful member, while Hu was not one of Jiang's favourites. Yet, of late, Zeng Qinghong has appeared together in public with Hu, indicating a shift in his loyalties. Hu's allies have been promoted to key party and state posts with Qinghong controlling party's dossiers and hiring and firing top party cadres.

President Hu and premier Wen Jiabao have also attempted to move China away from the policy of favouring economic growth at all costs, which characterised the Jiang era. They favour balanced growth with attention to social inequality and environmental damage. Jiang's theory of three representations (industrial worker, peasant and entrepreneur) is receding into the background and taking its place is a growing mention of *Xiao Kang* (middle class) society. Hu is trying to keep neighbours at ease by saying that Beijing believes in a peaceful rise, as opposed to aggression.

Hu's consolidation marks the first smooth transition of power in post-revolution China. After the revolution in 1949, the Cultural Revolution resulted in a discontinuous transfer of power, though Mao Dze Dung was still alive. The Gang of Four, favoured by Mao and patronised by his wife, seized power. That was followed by their being toppled by the army immediately after Mao's death and the restoration of Deng Xiao Peng to paramount position.

In 1989, in the light of Tiananmen Square incident, Deng replaced his own nominee Zhao Ziang with Jiang. This time, Hu acquired full supremacy from Jiang Zemin in a smooth transition in two stages — in March 2003 and September 2004. This transition is indicative of the intent of the Chinese Communist Party to prevent informal rule and cult of personality. President Hu has repeatedly asserted that the American-style democracy would not serve the Chinese people and culture.

Hu has spent his entire party career in the era of Deng and has no experience of Long March, the anti-Japanese war, Great Leap Forward, Cultural Revolution and other disruptive developments. He is a product of Dengist evolutionary policies emphasising economic growth and orderly governance. Changes in China's economic policy perspectives would be of interest to the world, as would its shifts on the diplomatic plane.



# Hu's 'peaceful rise' gives new hope to Taiwan, HK

Agence France-Presse  
Beijing, September 20

**PRESIDENT HU** Jintao could ease China's hardline stance on Taiwan and Hong Kong now that his predecessor Jiang Zemin has retired, but major policy changes are unlikely, analysts said.

Jiang stepped down on Sunday as chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission, his last official post, and Hu took control of China's nuclear-capable army. Hu had already replaced Jiang as Communist Party boss and state president. "One area where there might be a change is in foreign policy," Lyman Miller, from the Hoover Institute of Stanford University who edits the *China Leadership Monitor*, said.

Miller said it was difficult to analyse what this meant "but it seems that there has been some contention over what this idea means with respect to relations with the US and Taiwan".

Ostensibly the idea of a peaceful rise of an increasingly powerful China would entail the peaceful settlement of the Taiwan issue. But it was unclear if this meant Beijing would back

down from its threat to take the island by force should it declare independence.

Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian on Monday was cautious about Hu's elevation to the top military post, saying there was no cause for optimism. "Regarding Jiang's resignation as chairman of the Communist Party's Central Military Commission and Hu taking over his position, we absolutely must not harbour any wishful thinking or unrealistic expectations," Chen said.

The two sides split in 1949 at the end of a civil war. In recent years, some Chinese academics have voiced concern that conflict in the Taiwan Strait would scuttle China's economic development and impede the ruling party's stated priority of building a prosperous nation.

China's relations with the US would also be harmed as Washington has consistently maintained that it would defend Taiwan, as mandated in its legally binding US-Taiwan Relations Act, they say.

A party communique issued on Sunday said that "Jiang's eight-point policy on Taiwan", the bedrock of the mainland's Taiwan pol-



Jiang Zemin (second from right) and Hu Jintao (right) with representatives at the CPC Central Committee in Beijing on Sunday. AFP

icy, was still in force and some analysts see little change now Jiang has stepped down. "I don't expect great changes in either Sino-US relations or cross-strait relations, at least in the short run, but I think

Hu is likely to focus more on resolving China's socioeconomic difficulties than confronting the US," said Joseph Fewsmith, a China expert at Boston University.

On Hong Kong, Hu may be freer to address increas-

ing demands for democracy, but it would likely only come in the context of the intra-party democratic reforms that he is already trying to pursue domestically.

"Hu's coming into power bodes well for Hong Kong and carry out his reforms

and to a certain extent Taiwan," said Paul Harris, a specialist on Chinese politics at Hong Kong's Lingnan University. "It's still a big question on whether he can consolidate his power and carry out his reforms

## Tibetans also see light

**TIBETANS-IN-EXILE** hope that negotiations on Tibet may enter a decisive phase with Chinese President Hu Jintao emerging as China's most powerful leader.

Significantly, the power transition took place at a time when a delegation of the Tibetan government-in-exile comprising Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari and Keltsang Gyaltzen and their assistants is on a visit of China since September 12.

The Dalai Lama's Nepalese representative, Wangchuck Tsering, on Monday said, "Hu knows Tibet and its people better than any other Chinese leader. Now that he is in total command of China, negotiations on Tibet can enter a decisive phase." Hu

served as the Communist Party's secretary in Tibet for three years since 1989.

During their talks, Tsering said, the Tibetan and Chinese sides will try to clear the air of mistrust prevailing between them "to prepare ground for fruitful negotiations." In 2002, both sides had agreed to negotiate on core issues like the Tibetans' demand for autonomy and Beijing's concern for its territorial integrity.

The Tibetans have been optimistic about Hu since his elevation as China's President in 2002, though it was he who had imposed martial law in Tibet to crush pro-freedom demonstration in 1989.

**HTC, Kathmandu**

French Centre for the Study of Contemporary China, said the image Hu has already projected — a down-to-earth leader concerned with the problems of ordinary people — could blossom more now.

# Jiang yields last ground

## Hu now the most powerful man in China

Associated Press  
Beijing, September 19

FORMER PRESIDENT Jiang Zemin turned over his last major post as chairman of the commission that runs China's military to his successor Hu Jintao, the government said on Sunday, completing the country's first peaceful leadership transition since its 1949 revolution.

Jiang, whose term was to have run until 2007, handed in his resignation during a meeting of the ruling Communist Party's Central Committee, the official Xinhua News Agency said in a brief dispatch.

The committee "approved Hu to take over the (Central Military Commission) chairmanship after accepting Jiang's resignation", Xinhua said.

### PROFILE OF A LEADER

- As President from 1989 to 2003, Jiang took the helm of the world's largest country in the wake of the Tiananmen Square killings

- Jiang was paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's new protégé to lead the Communist Party

- Not regarded as an innovative statesman, Jiang is a facilitator whose main priority was to maintain social stability, continuing with gradual

economic reforms and thus ensuring the Communist Party remained in power

- He also attempted to make his mark as a political thinker, alongside Mao and Deng, by attempting to modernise the Party

- When he came to power, China was a virtual pariah state. By the time he handed over the presidency to Jintao, it had become the fastest-growing economy in the world

hua said. It did not say why Jiang chose to leave before his term was up.

Xu Caihou, 61, will replace Hu as deputy chairman, Xinhua said. In 1999, Xu became a vice-director in the People's Liberation Army, Chi-

na's massive military.

Diplomats and political analysts didn't expect any major announcements from the four-day meeting of the 198-member Central Committee, which began behind closed doors on Thursday.

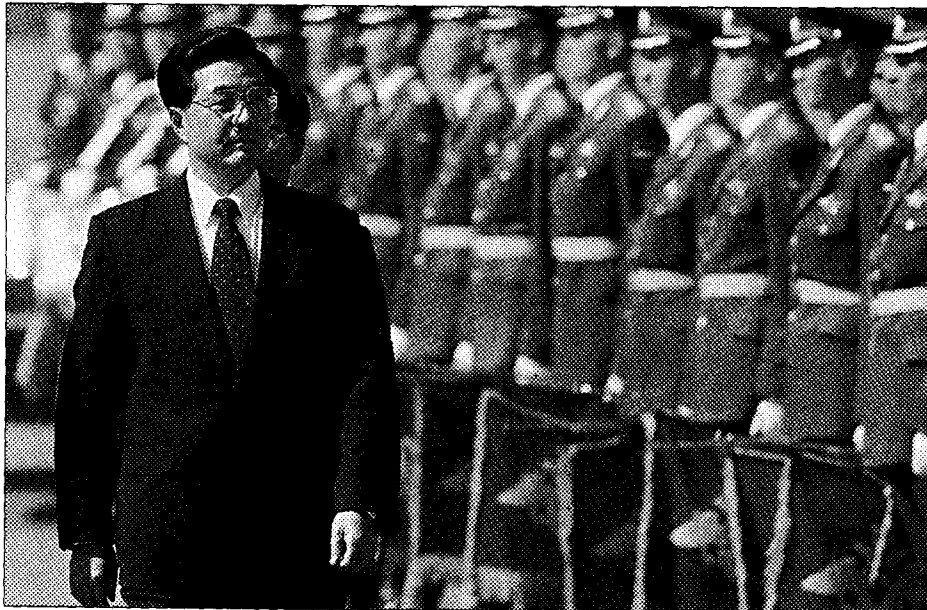
The session, which ended Sunday, was to focus on looking for ways to improve party governance.

But media reports that Jiang would step down began circulating days before the meeting began. Citing unidentified sources, *The New York Times* said on its website on Saturday that the former president might possibly cite heart trouble or cancer as an excuse for an early exit. The 78-year-old Jiang, however, has given no public sign of illness.

The resignation might also mean that Jiang is using a well-worn tactic in Chinese politics to shore up his position by mobilising public declarations of support and having backers beg him to stay. Jiang's retirement would complete the first peaceful leadership transition since the Communists took power in 1949. Party leaders have been keen on a peaceful transfer of power as they wrestle economic and social problems ranging from rural poverty to corruption to relations with rival Taiwan.

Hu has long been expected to inherit the top position in the military commission. Taking the post would ensure Hu's status as the country's paramount leader, although he would still be surrounded by Jiang allies on the nine-member Standing Committee, the party's highest echelon of power.

Hu, 62, took over as party leader in 2002 and became President early the following year. Jiang retained his influence after 13 years as party leader by holding on to his military post.



ALL-IN-ALL Chinese President Hu Jintao in Moscow.

REUTERS



# Jiang cedes military reins

China daily/ANIN & PTI

BEIJING, Sept. 19. — Chinese military helmsman Mr Jiang Zemin has resigned, handing reins of the world's largest standing army to President Hu Jintao, completing the Chinese leadership transition which began in 2002.

The four-day plenum of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), which concluded here today, approved Mr Hu to take over the chairmanship of the Central Military Commission (CMC) after accepting Mr Jiang's resignation.

No reason was cited for Mr Jiang's resignation as the CMC chairman, the powerful post which allowed the 78-year-old technocrat-turned politician control the 2.5 mil-

lion-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA), a leading player in China's closed political system.

"The plenum unanimously agreed that this (Mr Hu's becoming CMC chairman) is conducive to upholding the fundamental principle and system of the Party's absolute leadership over the military, and is also conducive to the strengthening of the military's revolutionisation, modernisation and regularisation process," said a communique released after the closing of the plenum. The communique also noted that the plenum had "highly evaluated Comrade Jiang Zemin's outstanding contributions to the Party, the state and the people."

Mr Jiang could have continued in his post till 2007. However, that could

have impaired the working of the Chinese government as well as the military with a new younger generation of Communist Party leadership under Mr Hu, who took control of

**Mr Jiang's handing over of the military reins to Mr Hu has culminated the power transition to the younger generation in the Communist Party that began in November 2002**

the party and government in 2002 and 2003.

Mr Jiang, a former Shanghai mayor, was selected by then-supreme leader Deng Xiaoping to lead the party in 1989 after Tiananmen

Square pro-democracy protests and an internal power struggle threatened to wreck it apart.

After holding two consecutive terms as Chinese President, Mr Jiang stepped down in favour of Mr Hu (61) in 2003. Prior to that, Mr Jiang had quit as secretary-general of the Communist Party in 2002 to make way for a new generation of leaders led by Mr Hu.

