

# Violence over, China begins great cover-up

HOWARD W. FRENCH

Shanghai, Dec. 17: Ten days ago, the sleepy fishing village of Dongzhou was the scene of a deadly face-off, with protesters hurling homemade bombs and the police gunning them down in the streets.

Now, a stilted calm prevails, a cover-up so carefully planned that the small town looks like a relic from the Cultural Revolution, as if the government had decided to re-educate the entire population. Banners hang everywhere, with slogans in big red characters proclaiming things like: "Stability is paramount" and "Don't trust investigators".

Many facts remain unclear about the police crackdown on a Dongzhou demonstration on December 6, which residents say ended in

the deaths of 20 or more people, but one thing is certain: The government is doing everything possible to prevent witnesses' accounts of what happened from emerging.

Residents of Dongzhou, a small town now cordoned off by heavy police roadblocks and patrols, said in scores of interviews on the telephone and with visitors that they had endured beatings, bribes and threats at the hands of security forces in the week and a half after their protest against the construction of a power plant was violently put down.

Others said that the corpses of the dead had been withheld, apparently because they were so riddled with bullets that they would contradict the government's version of events.

And residents have been

warned that if they must explain the deaths of loved ones — many of whom were shot dead during a tense standoff with the police in which fireworks, blasting caps and crude petrol bombs were thrown by the villagers — they should simply say their relatives were blown up by their own explosives.

"Local officials are talking to families that had relatives killed in the incident, telling them that if they tell higher officials and outsiders that they died by accident, by explosives, while confronting the police, they must make it sound convincing," said one resident of the besieged town in an interview. "If the family members speak this way they are being promised 50,000 yuan (\$6,193), and if not, they will be beaten and get nothing out of it."

NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

11-19  
17/12

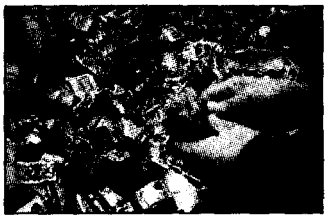
# UN to China: Close yuan-ing gap between cities, countryside

Beijing Asked To Help Poor Rural Folk Get Better Jobs And Education So They Can Share In Nation's Economic Boom

**Beijing:** A United Nations report released on Friday calls on China to fight poverty by dismantling a controversial household registration system that hinders people from the poor countryside who want to find jobs in its booming cities.

The report, written by Chinese researchers for the UN Development Programme, also calls on Beijing to spend more on education and public facilities in the countryside, home to 800 million people, many of them left behind by China's 25-year-old boom.

It echoes appeals by other Chinese and foreign researchers for China to create job opportunities for rural people by phasing out its



'China rich enough to feed itself'

**Beijing:** The World Food Programme (WFP) is ending food donations to China, saying the country no longer needs outside help because of a booming economy that has lifted millions of out poverty.

The United Nations agency made its last food shipment to China in April and the programme officially ends this month. "We've come to a point where China no longer needs the World Food Programme," WFP executive director James Morris said in a statement released Thursday. The end of the programme was long planned and came after 26 years of aid shipments that Morris said fed more than 30 million of China's poorest people. WFP has spent US\$1 billion on aid to China over the life of the programme, Morris said.

He praised China's focus on ending hunger. "The world has a lot to learn from China's approach and commitment to the issue of hunger and poverty," Morris said. AP

household registration system, known in Chinese as 'hukou'.

The system technically bars people from the poor countryside from moving to cities. But millions do so anyway, creating a "floating population" estimated at more than 140 million migrants who have no ac-



Students at a military nurse school give money during a donation event, answering a recent call by China's President Hu Jintao to help the needy in Xi'an, in northwest China's Shaanxi province

## Hu sets out to assuage rural areas

**Beijing:** Chinese President Hu Jintao made a three-day visit to remote northwestern Qinghai province to meet with laid-off workers, poor students and farmers, state media reported on Friday. It was the latest attempt by the government to show its concern for the common people.

Hu promised more intensive measures to raise the standard of living in rural areas, but did not give specifics. After a decade of building up trade and political ties abroad, the Communist leadership says it wants to focus on spreading prosperity to hundreds of millions of people, mostly in the countryside, who have missed out on China's 20-year-old economic boom. The trip was meant to give Hu a chance "to learn how the central government policies for helping people in difficulties had been implemented", the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

cess to schools for their children or other services.

The government of President Hu Jintao has begun encouraging rural people to seek city jobs. But the 'hukou' system has been slow to change, due in part to worries that crowded schools and other facilities would be swamped by an influx of newcomers.

"Unifying the labour market depends fundamentally on dismantling the 'hukou' system," the report said.

Chinese leaders have promised to make easing chronic rural poverty a priority, with more spending on schools and projects to improve the productivity of farms.

Communist leaders are alarmed at rising rural anger over the growing gap between China's rich and poor and complaints about seizures of farmland for the construction of power plants and other urban projects that often produce little benefit for local peasants. In the latest confrontation over land seizures, police in a southern village opened fire on protestors this month. The government says three people were killed, while residents put the death toll at up to 20.

The UN report made a special appeal for migrants' children, calling for the creation of special schools for them. "Discrimination faced by these children should be eliminated

Hu talked with farmers in poverty-stricken Dongjiagou village about the government's abolition of the agriculture tax earlier this year and visited primary school students who have been exempted from paying tuition and textbook fees, Xinhua said.

Hu "explained to villagers in detail the government's policies to support agriculture and rural development, stressing that more intensive policies will be formulated for the building of a socialist new countryside," Xinhua said. No details were given.

Hu also talked with a laid-off factory worker in Qinghai's capital of Xining and visited factories making steel, medicine, minority costumes and machine tools. He met with army officials posted to the province. "We must work energetically to solve the problems that concern the people most and are related to their fundamental interests," Hu said. AP

to help them integrate into society," the report said. The report was written by academics from Chinese universities and official think tanks and overseen by the government's China Development Research Foundation.

Many of their other recommendations for changes in health care and other social policies are in line with promised government reforms, though leaders have been slow to carry them out.

The report calls for sweeping, fundamental changes in the way that China provides health care, pensions and other social welfare benefits, which now come mostly from employers. AP

# People's fury worries China's Communists

## Beijing's Worst Fear: Growing Social Unrest And Violence

**Shenzhen:** Increasingly violent protests in areas throughout China over land, taxes and other disputes are forcing the government to strike a difficult balance, trying to maintain order while letting the public vent frustrations to prevent a larger explosion, analysts say.

Public dissent has flourished in recent years as the communist government eases social controls and complaints over corruption, pollution and yawning gaps in income grow. In the latest incident, police last week shot and killed villagers protesting land seizures in Dongzhou, a coastal village northeast of Hong Kong. The government says three people were killed, while residents put the death toll as high as 50.

"The government now finds itself with a dilemma," said Murray Scot Tanner, a political scientist with the RAND Corp, a Washington think-tank. "How to contain these sorts of things without violence or without sending the signal that people are free to protest is very, very difficult."

Beijing's biggest fear is that "the misuse of violence ... could cause a small protest to turn into a huge riot," Tanner said. The government has spent time and money over the past decade trying to refine a strategy for dealing with protests. Police have been trained in crowd control, and Beijing has invested in tear gas, riot gear and other nonlethal tools.

Local authorities have been warned to stay alert to grievances in order to defuse potential crises.