However, Mr Jiang held on to the Chairmanship of the Central Military Commission, the most powerful body which gave him big clout in areas such as security and foreign policy.

**Ex-minister expelled:** The Communist Party today expelled a former land and resources minister, Mr Tian Fengshan, from the party on corruption charges.

## 'No effect' on India-China ties

BEIJING, Sept. 19. — The resignation of Mr Jiang Zemin, the chief of China's military, will not affect Sino-Indian ties as the two neighbours have agreed to resolve their problems through dialogue and form a long-term comprehensive partnership, analysts said here today.

Though Mr Jiang had played a key role in laying the foundation of a stable India-China relationship during his 1996 India visit, the new generation of Chinese leaders led by Mr Hu have also worked hard to further improve ties with Delhi.

Among the most important bilateral pacts signed during the visit was the one on confidence building measures in the military field along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China border areas. — PTI

# জিয়াং বাদ, হু-ই চিনের সর্বময় নেতা

বেজিং, ১৯ সেপ্টেম্বর: জিয়াং জেমিনের হাত থেকে শেষপর্যন্ত চিনের সামরিক প্রশাসনের দায়িত্বভারও পেয়ে গেলেন হু জিনতাও। আজ এখানে চিনা কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির শীর্ষ অধিবেশনের শেষদিনে ক্ষমতার এই হাতবদলের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে ৭৮ বছরের জিয়াং-এর জায়গায় ৬১ বছরের হু-ই হলেন চিনের সর্বময় নেতা। প্রবীণদের সরিয়ে দেশের নেতৃত্বে নবীনদের আনার যে প্রক্রিয়া চলছে, এটা তারই শেষ পর্যায় বলা যায়।

হু-এর উত্তরণ শুরু হয়েছিল দু'বছর আগে। প্রথম ধাপে ২০০২ সালে জিয়াংকে সরিয়ে চিনা কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির চেয়ারম্যান হন হু। তার পরের বছর তিনি পান প্রেসিডেন্ট পদ। এ বারে জিয়াং তাঁর শেষ দুর্গ কেন্দ্রীয় সামরিক কমিশনের চেয়ারম্যান পদটি ২০০৭ সালে মেয়াদ ফুরানো পর্যন্ত ধরে রাখতে চেয়েছিলেন। চার দিনের পার্টি অধিবেশনে এই নিয়ে রীতিমতো টানাপোড়েন চলে। কিন্তু শেষরক্ষা হল না। জিয়াং-এর সঙ্গে হু-এর বড় বেশি সংঘাত লাগছিল। ফলে প্রশাসনিক কাজ ব্যাহত হচ্ছিল, অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়নও। তাই জিয়াংকে সরতে হল।



জিয়াং জেমিন



হু জিনতাও China ①

তবে, এর ফলে চিনের অভ্যন্তরীণ ও বিদেশ নীতিতে কোনও নাটকীয় পরিবর্তন আসবে বলে বিশ্লেষকেরা মনে করছেন না। দীর্ঘ ১৫ বছর ধরে জিয়াং-এর নেওয়া বহু নীতির সুফল ভোগ করছে চিন। দেং জিয়াও পিং-এর ওই উত্তরসূরির আমলেই চিন বিশ্বের সপ্তম অর্থনৈতিক শক্তিতে পরিণত হয়েছে। দেং-এর জমানায় কমিউনিস্ট রাষ্ট্রের নিরেট লৌহকপাট ভাঙার যে কাজ শুরু হয়েছিল, জিয়াং তাকে আরও অনেকটা এগিয়ে নিয়ে যেতে পেরেছেন। তাঁর চেষ্ঠাতেই চিনে ২০০৮ সালের অলিম্পিক হতে চলেছে। কাজেই হু-এর পক্ষে তাঁকে পুরোপুরি অস্বীকার করা সম্ভব হয়ে উঠবে না।

কারও কারও মতে, দেং যেমন সব পদ ছেড়ে দিয়েও নেপথ্যে থেকে বেশ কয়েক বছর দল ও সরকারকে নিয়ন্ত্রণ করেছেন, জিয়াও তা-ই করবেন। তবে পার্টিরই অনেকে বলছেন, দেং-এর যে ক্ষমতা ও দলের উপর যে প্রভাব ছিল, জিয়াং-এর তেমন নেই। সুতরাং অচিরেই তিনি ইতিহাস হয়ে যাবেন।

ইতিহাসই বলবে, কার ধারণা ঠিক।

— রয়টার্স, পি টি আই

# Hu acquires commanding presence

HD-14  
20/9

China  
①

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, SEPT. 19. The Chinese President, Hu Jintao, today assumed charge as Chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission (CMC) of the governing Communist Party of China (CPC). With this, Mr. Hu acquires a commanding political presence at the highest echelons of China's power structure, according to regional diplomats.

Holding the pivotal post of General Secretary of the CPC, besides being the President of China, Mr. Hu has now succeeded Jiang Zemin as the CMC Chairman. Mr. Jiang remained at the helm of the CMC, even as he successively relinquished the post of General Secretary of the CPC in November 2002 and that of China's President in March 2003. Both these positions went to Mr. Hu.

Today's turn of events, fully approved by the 16th CPC Central Committee, which concluded its four-day fourth plenum in Beijing, marks a complete transfer of power and authority from Mr. Jiang to Mr. Hu.

## Unanimous agreement

Accepting Mr. Jiang's resignation from the post of Chairman of the CMC, the plenum "unanimously agreed" that Mr. Hu's assumption of this position "is conducive to upholding the fundamental principle and system of the party's absolute leadership over the military", according to a communiqué that was released at the conclusion of the sessions.

The plenum further noted that the change "is also condu-

cive to the strengthening of the military's revolutionisation, modernisation and regularisation process."

At the same time, the plenum "highly evaluated Comrade Jiang Zemin's outstanding contributions to the party, the state and the people." Providing an informal and 'personal' interpretation of today's event, an authoritative Chinese source told *The Hindu* that Mr. Hu's assumption of the new post, while being significant, was a "follow-up" action, given that he had already become the CPC General Secretary and China's President when Mr. Jiang handed over those posts.

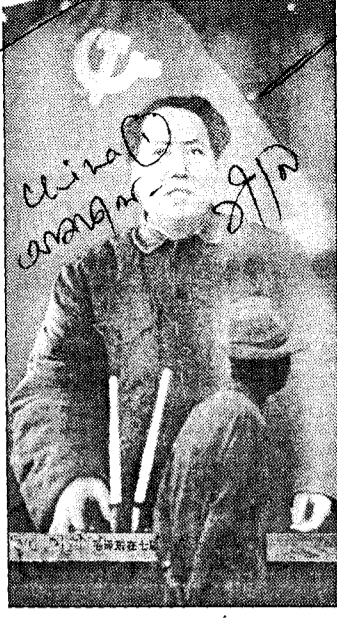
## Leader at the helm

Mr. Hu is now at the helm of not only the political affairs of the state but also the military establishment, the source underlined.

In what appeared to be a virtual farewell to Mr. Jiang at the centre-stage of China's politics and public administration, the CPC plenum said he had, during the past 15 years as the CMC Chairman, "grasped the development trends of new military reforms in the world with his great insight."

Enriching the army-building ideas of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, Mr. Jiang founded the 'thought,' now associated with his name, "for national defence and army-building," the communiqué quoted the plenum as having said.

Under his leadership, it was noted, China's "national defence and army modernisation process has achieved tremendous success."



এখনও মাও। প্লেনাম বৈঠক উপলক্ষে  
বিশেষ প্রদর্শনী। ছবি: এ এফ পি

## চীন: পার্টির প্লেনাম শুরু

বেজিং, ১৬ সেপ্টেম্বর (পি টি আই)—  
চীনা কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির চারদিনের  
প্লেনারি বৈঠক শুরু হল আজ থেকে।  
দলের বোডশ কেন্দ্রীয় কমিটির চতুর্থ  
বৈঠক। দেশের অর্থনৈতিক সংস্কার  
কর্মসূচি, আর্থিক বৃদ্ধির হার ধরে রাখার  
মতো বিষয়গুলো যথারীতি এবারও  
শুরু হতে পারে। কিন্তু এবারই প্রথম  
আলোচ্যসূচির শীর্ষে থাকবে কমিউনিস্ট  
পার্টির শাসনের ক্ষমতা এবং ক্ষেত্র কী  
করে আরও প্রসারিত করা যায়, সেই  
প্রসঙ্গ। দেশে তাইনের শাসন কীভাবে  
আরও মজবুত করা যায়, দল এবং  
সরকারের মধ্যে সম্পর্ক কীভাবে আরও  
ভাল করা যায়, বাজার অর্থনীতির  
সমৃদ্ধির পাশাপাশি প্রশাসনিক ব্যবস্থার  
উন্নতি কীভাবে সম্ভব, সেই সব নিয়েই  
আগামী চারদিন মতামত ঘামাবেন চীনা  
কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির এবারের কেন্দ্রীয়  
কমিটির ১৯৮ জন সদস্য। তবে  
আলোচনার বিষয় এবং সভ্য  
গতিপ্রকৃতি, সবই আপাতত রাজনীতি  
বিশেষজ্ঞ এবং বার্তামাধ্যমের  
অনুমাননির্ভর। কারণ বৈঠক হবে রুদ্ধদ্বার  
ঘরে। চীনের সরকারি সংবাদ সংস্থা  
শিনহুয়া বৈঠক শুরু হওয়ার খবরটাই  
জানিয়েছে মাত্র। ওই বিশেষজ্ঞরাই মনে  
করছেন, মুক্ত অর্থনীতির সুবাদে বহির্বিপ্লবের  
সঙ্গে চীনের যোগাযোগের ক্রমশ বিস্তৃত  
হওয়ার কারণে রাজনৈতিক ক্ষমতার ওপর  
চীনা কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির নিয়ন্ত্রণ ক্রমশই  
কমছে। চীনের নেতারা এও বুঝতে  
পারছেন যে, প্রশাসনের নিচুতলায় ব্যাপক  
দুর্নীতির কারণে তাদের জনসমর্থনে ভাঙন  
ধরেছে। সুতরাং চেষ্টা চলবে সাধারণ  
মানুষের হৃদয় জিতে নিতে পারে এমন  
নীতি নেওয়ার। তবে এক্ষেত্রে বেজিং  
নিজেদের পুরনো খোলস ছেড়ে পশ্চিমা  
রাজনৈতিক চরিত্র আত্মস্থ করার চেষ্টা  
করবে, এমন ধারণাও ভুল। বলছেন ওই  
বিশেষজ্ঞরাই। কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির সাধারণ  
সম্পাদক, চীনের প্রেসিডেন্ট হু জিনতাও  
নিজেও এ প্রসঙ্গে কেনও অস্পষ্টতা  
রাখেননি। এবারের প্লেনাম শুরু হওয়ার  
আগেই এক ভাষণে জিনতাও বলেছেন,  
'আমাদের অবশ্যই শিখতে হবে অন্য  
সভ্যতা থেকে, অন্য রাজনৈতিক সংস্কৃতি  
থেকে। কিন্তু তাই বলে অন্য দেশের  
রাজনৈতিক ব্যবস্থার অন্ধ অনুকরণ আমরা  
কখনই করব না।' পশ্চিমি বার্তামাধ্যমের  
আরও একটি ধারণা, জিয়াং জেমিন ইস্তফা  
দিতে পারেন চীনের সামরিক কমিশনের  
সভাপতির পদ থেকে। হু জিনতাওই ওই  
পদটি শেষ পর্যন্ত দখল করবেন।

17 SEP 2004

17 SEP 2004

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# CPC begins deliberations on 'ruling capacity'

By P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE, SEPT. 16.** The Communist Party of China (CPC) today began deliberations on measures to enhance its "ruling capacity," as the plenary session of the powerful Central Committee opened in Beijing.

At the top of the agenda of the fourth plenum of the 16th Central Committee of the CPC is the building of the party's governing capabilities in these changing times, according to an official version.

Regional diplomats and Chinese analysts have noted that the CPC Central Committee is formally turning the focus on this issue for the first time since the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on October 1, 1949.

The centre-piece of the discussions on this crucial subject during the four-day plenum has been formulated by the Political Bureau, whose "work report" will also be 'heard' during this session.

The Political Bureau had, at an earlier meeting in this regard, underlined that the 'improvement' of the party's governing capabilities would be

"a major issue of strategic importance to the fate of both the building of socialism and the Chinese nation," according to this account of the circumstances in which this discussion is now taking place at the political echelon of the Central Committee.

Political observers are of the view that the latest exercise has been undertaken in the context of toning up the quality of governance to meet the challenges and opportunities of developing its "market economy" with the characteristics unique to the country.

The other factors likely to determine the political priorities for this purpose are reckoned to be the issue of a better management of the relationship between the CPC and the Chinese Government, besides the accent on rule of law.

The plenum is taking place against the backdrop of the categorical assertion by the Chinese President and CPC's General Secretary, Hu Jintao, that the Western political models would not suit the requirements of governing China on the basis of its ideology of "socialist democracy."

CHINA'S SYSTEM / 'A GREAT INVENTION'

# Hu rules out western models

China  
HD-13  
1699

By P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE, SEPT. 15.** The Chinese President, Hu Jintao, today praised the country's people's congress system as a "natural choice" and said an uncritical adherence to the Western political systems would only "lead China to a dead end."

Mr. Hu was addressing a grand rally in Beijing to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's highest legislature. The Chairman of the NPC's Standing Committee, Wu Bangguo, presided over the rally, held at the Great Hall of the People.

The President, who is also the General Secretary of the governing Communist Party of China (CPC), hailed the people's congress system as a great invention that integrated the basic principles of Marxism with actual conditions.

Describing China's political model as a natural choice for social development since the advent of modern times, Mr. Hu said the system reflected "the common interests and aspirations of the Chinese people of all ethnic groups." Indeed, this system symbolised a significant

achievement of the Chinese people under the CPC's leadership, he noted.

Tracing the history of China's political choices in modern times, including those made under the "bourgeois democratic revolution" that was led by Sun Yat-sen in 1911, Mr. Hu said the CPC finally and "logically" came into the position to shoulder the historic mission of leading the Chinese people for the great change.

The people's congress system, which was set up under the CPC's auspices, laid the political foundation for China's socialist system, he pointed out. China, Mr. Hu emphasised, must stick to and improve the present system. Commending the socialist democratic politics under this model, he said the rule of law and the task of mobilising people for building "a relatively affluent society in an all-round way" should be persevered with.

's congress system, as the fundamental political system, fits China's special conditions by embodying China's socialist characteristics and representing Chinese people's right as the master of the country," said Mr. Hu. — AP

## CPC to highlight its 'ruling capabilities'

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, SEPT. 10. The ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) is set to turn the spotlight on its own "governance capabilities," with a view to enhancing them. The fourth plenary session of the CPC's Central Committee, scheduled to convene between September 16 and 19, will focus on the party's "ruling capacity."

The party plenum's agenda was outlined by the Political Bureau of the CPC's Central Committee at the conclusion of its preparatory meeting in Beijing

on Tuesday. It was indicated, in an official version by the party, that the Political Bureau decided to send a draft resolution on this subject to the fourth plenum of the CPC's 16th Central Committee for its approval.

The Political Bureau's meeting in Beijing was presided over by the CPC General Secretary and China's President, Hu Jintao.

This meeting "heard a report" on the drafting of the "Resolution on the Building of Ruling Capacity of the Party." The discussion centred on "lots of constructive comments and

proposals from different localities, departments and circles as well as the delegates of the 16th CPC Congress."

It was pointed out during the Political Bureau's meeting that the CPC must accelerate efforts to fashion its ruling capacity so as to meet the "demands of the new situation" during China's current "crucial stage of reform and development drive."

The new accent on raising the CPC's governance capabilities acquires importance in the context of the recent leadership changes at the helm of the party and the state.

By P. S. Suryacharayana

**SINGAPORE, AUG. 22.** The Chinese President, Hu Jintao, today pledged to strive for the "further development of socialist democracy" and "the promotion of political reform," as the country celebrated the birth centenary of Deng Xiaoping, the chief architect of "opening-up and modernisation drive."

Speaking at the grand centenary function at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Mr. Hu indicated that the process of political reform would be carried forward in "an active and steady manner". "Efforts must be made to develop socialist democracy, improve the

socialist legal system, build a socialist country under rule of law and ensure the people exercise the right to democratic election, democratic policymaking, democratic administration and democratic supervision according to law."

#### A great Marxist

Emphasising that the key to a successful management of the world's most populous country lay in the hands of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), he said it would concentrate on steps to improve its own "governing capability" while "unswervingly pushing forward the fight against corruption." Mr. Hu hailed Deng,

who died in February 1997, as "a great Marxist, a great proletarian revolutionary, statesman, military strategist and diplomat and a long-tested Communist fighter" and the "chief architect of China's socialist reform." Deng's "scientific theories" would "continue to change and influence China and the world at large."

Alluding to Deng's creative ideas that fashioned China in the past two-and-a-half decades, Mr. Hu, who is also the CPC's General Secretary, said, "Deng Xiaoping's blueprint for China's modernisation is gradually being turned into a wonderful reality." According to an official version of the key ad-

dress, Mr. Hu called upon the CPC and the entire people to persist with "arming the whole Party and educating the whole nation with Deng Xiaoping Theory and the 'Three Represents' important thought at all times and under all circumstances."

While Deng Xiaoping Theory placed China on its trajectory of rapid economic modernisation, the Three Represents, enunciated by the former President and the CPC's former General Secretary, Jiang Zemin, is widely regarded as a "further development" of Deng Xiaoping Theory. The CPC's representational character has been expanded under this new

thought, which Western diplomats and observers interpret as being reflective of the party's intention to move towards a "capitalist manifesto."

#### Foreign policy

Significant against this background was Mr. Hu's recounting of how Deng had underlined that the "planning and the market are only means of economic development rather than the symbols of socialism and capitalism."

On the "independent foreign policy of peace," Mr. Hu said Deng had, on the basis of his study of the international situation of the 1980s, come to a major conclusion that peace

and development were the two important issues of the contemporary world. Recalling Deng's "great concern" for the "reunification of the motherland," Mr. Hu said the Central Government would adhere to the policy of "one country, two systems."

Calling upon all Chinese, including "Taiwan compatriots," to oppose any move towards proclamation of 'independence' by that territory, he said: "We are ready to strive for the prospects of peaceful reunification, with our utmost sincerity and utmost efforts, but we are also fully determined and capable of smashing any scheme to separate Taiwan from China."

# Deng's scientific theories will influence the world: Hu



leader's 100th birth anniversary. —

## Deng's ideas will guide China forever: Hu *China*

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**BEIJING, AUG. 21.** The Chinese President, Hu Jintao, has lauded the "indelible historic contributions" of Deng Xiaoping in nation-building and asserted that the revolutionary policies of the late paramount leader would be adhered forever by the 1.3 billion Chinese people. "Deng Xiaoping made indelible historic contributions to the Communist Party of China (CPC), the nation and the people during more than 70 years of his revolutionary career, and won the love and esteem of all CPC members, soldiers and people of various ethnic groups across the country," Mr. Hu said. Speaking on the eve of the 100th birth centenary of Deng which will be marked on Sunday, Mr. Hu, also General Secretary of the ruling CPC, said the late leader's scientific policies would be the guide for Chinese people in their endeavour to make the country a developed nation.

"Deng's great achievement will be enshrined in the glorious history of the Chinese nation,

and his scientific theory will guide Chinese people forever," Mr. Hu said.

Deng, who died in 1997 at age 92, introduced the reform and opening-up policies in China that paved the way for a market economy.

### Tough message

China invoked Deng today in its campaign to recover Taiwan, lauding his proposal to recover the island by a "one country, two systems" formula but saying he never gave up the threat of force. The issue of Taiwan's reunification with the mainland has turned the Taiwan Strait into Asia's most dangerous flashpoint since the March re-election of the Taiwanese President, Chen Shui-bian, who has enraged Beijing by espousing independence for the self-ruled democratic island, analysts say.

"Deng stressed in the mid-1980s that China should never abandon military means as an option in resolving the Taiwan issue, which could deter

Taiwan's separatists," the Xinhua news agency quoted Chen Yunlin, director of the Taiwan Affairs Office, as saying late on Friday.

However, Beijing would maintain its primary policy of peaceful reunification, Chen told Xinhua. Deng's theory on reunification would remain the guiding principle in resolving the Taiwan issue, he said.

Beijing has regarded Taiwan as a renegade province that must be returned to the fold, by force if necessary, since the two split after the end of a civil war in 1949.

### Splashed in media

Deng's views on everything from bridges to economic reforms have been splashed across the media in recent weeks.

The propaganda barrage is aimed both at reminding Chinese to whom they owe their new prosperity and to underscore the legitimacy of leaders who have succeeded him, and their policies. — PTI, Reuters

# Li Peng washes hands of Tiananmen

Reuters  
Beijing, August 18

CHINESE EX-PREMIER Li Peng, dubbed the Butcher of Beijing for declaring martial law days before troops crushed the 1989 Tiananmen protests, has defended his role in the massacre by invoking late leader Deng Xiaoping for the first time.

Analysts saw the essay, titled *Commemorating Deng Xiaoping*, as an attempt by Li to wash his hands of the controversial decision and clear his name. In a rare essay published in the monthly magazine *Seeking Truth* — a Communist Party mouthpiece — Li said Deng had “firmly and forcefully backed” the government’s decision to send troops and tanks into Beijing’s Tiananmen Square.

Hundreds were killed on June 3-4 when the army cru-



Deng Xiaoping & Li Peng  
*Passing the buck*

shed the student-led pro-democracy demonstrations that had occupied the square for several weeks. Li, who had gone on television to declare martial law just days beforehand, was widely blamed for the carnage.

“A serious political disturbance took place in China between the spring and summer of 1989,” the 75-year-old Li wrote in the article published just before Sunday’s

100th anniversary of Deng’s birth. “With the boldness of vision of a great revolutionary and politician, comrade Deng Xiaoping and other old comrades firmly and forcefully backed resolute measures by the party and the government without delay,” said Li, who as premier at the time was reviled throughout China for his role in the crackdown.

Analysts said the party’s

elite 198-member Central Committee had approved publication of the essay in its magazine, indicating that the leadership had no intention of overturning the official verdict that the protests were a “counter-revolutionary rebellion”, or subversive.

The government bans public commemoration of the anniversary, fearing it could spark fresh protests against high unemployment, heavy taxes on farmers and a widening gap between rich and poor. “Putting down that political disturbance ensured the long-term stability of the country and provided indispensable conditions for China’s future development and improvement,” Li said.

An increasing number believe the massacre was unavoidable and paved the way for the stability and breakneck economic growth.