In a February 19 speech, President Hu Jintao told provincial

### BLOODY TUESDAY

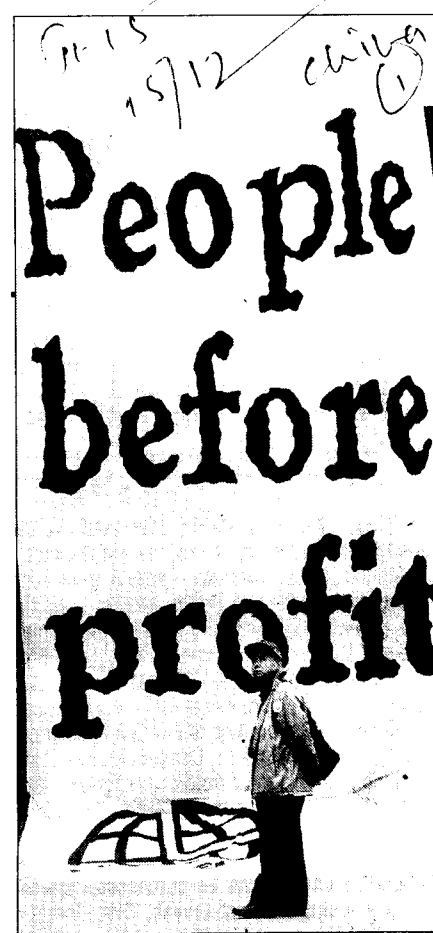
leaders to "identify antagonism of all kinds at an early stage and take effective measures in a timely manner," according to the official Xinhua News Agency. "We should handle the issues reflected by people legally and reasonably and guide people to express their interests in a reasonable way," Hu said. "We should actively prevent and properly handle incidents on a mass scale." A directive to police in the 1990s emphasised caution in use of weapons and coercion, according to Tanner.

"That puts the police in a vague situation," he said. "It's the sort of directive which puts tremendous levels of discretion and judgment on local security forces."

Demonstrations in China can gather size and force with remarkable speed. Crowds congregate and mild frustration can turn into fury within minutes. Officials worry that protests about mundane issues can quickly become anti-government riots. In June, thousands of people fought with police in an eastern town after a traffic dispute. They burned cars, smashed windows at a police station and looted a market. Agencies



A Chinese woman walks along with her child beneath a sign warning against law breakers at the Dongzhou village near Shanwei, Guangdong in southern China on Wednesday



### Activists call for probe into police shooting

**Dongyong:** A group of Chinese activists and academics—including one whose son was killed in the Tiananmen Square crackdown—called for an inquiry into the deadly police shooting here.

The letter, posted on a web site abroad, also called for the government to publish a list of those killed in the December 6 shootings.

"We express our strongest protest and condemnation of the Guangdong authorities who created this murder case!" says the letter, dated Sunday. Its 14 signers include Ding Zilin, a retired Beijing academic whose son was killed in 1989 when China's military crushed the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests.

The letter calls on the national government to investigate the killings, prosecute those responsible and compensate the injured and the families of the dead. "We hope more people will join us in signing the letter," Liu Xiaobo, a dissident writer who was among the signatories, said. AP

# China overtakes UK as world's 4th largest economy

Philip Thornton in Hong Kong

Dec. 14. — China has overtaken the UK as the world's fourth largest economy; it emerged yesterday in what will be seen as a key economic landmark for the new century.

Sources in Beijing have indicated that China's economy is much bigger than what was thought of. The Asian giant is understood to have raised its estimate of the size of the economy in 2004 by \$300 billion or 20 per cent to almost \$2 trillion.

On official exchange rates used by the Bank of England this would be worth £1.13 trillion, putting it a whisker ahead of the UK's economy which weighed in at £1.11 trillion.

Mr Jim O'Neill, head of global economics at Goldman Sachs — which forecast two years ago that China would overtake the UK by 2007 — said the watershed had come two years early. With China expected to post nominal growth of 12.5 per cent against the UK's cash terms growth of 4.5 per cent, it would "definitely" have overtaken this year. "If these figures are confirmed then it will mean that China will become the fourth largest economy in the world," he said.

He said the revision would not come as a "huge surprise" as many analysts had cast doubt on Chinese statistics: "The other important thing



Chinese Prime Minister, Mr Wen Jiabao (C) shakes hands with his Japanese counterpart, Mr Junichiro Koizumi while Malaysian Premier, Mr Abdullah Ahmad Badawi applauds following the signing ceremony of the declaration of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean) summit in Kuala Lumpur on Wednesday. — AFP

is that it probably means that the investment share of GDP is lower than people had been talking about which means that speculation about an investment bubble that will have to crash are misplaced." In an influential report on

economist at Capital Economics, said: "It's another reflection of the importance of China in the world economy. This increases the case for China to join the G7, perhaps in place of one of the smaller countries such as Canada.