# আর্থিক স্বাধীনতার সঙ্গে গণতান্ত্রিক অধিকারও ফিরিয়ে দেওয়া হচ্ছে চিনে

বেজিং, ৩ অগস্ট: চিনের প্রাচীর ভেদ করে এ বার সেখানে প্রবেশ করছে আলোকরেখা। ধীরে ধীরে হলেও, উন্নয়নের সঙ্গে অর্থনৈতিক স্বাধীনতা এবং মানুষের গণতান্ত্রিক অধিকারের পুনঃপ্রতিষ্ঠাকে যে চিন একই আসনে বসচ্ছে, তা জানিয়ে দিয়েছে সেখানকার বিভিন্ন সরকারি দফতর। চিনা সংবাদমাধ্যমও সে খবর প্রকাশ করতে দ্বিধা করেনি।

সম্প্রতি চিন সরকার জমির ব্যক্তি মালিকানা ফিরিয়ে দেওয়ার পরে এ বার তারা জানিয়ে দিয়েছে, শুধু জাতীয় আয় বা জি ডি পি কতটা বাড়ল, তার নীরস পরিসংখ্যান প্রকাশ করেই আর তারা তৃপ্ত থাকতে চায় না। ওই বৃদ্ধি কতটা মানবিক, মানুষের জীবন যাপনের মান বাড়ার মাধ্যমে তা এসেছে কি না, তাদের গণতান্ত্রিক অধিকার বজায় আছে কি না, তা মূল্যায়নের জন্য বেশ কিছু মাপকাঠিও স্থির করে ফেলেছে চিন সরকার। সেই কারণেই পরিবার নিয়ন্ত্রণের আইন লঙ্ঘন করলে সংশ্লিষ্ট পরিবারকে শাস্তি দেওয়ার বদলে এ বার আইন মানলে পুরস্কৃত করার নীতি গ্রামাঞ্চলে চালু করা হয়েছে। পাশাপাশি, বৃহৎ শিক্ষকে শাখা হিসাবে আর্থিক সংস্থা খোলার অনুমতিও দিয়েছে এখানকার ব্যাঙ্ক নিয়ন্ত্রক সংস্থা।

গ্রামাঞ্চলে পরিবার নিয়ন্ত্রণ নীতিকে সংস্কার করে

তাকে মানবিক রূপ দিতে বিগত ত্রিশ বছরের এক-সন্তান নীতি থেকে পুরোপুরি সরে না-এসেও, তা একটু ভিন্ন ভাবে বহাল রাখতে উদ্যোগী হয়েছে চিন। এই ব্যাপারে দায়িত্বপ্রাপ্ত অফিসারেরা জানিয়েছেন, এ বছর থেকেই গ্রামাঞ্চলে যাঁদের একটি সন্তান কিংবা দু'টি কন্যাসন্তান রয়েছে, তাঁদের শংসাপত্র দেওয়া, ব্যাঙ্ক অ্যাকাউন্ট খুলে দিয়ে পুরস্কৃত করা এবং সরকারি সহায়তা শুরু হয়ে গিয়েছে। এর জন্য যে সমস্ত মাপকাঠি স্থির করা হয়েছে, সেগুলি হল:

- পুরস্কৃতরা অবশ্যই হবেন গ্রামাঞ্চলের বাসিন্দা
- তাঁরা যে ১৯৭৩ থেকে ২০০১ সালের মধ্যে পরিবার নিয়ন্ত্রণ নীতি লঙ্ঘন করেননি, তার প্রমাণ থাকা চাই
- বর্তমানে তাঁদের হয় একটি সন্তান কিংবা দু'টি কন্যাসন্তান থাকতে হবে। সন্তানহীন হলেও এই সুযোগ মিলবে

‘দারিদ্র মানেই অধিক সন্তান, অধিক সন্তান মানেই দারিদ্র’— এই ঘূর্ণাবর্ত থেকে মানুষকে বের করে আনতেই পুরনো নীতি নতুন ভাবে রূপায়ণের উদ্যোগ বলে সরকারি সূত্রে জানা গিয়েছে। নয়া জমানায় প্রথম সরকারি শিরোপা ইতিমধ্যেই জুটে গিয়েছে উত্তর-পূর্ব চিনের হেলংজিয়াং প্রদেশের কিংহাইয়ের বাসিন্দা ৬৭

বছরের প্রবীণ গ্রামবাসী বাও শুকি এবং তাঁর স্ত্রী হুয়াং ইউইনের কপালে। গত ১ অগস্টই তাঁরা হাতে পেয়ে গিয়েছেন একটি শংসাপত্র এবং ব্যাঙ্কের পাশবই। ত্রিশ বছর আগে সরকারি আছানে সাড়া দিয়ে পরিবার নিয়ন্ত্রণ নীতি মানায় তাঁদের রয়েছেন একটিমাত্র কন্যা।

জীবন যাপনের মান বাড়তে শুধু পরিবার নিয়ন্ত্রণ নীতি নয়, স্থানীয় স্বায়ত্তশাসন সংস্থাগুলির মূল্যায়নেও নতুন ৩৩টি মাপকাঠি তৈরি করে ফেলেছে চিন। মাপকাঠিগুলি চিনা সরকারি গণমাধ্যমে এই প্রথম প্রকাশিতও হয়েছে। তার মধ্যে রয়েছে:

- (১) সাধারণ মানুষের মাথাপিছু আয় বাড়ানো,
- (২) গড় আয়ুর বৃদ্ধি, (৩) আমলাদের শিক্ষাগত মান বাড়ানো, (৪) পথ দুর্ঘটনা এবং শিল্প সংস্থায় দুর্ঘটনার কারণে মৃত্যু কমানো

এ ছাড়া, সার্বিক শিল্পোন্নয়নের লক্ষ্যে এ বার বিভিন্ন শিল্প সংস্থাকে নিজস্ব শাখা-প্রশাখাগুলির তহবিল পরিচালনার জন্য আর্থিক সংস্থা বা এন বি এফ সি খোলায় উৎসাহ দিচ্ছে চিন সরকার। ব্যাঙ্কিং নিয়ন্ত্রণ কমিশন জানিয়েছে, সংস্থাগুলির দাবি মেনেই এই সিদ্ধান্ত নেওয়া হয়েছে। এই সব সংস্থার মধ্যে রয়েছে সাংহাইয়ের বাওস্টিল গ্রুপ। চিনে মোট কোম্পানির সংখ্যা ৬ হাজার। — ব্লুমবার্গ, পি টি আই

*China*  
**China flexes military muscle**

Associated Press *5/10/97*

HONG KONG, Aug. 1. — China's military staged its first parade in Hong Kong today, with 3,000 soldiers marching crisply in formation as others rode in armoured vehicles and helicopters, as part of Beijing's efforts to boost patriotism and soothe lingering political tensions.

Hong Kong's people have been incensed at China's refusal to speed up democracy here. This former British colony was guaranteed Western-style civil rights — nonexistent in the mainland — when it was handed back to China in 1997.

The People's Liberation Army invited all of Hong Kong's pro-democracy lawmakers to the parade, where the Chinese soldiers — with their neat green uniforms and rifles — marched to mark the 77th anniversary of the PLA, which won control of mainland China for Mao Zedong's Communists amid civil war in 1949.

Some said they were impressed. "They are very well-trained and disciplined and leave us with a lasting impression," said Hong Kong's top Opposition leader, Mr Yeung Sum, who watched the parade with eight other Democratic Party lawmakers.

The PLA has been here since Hong Kong's 1997 return to China, but its troops usually stay in their barracks and keep an extremely low profile.

Their arrival seven years ago was met with suspicion by many Hong Kong people, who were shocked by the use of tanks and troops against Beijing's Tiananmen Square pro-democracy movement on 4 June 1989.

Many saw Beijing's invitation to the pro-democracy politicians as a conciliatory gesture to those China has viewed as troublemakers. But the move is also one with a bit of a barb, because the Opposition figures would be standing at attention as the PLA marched past.

The pro-democracy activists routinely hold annual candlelight vigils to mark the deaths of hundreds — if not thousands — of unarmed people in the PLA's crackdown on Tiananmen Square. But some analysts said Beijing may also be reminding people who is in charge of Hong Kong and send a warning to those who oppose China.



SHOW OF STRENGTH: Soldiers of the People's Liberation Army of China participate in their first public parade in Hong Kong on Sunday. — AFP

Despite his remarks on today's spectacle, Mr Yeung didn't see Beijing's move as a breakthrough in its relations with Hong Kong's Opposition. "This is just a ceremony and not real communication," he said, adding that the lawmakers didn't have a chance to talk with mainland officials at the event.

He said he hoped the opposition can visit Beijing and discuss democracy with leaders there after September's legislative elections, in

which ordinary people will directly choose half of 60 lawmakers.

The Hong Kong and Beijing governments fear that voters will side overwhelmingly with anti-government and pro-democracy candidates, which could spell political trouble for the Hong Kong administration.

**Warning to Taiwan**

China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) celebrated its 77th founding

day with the defence minister issuing a stern warning to Taiwan that the 1.2-million-strong military has will and the ability to "crush" the island's bid for independence, the state media reported today, PTI adds from Beijing.

China's PLA has the ability to "crush" any attempt by Taiwan to move towards independence, the minister, Gen. Cao Gangchuan, said in a speech at a reception he hosted on the eve of the 77th founding day here yesterday.

Gen. Cao claimed the Chinese army had the determination and ability to "smash" any separatist conspiracy by proponents of Taiwan independence. At the same time, he restated Beijing's stance that the Chinese mainland will stick to the "peaceful reunification, One Country, Two Systems" principle to strive for the reunification of China. But China will not allow anybody to break Taiwan away from China in any way, he added.

2 AUG 2000

Chinese officials have used the term 'peaceful rise' to describe an ideal growth plan for China's economic, political and military expansion. But whatever the future evolution of this blueprint for development, says EVAN S MEDEIROS, the term itself has been publicly debated

# China's peaceful rise?

**C**HINA recently conducted a quiet but important policy debate over the country's strategic direction in global affairs. In newspapers, magazines, and internal papers, Chinese officials and scholars argued whether the concept of "China's peaceful rise" (*Zhongguo de heping jueqi*) should be adopted as the motto for its rapidly expanding role in international politics. This debate, which may continue, serves as a reminder of China's effort to shape external perceptions as Beijing's power and influence expands.

Beginning in late 2003, senior Chinese leaders and prominent analysts began promoting the notion of "peaceful rise" (*heping jueqi*) as "the new pathway" (*xin daolu*) and the strategic choice for China in the coming decades.

Recognising that China's influence in international economic and security affairs is rapidly increasing – and that this is generating concern among major powers and Asian nations alike – Chinese leaders have begun pitching this new line to policymakers all over the world.

"Peaceful rise" is China's way of acknowledging the historical problems associated with being a rising power and signalling to the world that Beijing seeks to manage this process to prevent conflict. In many ways, the promotion of this idea is China's long delayed answer to the "China Threat" debate and the efforts by other countries to define China's future global position. Following Premier Wen Jiabao's first use of the term at a speech at Harvard University in December of last year, the phrase "peaceful rise" rapidly became part of the new Chinese lexicon for talking about its evolving role in world affairs.

Chinese policymakers and analysts argue that, as China rises, it seeks to avoid the competition-inducing policies of Weimar Germany, Imperial Japan, and the Soviet Union in the Cold War. According to Zheng Bijian, the main architect of this theory and a former senior government official with strong Party credentials and links to the current leadership, "The only choice for China under the current international situation is to rise peacefully, namely, to develop by taking advantage of the peaceful international environment, and at the same time to maintain world peace through its development."

Yet, acceptance of this new term within China was not a fait accompli, despite such high-level endorsement. Unlike in past years when the Communist Party was the dominant force in foreign policy discourse, "peaceful rise" did not automatically enter China's

vaunted orthodoxy of foreign policy expressions like "peace and development" and "one country, two systems."

Rather, many Chinese scholars and analysts questioned the meaning and accuracy of the new expression. International observers have also begun to notice some of its weaknesses, such as its unclear and potentially contradictory treatment of the Taiwan issue.

China's internal debate centred on a few arguments. Many opposed the use of the term "rise" (*jueqi*) arguing that China is not rising and will not rise given the myriad of economic and social problems complicating its transition from a planned to a market economy. They argue it is too early to talk about rising, which is a far too optimistic characterisation of China's current socio-economic evolution.

Others in China objected to the use of "rise" because it connotes a China-led "power transition" in the region and possibly the emergence of a new power centre in Asia. Such terminology would do

**This is China's way of acknowledging the historical problems associated with being a rising power and signalling to the world that Beijing seeks to manage this process to prevent conflict**

little to assuage concerns of neighbouring nations.

Furthermore, a small, but vocal minority opposed China's commitment to a rise that is peaceful. This group, which did not just include the military, argued that committing to a peaceful rise could undermine China's ability to deter Taiwan from moving towards formal, legal separation from the Mainland. Cross Strait relations continue to grow tenser and more militarised, and few in Beijing trust any of the commit-



Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao (right) during a meeting with US commerce secretary Donald Evans (left) in Beijing. — AFP

ments of Taiwan's leadership. Thus, it is argued in China, this new strategy would send the wrong signal to Taiwan during a highly unstable period.