China's bureau of statistics will next week announce some of the findings of the census and "revisions of the GDP data for 2004", reports from Beijing said. Economists believe a revision of China's service sector data — which official figures show making up just a quarter of the economy — will show the sector has been under-scored, especially in areas such as accountancy, banking and advertising.

This will echo warnings from Mr Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that China presents a growing economic threat to Europe, particularly the UK. Two months ago he warned union leaders that China and India were now training more engineers, computer scientists, and university graduates — four million a year — than Europe and the US combined.

Mr Frithjof Schmidt, a German Greens MEP, said the news would fan Western protectionism. "China's success has made even strong industrial nations nervous," he said. "They are beginning to wonder if they will really be the winners of this (WTO) game as they expected." — The Independent

# Toxic spill sparks China exodus

*Concerns grow over long term impact*

AGENCE France-Presse  
Wujiazhan (China), November 25

MILLIONS OF residents in China's Harbin city endured their third full day without running water on Friday due to a toxic chemical spill, as concerns grew over the long-term impacts of the disaster.

Harbin's taps remained turned off as an 80-kilometre slick of the carcinogen benzene and nitrobenzene that was 33 times above national safety levels flowed slowly through the city along the partially frozen Songhua river.

While the government tried to reassure Harbin's 3.8 million urban residents that water supplies would resume quickly and safely, many people were still evacuating the city and engineers were continuing to sink dozens of wells. Millions of bottles of water were also being trucked in to replenish supermarket and shop shelves that had been stripped bare at the beginning of the crisis.

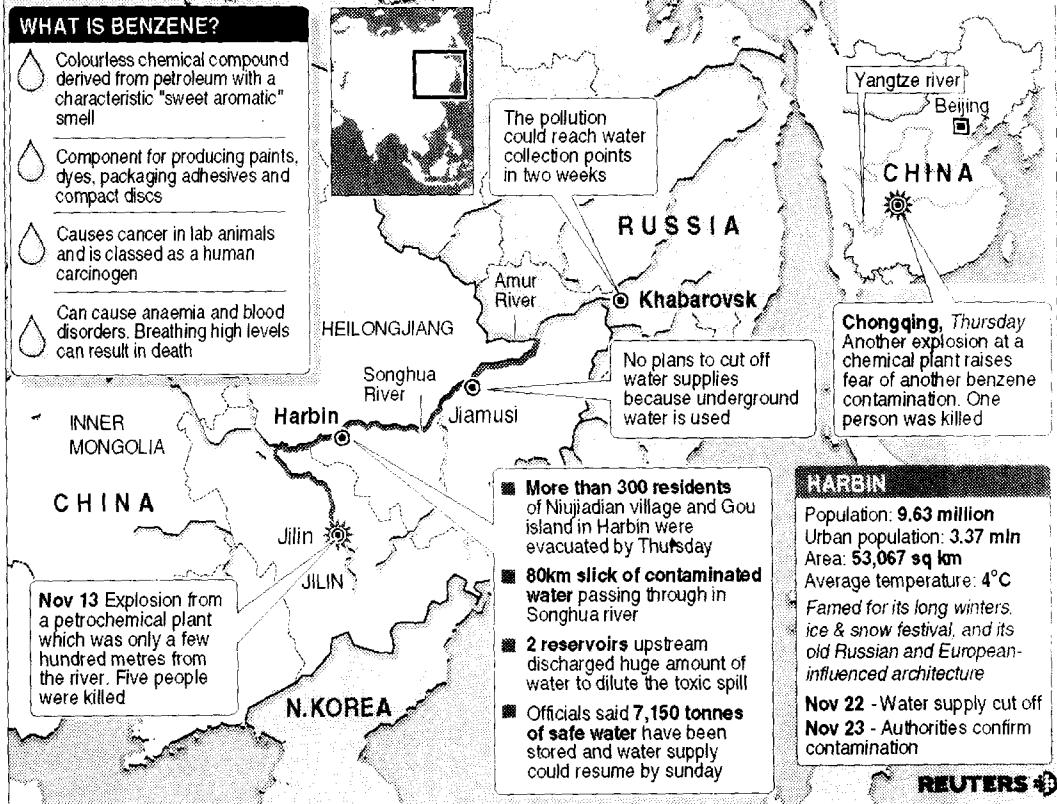
The slick reached Harbin, the industrial capital of Heilongjiang province in China's far northeast, on Thursday morning after taking 11 days to flow 380 kilometers down the Songhua from the spill site in neighbouring Jilin province.