In May this year, a turning point in the debate on peaceful rise occurred. During a speech at the Boao Forum for Asia held on Hainan island, China's version of the annual World Economic Forum, China's President Hu Jintao used the expression "peaceful development" (*heping fazhan*) to refer to China's external strategy. This articulation likely set the marker on the official expression. Hu's non-use of the term "rise" indicates his agreement with analysts who favoured a less confrontational phrase. To be sure, it is still too early to know whether the new expression will traverse the increasingly bumpy road from academic lexicon to Party orthodoxy, or will end up in the Communist Party's overflowing dustbin of meaningless expressions.

To some extent, China's internal debate is encouraging. It provides further evidence of increasing openness in foreign policy thinking and in official policy formulation. Chinese leaders are actively seeking input and guidance from analysts with extensive training, expertise and experience in regional and international affairs. In this one instance, debates among officials, analysts, and scholars shaped (and are continuing to influence) official foreign policy

guidelines like peaceful rise.

China's formulation and articulation about peaceful rise, however, leaves Taiwan as a looming contradiction. In discussing the implications of peaceful rise for the Taiwan issue, most Chinese commentators view Taiwan as an exception. Some officials and scholars firmly argue that Taiwan is strictly a domestic issue that foreigners intrude into. A larger body of scholars and analysts highlight China's strong national sentiment for reunification and the leadership's stated willingness to bear "any costs" for that goal – regardless of the implications for Beijing's strategy of peacefully rising.

Yet, for many US policymakers and analysts, Taiwan is the litmus test of China's future role in global affairs. China's resolution of the Taiwan situation is one of the most important indicators of how China will use its growing economic influence, diplomatic skills and military might to shape international affairs in the future. According to a November 2003 speech by secretary of state Colin Powell, "whether China chooses peace or coercion to resolve its differences with Taiwan will tell us a great deal about the kind of role China seeks with its neighbours and seeks with us." Thus, the differences between US and Chinese perceptions could not be starker.

Some of China's neighbours, such as Japan, South-east Asia, and India, likely share Wash-

ington's assessment. While most warmly welcome the growth-inducing effects of Taiwan's economic integration with the mainland, all of them maintain strong security ties with the USA and continue to gradually modernise their defence forces. If a military conflict over Taiwan erupted, it is not difficult to envision a scenario in which regional concerns about China's willingness to use force to resolve outstanding territorial disputes in Asia would become a prominent driver of foreign and military policies in the region.

The future evolution of China's new external strategy of peaceful rise is unclear. It reflects an encouraging recognition by Chinese policymakers that they need to define how China will use its expanding global influence in ways conducive to regional and global stability. Regardless of how peace loving the Chinese people feel they are, Chinese leaders need to take into account the legitimate concerns of its Asian neighbours and major powers in the region. Whether Chinese leaders can translate this new expression into tangible policies and deeds of reassurance remains an open question.

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# 16 arrested on Tiananmen anniversary

Associated Press  
Beijing, June 4

THE POLICE kept Tiananmen Square free of demonstrators on Friday, detaining at least 16 people while activists abroad marked the 15th anniversary of the deadly attack on pro-democracy protesters and pressed their demands for political change.

Since the June 4, 1989, military assault that killed hundreds, and possibly thousands, communist leaders have made many changes demanded by the dissidents, scrapping rules dictating where Chinese could work and whom they could



AP  
A protester being arrested at Tiananmen Square on Friday.

marry. A decade of stunning economic growth has given millions new choices in life. But the closed, secretive ruling party that crushed the protests still permits no independent political activity and has jailed or driven into exile most of China's active dissidents. Reporters saw 16 middle-aged men and women picked up Friday on the square in twos and threes and dragged to waiting police vans. It wasn't clear whether the detentions were related to the anniversary, but security forces had been trying to block public commemorations for people killed in the military crackdown.

The square was open to the public and hundreds of tourists with their children were strolling under a light sprinkling of rain. Though extra guards were on duty, security was relatively light compared with other politically sensitive dates. A photographer was briefly detained after photographing detentions on the Square, and Chinese tourists who snapped pictures were forced by police to delete them from digital cameras. In advance of the anniversary, Chinese authorities detained activists and relatives of people killed in 1989 or ordered them out of Beijing.

A traveller wears a mask at Beijing airport on Sunday.

# WHO team for China

26/4 5-3  
**Beijing, April 25 (PTI):** Concerned by the spurt in Sars cases, the World Health Organisation today decided to send a team of experts to China to help it fight the deadly disease, which appears to have infected four more people in the last 24 hours.

"WHO will send an expert team to China to assist its health ministry investigate the cause of Sars cases reported recently," WHO spokesperson based in China, Bob Dietz, said.

WHO will send a team of two or three experts in laboratory bio-safety to China to investigate possible links between the Institute of Virology in Beijing and the Sars cases reported recently in the country, he said.

The team will arrive in China within a few days, he said adding that since April 22, it has reported two confirmed and six suspected Sars cases in east Anhui province and Beijing.

With two persons working in the laboratory at the Institute of Virology testing positive, the experts feel the infection may have spread from the laboratory.

The laboratory was sealed on Friday after one person from Anhui tested positive while another from Beijing was suspected to be infected by the virus.

Dietz said he does not see the disease as a "significant" threat to public health in China. However, he said the situation could change if the Sars coronavirus

was transmitted through contact, including sharing a taxi or from a waitress at a restaurant.

The Chinese health ministry earlier said every new case reported has been traced to a single patient.

The ministry said the four suspected Sars patients had close contact with Li, a nurse who was diagnosed with the deadly disease. The persons who contracted the disease include Li's parents, aunt and a female patient surnamed Xu who once lived in the same ward with Li.

According to the ministry, the 337 people who came in contact with the patients have been put under medical observation in Beijing.

China  
11/4

# China halts mega dam project

By Jonathan Watts

**BEIJING, APRIL 10.** China's Premier, Wen Jiabao, has halted plans for a huge dam system in the country's most spectacular canyon, it was reported yesterday.

The news raises hopes that the world's fastest developing country may be pausing to take stock of the environmental destruction caused by its explosive economic expansion.

The reprieve for the pristine Nu river — one of only two major waterways left undammed in China — may prove temporary, however, as few details have been made public about Beijing's change of tack.

But even a slight hesitation will encourage environmentalists who have been urging the Government to consider the impact on nature of its drive for new energy resources.

The Chinese media reported Mr. Wen as citing social and environmental concerns in ordering a review of the scheme to build more than a dozen hydroelectric power plants along the Nu, which, with the Mekong, is one of south-east Asia's two great rivers.

From its source in the Himalayas of Tibet, the Nu ("angry river" in Chinese) flows 2,800km through Yunnan province — a region rich in ethnic and biological diversity — and on into Burma and northern Thailand, where it is known as the Salween.

The river is at the heart of a remote area, a United Nations world heritage site that has been called the "Grand Canyon of the

Orient". It is home to more than 80 endangered species, including snow leopards and Yunnan snub-nosed antelopes, as well as wild elephants and oxen.

Last year Beijing announced plans to exploit the Nu to meet the thirst for energy. In China's biggest hydropower scheme to date, construction firms in Liuku, Yunnan province, were to start work this year on the first of 13 dams that would together generate 21.3 million kilowatts of electricity.

The 20-year project was drawn up by China Huadian, one of the country's five biggest utilities. It has been estimated that rising water levels would force the relocation of 50,000 people, mostly from ethnic minorities such as the Yi, Lisu and Miao, whose way of life in the canyon has changed little for centuries.

Although it has sparked less of an international outcry than the controversial Three Gorges dam on the Yangtze, which began operating last year, the Nu plan has met fierce domestic resistance.

Last year, the state environment protection agency dispensed with its usual caution to declare outright opposition to the plan and insist that the Nu river remain unspoiled. In a sign of embryonic public debate on the environment, the Chinese academy of social sciences also voiced concern.

Downstream communities — particularly in Thailand — have also condemned the plan. Last year, a coalition of 80 environmental groups sent a protest letter to Beijing, insisting that it be abandoned.

To their surprise, Mr. Wen, who has introduced a populist "people-first" policy since taking office a year ago, appears ready to listen. "We should carefully consider and make a scientific decision about major hydroelectric projects such as this that have aroused a high level of concern in society, and with which the environmental protection side disagrees," he was quoted as saying in *Ta Kung Pao*, a Hong Kong newspaper close to the Government.

It is far from certain, however, how long this delay will last.

Although the appalling environmental impact of China's growth is increasingly apparent in its polluted air and waters, it will be difficult for state planners to kick the addiction to rapid growth.

Mr. Wen has called for balanced development that minimises environmental and social damage, but the Government still believes it must achieve at least 7 per cent growth per year to provide jobs for China's vast and increasingly tetchy workforce. This resulted last year in a 15 per cent surge in demand for power, to 1.8 trillion kilowatt hours.

Even with the start of electricity generation at the Three Gorges and increased oil imports, China could not satisfy these needs.

Last summer, much of the country suffered power cuts as the wealthier sections of its 1.3 billion population switched on their air-conditioners. The Nu's reprieve may not last long. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2004



# The North-South divide

**R**EGIONAL DISPARITY has always been a problem in big countries. Even China has its underdeveloped north-west and its gleaming southern coastal provinces. In India, the idea of balanced growth across all regions had attracted policy intervention for 40 years. But in the last few years, inequalities between states have accentuated, leading to migration and a rise in the number of urban poor. According to the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry, south India is growing at a faster rate than the northern states in agriculture, industry and services and its contribution to the GDP increased from 22 per cent in the Eighties to 26 per cent in 2000.

Some northern states have been facing problems in agriculture due to inadequate road connectivity and the frequent occurrence of drought. In the services sector, with the southern states becoming a software hub, naturally they are ahead. Many northern states have remained industrially

backward because of lack of infrastructure — shortages and interruptions in power supply.

The pace of reforms in the states is the determining factor of their growth rates. Faster-growing states also have lower rates of population growth, higher literacy rates and women in the work force. Sick PSUs are concentrated in certain geographical regions and not in regions with high job growth. Ranking by criteria like literacy rates, poverty ratio, hunger and infant mortality, also leads to a similar conclusion about disparate development. With a rise in inter-state inequalities, tensions between better-off states and states with a worse track record increase. The better performers have to cross-subsidise the laggards through revenue sharing. So the need for policy interventions and appropriate targeting for the provision of food security, employment, education and health becomes important. Ideally, the 'trickle down' effect of growth should percolate down to all regions.

## Now, a permanent address in China

THE CENTRAL tenet of Marxism is the abolition of private property. So when the Chinese are granted the constitutional protection of private property, one stops and takes note. There has been a real estate boom in China over the last 20 years, with 97,751 villas and luxury apartments coming up in 2002 alone — a 35 per cent increase from 2001 — with Beijing accounting for nearly 10 per cent of those built. On the flip side, with many developers running into trouble over government permits and banks being asked last year to lend only to credit-worthy developers, incomplete buildings now dot the rural landscape.

With such heavy investment in the property market of late, 93 per cent of the people are keen on a stronger constitutional protection of their property rights. However, the legalising of private property could also mean slower progress in China's gleaming network of highways and flyovers. A prime ex-

ample is India's infrastructure projects that have suffered mainly because of the difficulties in the acquisition of private land that lies along the highways. The earlier property laws meant that millions of Chinese could be pushed out of their rural homes overnight without adequate compensation.

Today, China is modifying its ideology. The 2002 formulation that allowed private businessmen to join the Communist Party has been constitutionally amended. It's now the turn of ordinary citizens to be assured that the assets they acquire as a result of the privatisation of housing won't be arbitrarily seized from them. It's a logical step to protecting the interests of both entrepreneurs and citizens who have made China the rich and powerful nation that it is today. The question on every China-watcher's mind now: will this be followed by a privatisation of the community — in other words, democracy?

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

16 MAR 2004

# Communist China vows to protect private property

Beijing, March 14 (Reuters) — China's parliament amended the constitution today to protect private property, a landmark move that waters down the country's core communist ideology.