The spill occurred after an explosion at the PetroChina chemical factory on November 13 in Jilin city, although the government refused to admit until Wednesday — 10 days later —

Hundreds of villagers have been evacuated from their homes along a river in northeast China after an explosion at a petrochemical plant dumped 100 tonnes of benzene and toxic chemicals in the water

## WHAT IS BENZENE?

- Colourless chemical compound derived from petroleum with a characteristic "sweet aromatic" smell
- Component for producing paints, dyes, packaging adhesives and compact discs
- Causes cancer in lab animals and is classed as a human carcinogen
- Can cause anaemia and blood disorders. Breathing high levels can result in death



that the river had been polluted.

Residents of villages and towns that lie along the Songhua between Jilin and Harbin said on Friday that they had never been told about the pollution and were still eating fish from the river.

"No one has told us about it," a resident of Wujiazhan, a town of about 50,000 people about 200 kilometres downstream from Jilin city, said.

The resident, a man in his early 50s who gave his surname as Wu, had just left the town market after buying a handful of small fish he said came from the

Songhua.

"Is it safe to eat?" he asked after being told about the chemical slick. "Take the fish. I don't want to eat them now."

The government admitted Thursday 100 tons of benzene and nitrobenzene, about 10 tanker-truck loads worth, spilled into the Songhua after the blast, state media reported.

Although the government has tried to play down the effects of the spill, environmentalists warned on Friday that environmental and social impacts could be severe and last for years.

Kenneth Leung, an ecotoxicologist from the University of Hong Kong, said benzene would settle in the river sediment and be taken into the food chain by tiny fish which scour the river bed for food. "Benzene can bond to DNA and cause mutation which can lead to cancer," Leung said.

In neighbouring Russia, fears were also growing that the contaminated water would soon flow over the border. The Kremlin said on Friday it was taking emergency steps to protect millions of people in its Far East region from the toxic spill.

## BUSH URGES CHINA REFORMS

# Who cares, says Hu

China Daily/ANN

BEIJING, Nov. 20. — US President Mr George W Bush's appeal to China today to expand religious, political and social freedom was met by his counterpart Mr Hu Jintao's firm assertion that Beijing would not ape western-style political system and will improve human rights according to "the actual situation." Mr Hu also said that China will not allow "independence" of Taiwan while agreeing to crack down on intellectual piracy, gradually balance trade currently favouring Beijing and make currency reforms.

"The relationship between China and the United States is an important relationship. This trip will make it stronger," Mr Bush said in a brief meeting with the press together with Chinese President Mr Hu Jintao after their official talks. Describing China as an important trade partner of the USA, Mr Bush said the two countries share many common opportunities and challenges in the 21st century. On the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, Mr Bush said both the USA and China seek a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons.

"China will continue to build up democracy with its own characteristics and improve its people's human rights based on the actual situation and the aspirations of the people," Mr Hu said after a 90-minute meeting with Bush at the Great Hall of the People in Tiananmen Square.

Mr Bush, who earlier kicked off his third visit to China by attending a solemn service at Gangwashi Church, one of five officially recognised Protestant churches here, used the opportunity to call for more religious freedom in the Communist nation. Mr Hu, also general secretary of the ruling CPC, noted China's democracy and human rights cause have made "remarkable achievements" since the founding of the People's Republic of China, especially after the launching of the reform and opening-up drive.