Five decades after the Communist Party took power, nationalised private property and waged bloody campaigns against landlords, the parliament amended the constitution

to add the clause: "Private property obtained legally is inviolable."

Analysts said the move reflected the party's desire to maintain its grip on power while adapting to wrenching social change wrought by 25 years of economic reform that has made the private sector a key pillar of the booming economy.

But the landmark change

was coupled with calls by Premier Wen Jiabao to the parliament to help phase out taxes on poor farmers and find jobs for unemployed workers to help ease a yawning wealth gap between rich urban centres and the countryside.

Wen's appeals were cornerstones of a work report approved overwhelmingly by the rubber-stamp National People's Congress today.

The constitution, changed for the fourth time since its adoption in 1982, put private property on an equal footing with public property.

"It's significant for a socialist regime that says it's still socialist or communist to recognise more than before the role of the private economy in its development," a western diplomat said.

Warning of a widening wea-

lth gap that Beijing fears could spark social unrest, Wen outlined in his work report steps to scrap farm taxes and boost subsidies in rural areas — home to 800 million people.

He also pledged to create nine million new urban jobs and re-employ five million workers laid off from state firms that are struggling to stay in business as the private sector blossoms.

The parliament also gave a further nod to the private sector by enshrining in the constitution the theories of Jiang Zemin, who handed over the presidency and top party post to Hu Jintao in a generational leadership change that started in November 2002.

The Three Represents theory says the Communist Party stands for advanced productive forces, advanced culture and

the interests of the majority of the Chinese people. But the amendment is communist code for opening the doors of the party to entrepreneurs once regarded as "running dogs of capitalism".

"It's a departure from Marxism. It's also a recognition of Jiang Zemin thought after 13 years in power," political commentator Wu Jiaxiang said.

■ See Page 4

THE TELEGRAPH

15 MAR 2004

Chinwa  
①

# China legalises private property

H.D.  
193

**BEIJING, MARCH 14.** China today amended its Constitution to protect private property rights and formalised a former President's once-unthinkable legacy — inviting entrepreneurs to join the Communist Party.

The legislature also added to China's Constitution the first-ever mention of human rights. But the language said nothing about protecting free political expression — a key issue for government critics.

The moves came on the 10th and final day of the 2,904-member parliament, the National People's Congress, which held its annual meeting in the Great Hall of the People on Beijing's Tiananmen Square.

"These changes to the Constitution are of great significance to the development of China," said the Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao. China's No. 2 leader and legislative chief, Wu Bangguo, said the constitutional change "lays down the ground rules for our struggle."

The vote to adopt the slate of constitutional amendments was 2,863 in favour, 10 against and 17 abstaining. "The high number of yes votes shows that the changes reflect the will of the Chinese people," Mr. Wen said.

The constitutional protection of private property was the first since the Communists took power in 1949. It was largely symbolic: China already has laws on private property, but with millions of people starting businesses and buying homes and stocks, entrepreneurs have lobbied for constitutional guarantees.

Entrepreneurs are a pivotal part of the Communist Party's plans to open China's economy and attract foreign investment — both to its booming eastern seaboard and, as Mr. Wen emphasised at this year's meeting — to the still-impooverished countryside.

The awkwardly named "Three Represents" theory of inviting entrepreneurs into the Communist Party was the brainchild of the former Chinese President, Jiang Zemin, who retired last year. — AP

Another report on Page 16

# ব্যক্তির সম্পত্তির অধিকার এ বার কমিউনিস্ট চিনেও আদরণীয়

বেজিং, ১৪ মার্চ—  
অর্ধশতাব্দীরও বেশি সময়  
ক্ষমতায় থাকার পরে চিনের  
কমিউনিস্টরা আজ ইতিহাসের  
পটপরিবর্তন ঘটিয়ে সংবিধান  
সংশোধন করে ব্যক্তি মালিকানায়  
সম্পত্তির অধিকারকে সাংবিধানিক  
স্বীকৃতি দিল। এতদিন কমিউনিস্ট  
মতাদর্শ আঁকড়ে থেকে চিনা পার্টি  
ব্যক্তিগত মালিকানায় সম্পত্তির  
অধিকারকে স্বীকৃতি দিতে রাজি  
হয়নি। সে দিক দিয়ে দেখলে এই  
সংশোধন ঐতিহাসিক তো বটেই,  
নামে কমিউনিস্ট পার্টি হলেও চিনা



প্রেসিডেন্ট হু জিনতাওয়ার সঙ্গে প্রাক্তন প্রেসিডেন্ট  
জিয়াং জেমিন। রবিবার। — এ এফ পি

নেতৃত্ব কমিউনিস্ট মতাদর্শের সবচেয়ে  
গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বিষয়কেই সংশোধন করে পাল্টে  
দিলেন। চিনা সংবিধানে এবার বলা হল—  
বৈধ উপায়ে অর্জিত ব্যক্তিগত সম্পত্তি  
কেউ কেড়ে নিতে পারবে না। সংবিধানে  
আরও একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ পরিবর্তন করা  
হয়েছে। এই প্রথম চিনে মানবাধিকারকেও  
স্বীকৃতি দেওয়া হল। সংশোধনীতে বলা  
হয়েছে, “রাষ্ট্র মানবাধিকারকে মর্যাদা দেয়  
এবং তাকে রক্ষা করে।”

উল্লেখ্য, গত ২০ বছর ধরে ধীরে ধীরে  
সংস্কারের পথে এগিয়ে চললেও গত বছর  
চিনা পার্টির কংগ্রেসের সময়েই চিনা নেতৃত্ব  
শিল্পপতিদের জন্য পার্টির দরজা খুলে  
দেওয়ার সিদ্ধান্ত নিয়ে কমিউনিস্ট মতাদর্শ  
থেকে সরে আসার ইঙ্গিত দিয়েছিলেন।  
এবার ব্যক্তিগত সম্পত্তিকে সংবিধানে  
স্বীকৃতিদান তারই আবশ্যিক পরের ধাপ।  
চিনা সংবিধানে এখন থেকে রাষ্ট্রীয় সম্পত্তি  
ও ব্যক্তিগত সম্পত্তি একই গুরুত্ব ও আইনী

মর্যাদা পাবে। এক পশ্চিমী  
কূটনীতিকের মতে, “এক দিক  
দিয়ে দেখলে এটাই মেনে নেওয়া  
যে আর্থিক শোষণ খুব খারাপ নয়।  
এটা বিরাট পদক্ষেপ।”

চিনে কমিউনিস্টরা ক্ষমতায়  
আসার পরের পাঁচ দশকে কুলাক  
বা ভূস্বামীদের বিরুদ্ধে লাগাতার  
আভিযান গালিয়ে ব্যক্তিগত  
মালিকানার জমি ও সম্পত্তি  
রাষ্ট্রের নামে দখল করে নিয়েছিল।  
চিনা কমিউনিস্টদের এই পর্বটি  
এক রক্তাক্ত ইতিহাস। ১৯৮২  
সালে সংবিধান রচনার পরে  
চিনের ইতিহাসে এই নিয়ে চতুর্থবার  
সংবিধান সংশোধন করা হল।

সংশোধনীটি প্রায় ৩০০০ ভোটে চিনা  
পার্লমেন্টে পাশ হয়ে যায়। শাসক দল  
ন্যাশনাল পিপলস কংগ্রেস (এন পি সি)-এর  
মোট ২৮৯৬ জন সদস্যদের ৯৯ শতাংশই  
এই সংশোধনীর পক্ষে ভোট দিয়েছেন।  
বিপক্ষে পড়ে মাত্র ১০টি ভোট। আজ  
পার্লামেন্টে প্রধানমন্ত্রী ওয়েন জিয়াবাওয়ার  
এর পর পাঁচের পাতায়

## কমিউনিস্ট চিনে

প্রথম পাতার পর  
গত এক বছরের কাজকর্মের রিপোর্ট ও  
(ওয়ার্ক রিপোর্ট) অনুমোদিত হয়েছে।

চিনা পার্লামেন্ট এই সংবিধান সংশোধনের মাধ্যমে জিয়াং জেমিনের নীতিকেই স্বীকৃতি দিল। আরও একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কাজ করে নিয়েছে। প্রাক্তন চিনা প্রেসিডেন্ট জিয়াং জেমিন তাঁর 'তিনটি নীতি' তত্ত্ব প্রচার করে দেশের মধ্যে ব্যক্তিগত গুঁজি ও সম্পত্তির গ্রহণযোগ্যতার জমি তৈরি করছিলেন। জিয়াং জেমিনের তিন নীতি অনুযায়ী চিনা কমিউনিস্ট পার্টি ১) উন্নতমানের উৎপাদন শক্তি, ২) উন্নত সংস্কৃতি এবং ৩) চিনা জনগনের সংখ্যাগরিষ্ঠের স্বার্থ দেখবে। চিনা কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির পরিভাষা অনুযায়ী এই তিন নীতির রূপায়ণ করতেই পার্টির দরজা শিল্পপতিদের জন্য আগেই খুলতে হয়েছে। এখন সংবিধানে ব্যক্তিগত সম্পত্তির স্বীকৃতি এবং জেমিনের তিন নীতি অন্তর্ভুক্ত হওয়ার সুবাদে চিনা কমিউনিস্টদের সর্বকালের নেতাদের মধ্যে তাঁরও একটা পাকা জায়গা হয়ে গেল। চিনা বিপ্লবের নেতা হিসাবে মাও জে দং, চিনা সংস্কারের পথপ্রদর্শক হিসাবে দং জিয়াং পিং আগে থেকেই কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির স্বীকৃতি পেয়ে গিয়েছেন। জিয়াং জেমিন বেঁচে থাকতেই তাঁর উত্তরসূরি বর্তমান চিনা প্রেসিডেন্ট হু জিনতাও সংবিধান সংশোধন করে তাঁকে 'অমরত্ব' দিলেন। — রয়টার্স

বেজিং, ১৪ মার্চ— জাতির সামনে নয়, যাঁড়ের সামনে উড়বে লাল নিশান। এমনটাই ঘটতে চলেছে কমিউনিস্ট চিনে। যাঁড়ের লড়াইয়ের জন্য আউনি তৈরি হচ্ছে। এশিয়ায় এটিই বৃহত্তম বলে দাবি করা হয়েছে। প্রায় রোমান অ্যাক্সিথিয়েটারের কায়দায় তিন হাজার দর্শকের বসার ব্যবস্থা করা হচ্ছে।

# China to enshrine human rights in Constitution?

China Daily/ANN

BEIJING, March 8. — Chinese legislators today began deliberating a proposed Amendment to China's Constitution, which includes the historic stipulation of protecting private property and preserving human rights.

Mr Wang Zhaoguo, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, briefed lawmakers on the draft changes to

the 1982 Constitution, which will be put to a vote at the end of NPC's 10-day session on 14 March.

The changes are proposed by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China last October and adopted by the NPC Standing Committee in December.

The proposal, the fourth since 1988, was drawn up by giving full play to democracy. It solicited opinions extensively, according to Wang.

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## Tiananmen crackdown 'a mistake'

BEIJING, March 8. — A surgeon who shot to fame by exposing the extent of China's Sars outbreak last year has called on the government to admit it made mistakes during the 1989 crackdown on the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy movement (see photograph on right). In a letter dated 24 February to China's legislature, Dr Jiang Yanyong said ordinary Chinese will be "increasingly disappointed and angry" if the Communist Party does not revise its judgment on the incident, which says the student-led protests were a counterrevolutionary riot. He called on officials to "reappraise the demonstrations as a 'patriotic movement'". — AP

The Amendment was made in light of the need of reforms and the opening up of the major ones that concern socialist modernization drive. All the issues it covers are socialists

national development and involved long-term peace and order in the country, he said.

Mr Xu Xianming, president of the China University of Political Science and Law, said the draft amendment has incorporated opinions of non-Communist parties, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, as well as theorists, legal experts, and economists.