Mr Hu told Mr Bush that China's path of peaceful development is "an inevitable choice" based on its national conditions, its historical and cultural traditions and the current development trend in today's world. On the vexed Taiwan issue, Mr Hu said he told Mr Bush that Beijing was committed to achieving peaceful reunification

of the mainland with Taiwan but would not tolerate "Taiwan independence." "I reaffirmed to President Bush that the Chinese government and Chinese people are committed to peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits," Mr Hu said, adding that Beijing will by no means tolerate "Taiwan independence." "To oppose and check so-called Taiwan independence and safeguard peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits serves the common interests of China and the USA," Mr Hu said. During their talks, Mr Hu and Mr Bush agreed to expand bilateral trade and economic cooperation, believing it serves the common interests of the two countries and peoples.

### Going to church

US President Mr Bush today kicked off his high-profile visit to China by attending a church service here, signalling that Washington is resolved to push for greater religious freedom in the Communist nation. In the church's guest book, Mr Bush, now on his third visit to China, wrote "May God bless the Christians of China." (With agency inputs)



PEDDLING FRIENDSHIP: Mr Bush joins Chinese cyclists for a ride at the Laoshan Olympic course in Beijing on Sunday. — AFP

# China will adopt its own path to democracy, Hu tells Bush

Washington, Beijing sign agreement on prevention of illegal nuclear trade

**BEIJING:** Chinese President Hu Jintao said here on Sunday that it is in the common interest of both China and the United States to oppose and check secessionist activities of the "Taiwan independence" forces and safeguard peace and stability across the Taiwan Straits.

Mr. Hu was speaking to reporters after his talks with the visiting U.S. President George W. Bush.

## One-China policy

The U.S. side has reiterated, on many occasions, that it will stick to the one-China policy, abide by the three Sino-U.S. joint communiqués and oppose "Taiwan independence", Mr. Hu said. "The Chinese side highly appreciates this."

Reacting to Mr. Bush's appeal to China to expand religious, political and social freedom, Mr. Hu said, "China will continue to build up democracy with its own characteristics and improve its people's human rights based on the actual situation and the aspirations of the people". On Saturday, China inked an agreement with the U.S. to prevent illegal trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive material.

Representatives of China and the U.S. signed the MoU here. — Xinhua, PTI



**HAND OF FRIENDSHIP:** United States President George Bush (left), and his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao after they made a joint statement in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Sunday. — PHOTO: AP



# China shifts focus to rural areas

## New Five-Year Plan Aims To Tackle Explosive Rich-Poor Gap

**Beijing:** China's communist leaders have issued an economic plan that calls for developing the impoverished countryside in an effort to narrow the growing and politically explosive gap between rich and poor, state media said on Wednesday.



**TARGETTING CHANGE**

The five-year plan was approved at an annual leadership meeting that ended last week but wasn't released to the public until this week. It pledges to maintain "fast and stable growth" and to carry out more reforms of China's banks and financial industries and development of oil and gas resources to meet surging energy needs, the government's Xinhua News Agency and other media reported.

But the plan's focus is rural development, reflecting official alarm at the yawning gap in incomes between eastern cities that have boomed during China's 25-year-old

economic reforms and the poor countryside, home to 800 million people. Enduring rural poverty and anger at corruption, heavy taxes and the seizure of farmland by officials for development in areas where some families get by on only a few hundred dollars a year has sparked protests and sometimes violent clashes in areas throughout China.

The plan "stresses the need to accelerate rural reform in a bid to narrow the yawning gap between the rural and urban areas and promote social harmony," Xinhua said.

The plan, which takes effect next year, promises to overhaul the rural tax system, to invest more in agriculture and to experiment with new methods of letting farmers control their land, the reports said.

Reports issued immediately after the Communist Party meeting, known as a plenum, ended last week said President Hu Jintao and other leaders pledged to promote "social fairness" and to work toward closing gaps in income.