"It's a consistent principle adopted by the Party and the State to respect and protect

human rights. To write this principle into the Constitution will further provide a legal guarantee for its implementation," Mr Wang Zhaoguo said while explaining the draft Amendment.

The inclusion of human rights protection in the Constitution is also "conducive to the development of China's socialist human rights undertakings, and exchanges and co-operation with the international community in the human rights field," he said.

# China hikes defence budget by 12 per cent

By P. S. Suryanarayana

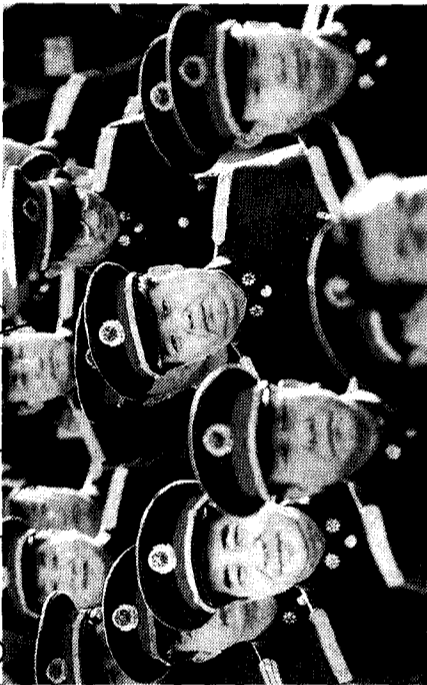
SINGAPORE, MARCH 6. China's defence expenditure will go up by 11.6 per cent in 2004 as against the budget of the previous year. The ongoing second annual session of China's National People's Congress (NPC or Parliament) was informed of this today.

The additional spending would help "improve the defensive combat readiness of the (Chinese) armed forces", according to an official version on the new defence budget.

The toning up of "combat readiness" would be done "under high-tech conditions".

This is in line with the frequent affirmations by the Chinese leaders about their intention to 'modernise' the Chinese military to meet the new challenges in the 21st century.

Another reason cited for the higher defence outlay was the need to "raise the salaries of



Chinese military delegates leaving the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Friday, after the opening session of the 10th National People's Congress. — AP

army personnel and the pensions for ex-servicemen". On Beijing's relations with major countries, the Chinese Foreign Minister, Li Zhaoxing, denounced the 'unilateralism' that was now in evidence on the world stage.

In a transparent reference to the U.S. in this regard, he said "the reason (why) the United Nations was founded and the U.N. Charter was written is that the future matters in the world cannot be dictated by one single country or a group of coun-

tries". He said China "is committed to multilateralism". Addressing a press conference on the margins of the ongoing NPC session in Beijing, Mr. Li said China's role in the six-party process on the North Korean nuclear arms issue was to "promote peace talks and to make peace".

Hoping for "a constructive role" by all the participants in this process, he said: "We don't wish to see a Korean peninsula with nuclear weapons; we wish to see a Korean peninsula that is peaceful, stable and prosperous".

On Sino-Russian relations, he said the Presidents of the two countries would hold a summit in Beijing later this year.

Referring to China's present "strategic partnership of cooperation" with Russia, Mr. Li noted that the two were the largest neighbours in the world, with a 4,300-km. long common border.



# Chinese Premier vows to boost rural income

Associated Press

BEIJING, March 5. — China's Premier vowed to increase rural income, continue economic growth and speed up military modernisation even while seeking a peaceful resolution to the Taiwan question, during the opening session of the country's annual legislative session today.

Premier Mr Wen Jiabao's remarks came as China's largely toothless legislature convened for 10 days. During that time, it will take up one of its top agenda items: the very uncommunist notion of enshrining private property in the Constitution. The Communist Party has approved the move, and it is certain to be endorsed.

The party says the measure, which enshrines the country's increasingly capitalist outlook, will help promote economic reform and improve life for millions of Chinese.

Mr Wen, laying out plans for the coming year, said he expected seven per cent growth in the Chinese economy during 2004 — compared to 9.1 per cent the year before — and targeted a key priority of the leadership: lifting hundreds of millions of rural Chinese from poverty.



Premier Wen

"We must take more direct and effective policies... to strengthen, support and protect agriculture and increase rural incomes in line with the needs to balance urban and rural development."

He also focused on the expansion of private con-

sumption, a key pillar of the economic reform that, in a single generation, has taken China from a planned communist economy to a freewheeling experiment in private enterprise.

Also on tap at the yearly meeting of the National People's Congress was a

## Seeking stability

THE focus on rural income points to the top priority for the one-year old government of Premier Wen and President Hu Jintao: harnessing the economy to make sure that development stays on track without widening the rich-poor gap that could threaten their hold on power.

new military budget to be released tomorrow, days before a Taiwanese election and referendum on missiles that China has pointed at the island.

Mr Wen amplified the government's oft-stated policy — Beijing "will never allow anyone to split

Taiwan from China by any means". But he also reiterated that peace was the preferred path. "We will do everything possible to bring about the peaceful reunification of the motherland."

Mr Wen said the leadership was "stepping up efforts" to make sure the People's Liberation Army is up to any task it faces. "We will energetically carry forward military reforms with Chinese characteristics and work hard to modernise national defence and armed forces to a higher stage of development."

Also in the works is the development of "new and high-technology weaponry and equipment" and the training of "a new type of highly competent military", the Premier said, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

Lawmakers also will review anti-corruption measures but did not specify if any legal changes were planned.

China

**NPC SESSION / CONSTITUTION TO BE AMENDED**

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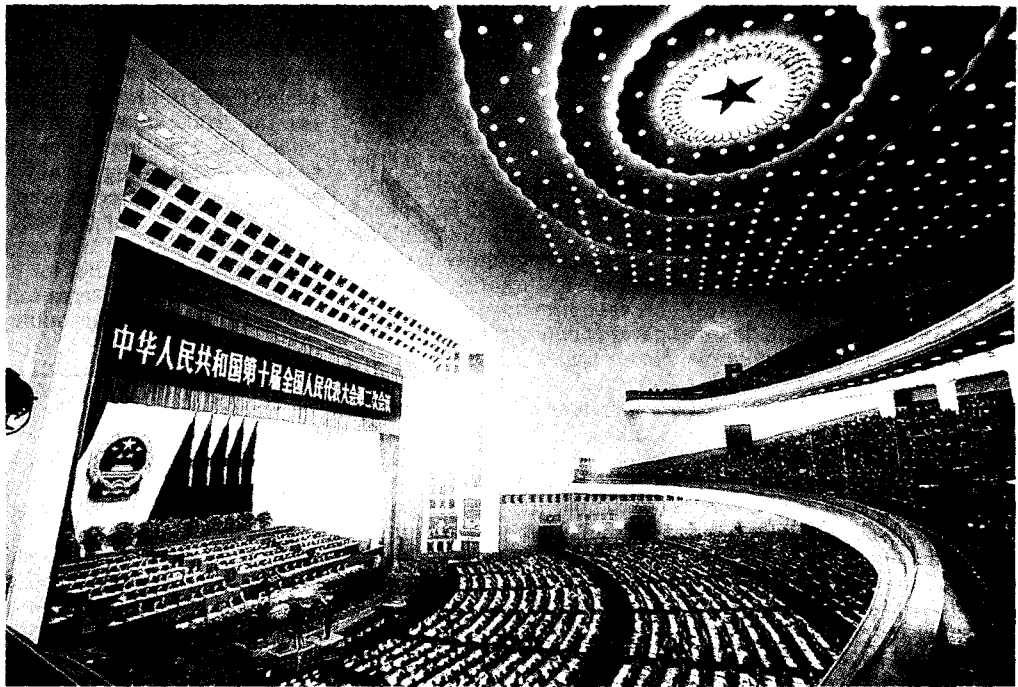
# Focus on rights, private property

By P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE, MARCH 5.** The Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, today pledged to sustain the country's "independent foreign policy of peace", even as a crucial session of the National People's Congress (NPC or Parliament) began at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Identifying some of the foreign policy challenges as the re-emergence of the "tendency towards unilateralism" as also local conflicts and "international terrorist activity", Mr. Wen said China would continue to strive for a new international political and economic order that would be "fair and equitable".

He said the Government would "energetically carry forward military reforms with Chinese characteristics and work hard to modernise national defence and armed forces [taking them] to a higher stage of development". Maintaining that Beijing "will never allow anyone to split Taiwan from China by any means", Mr. Wen said the long-term stability and prosperity of Hong Kong and Macao would remain an "unshakable goal". Setting a target of seven per cent economic growth rate for 2004, he said the idea was to ensure "a stable and rapid economic growth without drastic fluctuations". The growth witnessed in 2003 was of the order of 9.1 per cent, he noted, even as he outlined a programme of



**Chinese leaders assembled in Beijing's Great Hall of the People for the opening ceremony of the National People's Congress on Friday. — AP**

reforms. The 10th NPC's second annual session, scheduled to last about 10 days, is expected to consider some qualitatively new draft amendments to the country's Constitution.

The "protection of human rights", the inviolability of "legal private property" and the doctrine of emergency law are among the proposals for possible adoption by the NPC plenary session.

The relevant draft measures

were approved by the governing Communist Party of China [CPC] before the Standing Committee of the NPC approved them several weeks ago. All these amendments were crafted on the basis of a theory that the CPC and, therefore, the State represent the advanced production (or, productive) forces as also the advanced cultural forces and the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people. Western diplomats and analysts

tend to view the proposed constitutional amendments as a form of new "capitalist manifesto". The phrase, popularised by Guy Kawasaki in a different context, is meant to convey the general perception of a qualitative shift from the communist manifesto.

A key proposal, if adopted, will call upon the State "to respect and guarantee human rights" within the parameters of the Chinese social milieu.

# China frees democracy activist

Associated Press

BEIJING, March 4. — A longtime Chinese activist who helped organise the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests and later co-founded a democracy party was released from prison today and left for the USA, a human rights activist said.

The medical parole of Mr Wang Youcai, on the heels of another prisoner release and a sentence reduction for a third activist, suggests the Chinese government is moving on cases the USA has identified as priorities.

Mr Wang left the Zhejiang No. 1 prison in southern China early today, said goodbye to his family and boarded a plane for San Francisco, according to John Kamm, executive director of the

## 'Doors open' for Dalai Lama

BEIJING, March 4. — China today said talks with Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, were possible once he renounced his demand for "Tibetan independence" and fulfilled other pre-conditions of Beijing.

"Our position is very clear-cut. The door for negotiations and talks with the Dalai Lama is always open," foreign ministry spokesman Mr Liu Jianchao told reporters here. "We hope the Dalai Lama can abandon his position of separating Tibet from China and he will acknowledge officially that Tibet is a part of China. Then the door of negotiations will always be open," Mr Liu said, restating Beijing's pre-conditions for the resumption of talks with the Dalai Lama.

However, Mr Liu did not comment on the upcoming 45th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's exile in India which will be marked on 17 March. — PTI

Dui Hua Foundation, a Square democracy protesters in which hundreds, perhaps thousands, died. He served a year in prison in 1990 on charges related to those activities.

The release of Mr Wang (37), a physicist by profession, had been publicly advocated by US ambassador Mr Clark T Randt. It came one day after the crackdown on Tiananmen

US House of Representatives urged the Bush administration to move more forcefully on China's human rights record.

"Clearly, I think, they have been releasing and giving sentence reductions to people who are considered priority cases by the USA," Mr Kamm said. "It's part of an overall effort to get the human rights dialogue back on track." He added: "The USA is very happy with it. They've made their message known loud and clear."

Two U.S. legislators — Republican Rep. Jim Leach of Iowa and Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel of Nebraska — had also pushed for Mr Wang's release.

The Chinese foreign ministry had no immediate comment, and a switchboard operator at the prison couldn't confirm



Chinese dissident Wang Youcai, founder of the China Democracy Party. — AFP

whether Mr Wang was released and said no officials were available.

Mr Wang wasn't the first leader of the party he founded to be released. Its cofounder, Xu Wenli, was freed in December 2002 and also left for exile in the USA.