Capitalist-style economic reforms have undercut the importance of such communist-style plans, but they are still closely watched as indicators of the ruling party's priorities. The plan echoes long-term party objectives put in place even before Hu became president in 2003. The party says it plans to focus over the coming decade on spreading prosperity to the rural poor, the working class and others left behind by China's economic boom.

In a report in September, a government think tank said half of all income in China goes to the top one-fifth of the population, while the bottom one-fifth receives just 4.7%.

The government said last week that the economy grew by 9.4% in the first nine months of this year, and forecast growth for the full year at 9.2%. AP



---

# Space success sends China spirits soaring

Beijing, Oct. 17 (Reuters): China's second manned spacecraft returned today after orbiting the Earth for five days as patriotic fervour gripped the nation and the media hailed the mission as a symbol of the country's technological prowess.

Astronauts Fei Junlong, 40, and Nie Haisheng, 41, were flown to Beijing where they were given a hero's welcome after their Shenzhou VI space capsule touched down in the remote steppes of the northern Chinese region of Inner Mongolia.

The two astronauts were in good health after orbiting the Earth 76 times covering 3.25

million km. State media hailed the mission as a breakthrough marking China's emergence as a major technological power.

Soon after the craft touched down at 2033 GMT, barely 1 km from its target, jubilant residents in Fei's and Nie's home towns set off firecrackers and performed traditional dragon and lion dances, banging gongs and drums. "The motherland is so great!" the official Xinhua news agency quoted Fei's father as saying. Fei's mother wept on learning of his safe return.

State television showed the astronauts emerging unaided, pausing atop the charred re-

entry craft to wave to the recovery team, cameramen and photographers.

Tang Xianming, director of the Manned Space Engineering Office, said that China would aim for a spacewalk by 2007 and consider putting a woman in space in the near future.

A patriotic propaganda campaign, in full swing even before the spacecraft landed, went into overdrive.

# China pauses, remembers social reform

Beijing, Oct. 11 (Reuters): China's Communist Party chief Hu Jintao today emerged stronger from a party meeting that endorsed an economic blueprint to curb unrest by improving social services and stressing sustainable rather than breakneck growth.

But there was no sign Hu had anointed a political ally as the country's fifth-generation leader after Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and himself, suggesting he still has a way to go before establishing full control.

Hu strengthened his grip on power by peppering the

communiqué of the four-day plenary session of the party's 354-member elite Central Committee with his "harmonious society" platform.

His "scientific development" political thought was enshrined in the document, marking a policy shift away from growth for growth's sake towards a more sustainable model that addresses social inequities reflected in a widening gap between rich and poor and which threaten social stability.

"We have to... put more emphasis on social equity, enhance efforts in adjusting income distribution and try

hard to alleviate dependency of the widening income gap between regions and some members of society," state television quoted from the communiqué.

The world's seventh biggest economy has enjoyed eight straight quarters of annual growth of 9 per cent or more, but Beijing has grown increasingly worried about social discontent stemming from rising income inequality and huge gaps in the health-care and retirement systems.

The closed-door plenum endorsed the country's 11th five-year plan, which aims to double per capita GDP by 2010



Hu: Almost there

compared with 2000, the official Xinhua news agency said.

China will also raise energy efficiency and cut consumption over the next five years, Xinhua said.

Hu pledged to pursue political reforms in "an active and stable manner", but called for strengthening the party's ability to govern. China's Communist Party has enjoyed a monopoly on power since 1949.

It was Hu's first plenum without his influential predecessor, Jiang Zemin, holding some form of office, although Jiang has stacked the party's upper echelons with his allies.

In a sign obstacles remain on Hu's path to consolidation, he failed to manoeuvre protégé Li Keqiang, 50, who cut his teeth in Hu's power base, the China Youth League, into the decision-making Polit-

buro, which has 24 full members and one alternate member.