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# Flu worsens in China

92 ✓ T-4 China  
**Hanoi, Feb. 4** (Reuters): The death toll from Asia's bird flu outbreak rose to 15 today as the virus ravaged poultry flocks in 10 countries and, most worrying, spread in China.

Vietnam said a 17-year-old woman had died of the disease and Thailand said tests confirmed a six-year-old boy who died earlier in the week was infected with the H5N1 virus.

The H5N1 bug, which can cross the species barrier, is still spreading despite a mass slaughter of poultry the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation says it estimates at 50 million birds.

Guangdong, the southern Chinese province from which the Sars virus emerged before affecting 30 countries last year and killing nearly 800 people, definitely has the H5N1 avian virus.

Now 12 of the vast country's

31 provinces have confirmed or suspected outbreaks of bird flu. The FAO said bird flu had been confirmed in 53 of Vietnam's 64 provinces. China has yet to report any human infections, unlike badly hit Thailand with 17 suspected cases as well as five confirmed and two probable deaths from the disease.

Most of the deaths have been attributed to direct contact with infected fowl, like the Thai boy who was present when his grandfather killed chickens.

But Guangdong, where people live cheek by jowl with poultry and other farm animals, is widely regarded as a breeding ground for viruses which could cause a pandemic in humans.

That is still regarded as a remote threat and the WHO said the possibility that two Vietnamese sisters might have

caught bird flu from their brother did not mean a pandemic was any nearer. But, WHO spokesman Peter Cordingley said, the battle against bird flu was not being won.

"We are looking at a very serious situation in terms of the virus in the poultry world," he told Reuters Television in Manila. "At the moment, we are losing more than we are winning."

The FAO also said in a statement a smaller outbreak in Laos, sandwiched between China, Vietnam and Thailand, had not been stopped despite cullings on 20 farms. Thailand is one country which believes it is winning the fight. Its "red zones", the 5-km area around a confirmed outbreak within which the government orders the slaughter of all poultry, were down to just 14 in seven provinces.

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# China losing flu war

Beijing, Jan. 31 (Reuters): China's window of opportunity to stop the spread of bird flu is narrowing, the WHO said, while the country stepped up checks on poultry nationwide for signs of the deadly virus.

That window closed a bit more today, when China announced two new areas suspected of having cases of bird flu — one in the central province of Hubei and one in the southern province of Guangdong.

China confirmed outbreaks in the provinces of Hubei and Hunan to be the lethal H5N1 strain of avian influenza yesterday, and announced four new areas of suspected infection — two in Anhui province, one in Guangdong and one in the city of Shanghai.

"We have repeatedly said there is a brief window of oppor-

tunity to act within China. This latest news strongly suggests that the window is getting smaller with each passing day," said WHO disease surveillance specialist Julie Hall.

Earlier this week, China confirmed an outbreak in the southern region of Guangxi bordering Vietnam. Bird flu has spread rapidly to 10 Asian countries, killing at least eight people in Thailand and Vietnam. Chinese authorities have been culling poultry within 3 km of infected farms, vaccinating birds within 5 km and established national command headquarters.

Today China also halted exports from Anhui, Guangdong and Shanghai, following bans on shipments abroad from the other infected areas. On the outskirts of China's financial hub, Shanghai, teams of inspectors de-

scended on villages and markets without warning yesterday, residents said, seizing tens of thousands of fowl, spraying disinfectant and burning piles of bird dung. At least 20,000 chickens had been culled in a single day at Shanghai's largest wholesale poultry trading station in an outlying northeastern district.

# China denies flu cover-up

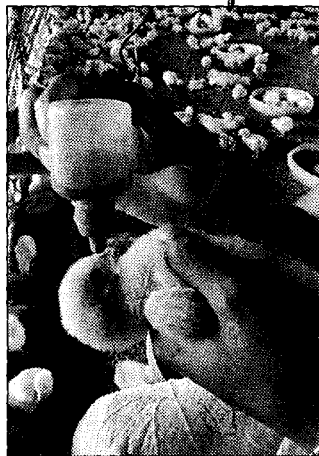
Bangkok, Jan. 29 (Reuters): China, accused of deceiving the world over Sars, denied today a similar cover-up that allowed the bird flu scourge to sweep across Asia.

China's foreign ministry spokeswoman Zhang Qiyue said the accusation made in the British weekly *New Scientist* "is completely inaccurate, is without proof and moreover does not respect science".

The *New Scientist* report quoted experts as saying they suspected the new strain of bird flu, which could be a greater threat than Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, also began in China, probably in the first half of 2003. "A combination of official cover-up and questionable farming practices allowed it to turn into the epidemic now under way," the weekly magazine said.

The magazine said a decision by China's poultry producers to vaccinate birds after an outbreak in Hong Kong in 1997 may have been a mistake and could have contributed to the current problem. Hong Kong conducted a mass slaughter of chickens when the H5N1 bird flu killed six people.

To protect their poultry Chinese producers later vaccinated them with an inactivated H5N1



A farm worker vaccinates a chick at a poultry farm in Bogor, Indonesia. (AFP)

virus. Health officials fear the H5N1 avian flu virus might mix with human influenza and unleash a pandemic among people with no immunity to it. So far, there is no sign of people-to-people transmission.

"We are aware of samples taken early last year that turned out to be this strain exactly," Klaus Stohr of the WHO said.

Although Stohr would not say where the early samples came from, *New Scientist* said comments from other experts suggested China was the origin.

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# Bird flu pinned on China

23/11 H5N1  
AFP & Reuters

Paris/Hong Kong, Jan. 28

SCIENTISTS HAVE blamed China for the current bird flu epidemic, accusing it of covering up an outbreak last year and using the wrong vaccine on chickens that made them carriers of the disease.

"The outbreak began as early as the first half of 2003, probably in China," British magazine *New Scientist* said, citing unidentified health experts. "A combination of official cover-up and questionable farming practices allowed it to turn into the epidemic now under way." The report is carried in Saturday's issue, a copy of which was made available to the press.

*New Scientist* says the suspected cause for the widespread dissemination of the H5N1 virus was mass vaccination of poultry flocks by Chinese farmers. Worried by losing their birds after all chickens in Hong Kong were slaughtered to curb an outbreak of the disease in 1997, Chinese producers started vaccinating their birds with

an inactivated H5N1 virus.

"This may have been a mistake," *New Scientist* says, pointing to the impact from small genetic mismatches that can occur between vaccines and the notoriously mutating flu virus.

The mismatch meant that Chinese birds would not be primed to destroy the specific form of the virus with their immune systems. Instead, they could harbour the virus but show no symptoms, and so could pass it on in to other flocks when they were traded.

## More virulent

The unusually large number of ducks dying from bird flu in southern China indicates the bug has become more vir-

ulent, which will put more people at risk of contracting it, Hong Kong scientists said, raising the alarm about chilled and frozen poultry meat, saying the deadly H5N1 virus could survive for years in temperatures as low as minus 70 degrees Celsius, but repeated that it can be killed if meat is cooked properly.

## Thai PM admits mistakes

The Thai PM has admitted to "mistakes and errors" after international criticism that his government covered up an outbreak of bird flu. "The situation has reminded us that even when we were so mindful of past lessons, mistakes and human errors could always be possible."

# China acts to combat Sars

**Beijing:** Asia took measured steps on Tuesday towards protecting its people against Sars as China, fresh from its first case of the season, began a high-profile slaughter of the civet cats and other wildlife that it believes could be spreading the virus.

Guangdong province, believed to be Ground Zero of severe acute respiratory syndrome, raced against a self-imposed Saturday deadline as it moved to eradicate the animals that many people consider a dinner-time delicacy.

**In southern China, civet cats were drowned, electrocuted and incinerated by the hundreds. Animal rights activists in Hong Kong condemned the slaughter of civet cats as an overreaction**

Across the province, civet cats were drowned, electrocuted and incinerated.

Hong Kong, which abuts Guangdong, tightened scrutiny of people arriving from the province. So did Taiwan, where the chief of its Center for Disease Control said officials, worried that creatures in the province's markets might be infected with Sars. Travellers who have visited Guangdong in the past ten days will have to declare on a form whether they have come into contact with wild game, especially civet cats. The measure will last until mid-February.

In the Philippines, health officials said on Tuesday they had isolated and were observing 38 people who possibly had been in contact with a woman suspected to have contracted Sars. Blood test results were expected on Wednesday from the 42-

year-old woman, who had developed a fever and pneumonia days after returning from Hong Kong on December 20. Her husband also was under observation.

Singapore added ten additional thermal scanners to the existing 20 in its airport to check for fevers among visitors arriving from southern China and Hong Kong. The scanners will be added to walkways connecting planes to the main terminals of Changi airport, where one flight a day arrives from Guangzhou and 10 from Hong Kong.

China, mindful of persuading the world that it was in control of the situation, said it was willing and able to deal with the new SARS case. "Foreigners who come to Beijing - and Chinese citizens - will have no danger," said foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan, adding, "We need to be vigilant, but we don't want to panic."

In southern China, as civet cats were drowned, electrocuted and incinerated by the hundreds, authorities checked highway traffic for smuggled animals. The government has issued a death warrant for 10,000 civets - a weasel-like mammal sold as a delicacy in wildlife markets - and related wildlife in Guangdong province by the end of the week.

In Hong Kong, animal-rights activists condemned the slaughter of civet cats as an overreaction. "We don't even know if civet cats are the direct source of Sars," said Ng Cho-nam, a university professor and director of the Conservancy Association. The cull, he said, should be "done in a humane way with minimal suffering. Drowning is quite inhumane as it takes about a few minutes before the animal dies." AP



# Jail for China balloon brigade

Beijing, Dec. 31 (Reuters): A Chinese court sentenced an American and a New Zealander to up to five years in jail today on charges of plotting to explode balloons by remote control above Tiananmen Square and scatter pro-democracy leaflets.

The Beijing No 2 Intermediate People's Court handed a five-year prison sentence to Chinese-born New Zealand businessman Sun Gang, 44, and a three-and-a-half-year term to Taiwan-born US national Lan Yupeng, the official Xinhua news agency said.

No comment was available from the US embassy or the New Zealand mission which were closed for the New Year holiday. The court ruled the men should be deported, Xinhua said, adding they were also fined unspecified amounts on charges of inciting subversion.

It was unclear if the pair would be deported before or after serving their sentences.

Sun and Lan used false names to rent a Beijing apartment in May where police found leaflets, a hacksaw and an "airship", it said, adding they had colluded with an overseas organisation.

They also plotted to kidnap a local person working for an unnamed company in the southern province of Hunan to extract ransom money, it said. The court also sentenced Chinese national Lin Yandong, 42, to 18 months in jail for involvement in the kidnapping plot.

Lan and Sun were arrested as they assembled hot air balloons brought into China from the US, a US-based leader of the little-known China Federation Party said in May. The men had planned to explode the balloons by remote control above

Tiananmen Square and Beijing's international airport, sending into the air 2,000 leaflets espousing the party's pro-democracy platform.

The staunchly anti-Communist party said it had set up a government in exile with the aim of fomenting "revolution" and "overthrowing" the Communists who have run China since 1949.

## Taiwan rap

China condemned Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian today for saying he was waging a "holy war" against the mainland, calling him immoral and accusing him of fanning anti-Beijing sentiment to win votes.

Newspapers in Taiwan, which China regards as a renegade province, quoted Chen as telling a campaign rally in southern Taiwan on Saturday the March presidential election was a holy war by the Taiwan people against the Chinese Communists.

"He unscrupulously fanned Taiwan compatriots' anti-mainland sentiment for his own selfish interest and for the elections," Zhang Mingqing, spokesperson for China's policy-making Taiwan Affairs Office, said. "This goes against the will of Taiwan compatriots to seek peace, stability and development... This is extremely immoral."

Tension has been simmering since Taiwan passed a controversial bill in November allowing referendums, which China sees as a move towards independence. Beijing has threatened force if Taiwan drags its feet on reunification or declares statehood. "We are resolutely opposed to any form of Taiwan independence," Chinese President Hu Jintao said.