Hu, 62, replaced Jiang, 79, as party chief in 2002, state president in 2003 and military chief last year. Hu began his long march out of Jiang's shadow to consolidate power after ending a government cover-up of an outbreak of the SARS virus in 2003. He has sought to portray himself as a man of the people and boost greater government transparency and accountability.

Sources and analysts said Hu lacked the political clout to seize control of Jiang's political stronghold of Shanghai.

Hu still needs cooperation from Jiang's men to reduce the high cost of health care, education and housing and to slash the number of urban unemployed.

## Activist alive

A Chinese civil rights campaigner survived an attack by a group of thugs. *The Guardian's* Shanghai correspondent, Benjamin Joffe-Walt, wrote that the thugs beat Lu Bangjie when they were stopped from entering Taishi village in Guangdong province.

Lu said his eyes were swollen, his vision blurred and his body ached.

# Hu Jintao advocates an orderly urbanisation

Chinese President lays stress on land conservation and social harmony

**BEIJING:** Chinese President Hu Jintao has urged to continue the urbanisation process with Chinese characteristics in a healthy and orderly way.

Mr. Hu, also General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), made the remarks presiding over the 25th group study of the CPC Central Committee Political Bureau.

Mr. Hu called for the adherence to the principles of gradualism, land conservation, intensive development and rational project distribution so as to form the new structure of urban development on the basis of energy saving, environmentalism, economic efficiency and social harmony.

Urbanisation is the ultimate trend for economic and social development and an important symbol for industrialisation and modernisation, he said.

China is at the crucial stage of the urbanisation process, so it's of great importance to continue the coordinated development of large and medium-sized cities and small cities and gradually lift the level, he said. — Xinhua



**DEVELOPMENT GOALS:** China's President Hu Jintao (centre), Premier Wen Jiabao (left) and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Wu Bangguo at the National Day Reception at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Friday. — PHOTO: REUTERS

# China plots grassroots *512* 'democracy' ... *China D* *27/9*

Press Trust of India

BEIJING, Sept. 26. — China's Communist Party, which is plotting "democracy with Chinese characteristics", has made public participation and election mandatory for the selection of party secretaries of village committees nationwide. Election of the secretary of a village committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) will no longer be an "internal affair" of the party as non-party people have been allowed to attend CPC's grassroots election.

For example, in Shandong province of east China, 81,271 out of 81,988 village committees of the CPC have completed secretary re-election.

According to an official from the Organisation Department of the Shandong Provincial CPC Committee, 91.9 per cent of newly-elected secretaries were recommended by non-party people. The official said that one-fifth of the secretaries of the CPC village committees in the province were changed during this year's re-election, after the non-Party people were allowed to participate in the election.

In past decades, secretaries of all levels of CPC committees were elected merely by Party members and they were the top leaders of their administrative regions, the official Xinhua news agency reported. But normally in one village, there were only dozens of Party



A computer-generated image

**The Communist Party has made election mandatory for the selection of party secretaries of village committees**

members out of over 10,000 non-Party people, it noted.

In recent years, the head of village affairs committee, elected by the masses, often challenged the secretary of CPC's village committee, elected by a few of Party members, said Mr Wang Shaoxing, professor with the Shandong University.

"Therefore, allowing non-Party people to participate in CPC's grassroots election will consolidate CPC's ruling foundation," said Mr Ding Junping, head of the public administrative college under Wuhan University.

According to a source from the Organisation Department of the Shandong Provincial CPC Committee, 5,384 village committees of CPC have introduced direct election in 2005. Candidates must be recommended by villagers and they need to deliver public speeches to promote themselves.

## ... Picks Online rights for repression

Press Trust of India

BEIJING, Sept. 26. — China has issued new guidelines to regulate the content in the country's booming Online news services, threatening severe punishments and even shutdown if they violated the code of conduct.

Online news sites that publish stories containing fabricated information, pornography or violence will face "severe punishment" or even a shutdown under a revised regulation, the official media reported today.

The new regulation on online news services was jointly issued yesterday by the State Council Information Office and the Ministry of Information Industry, the media reported.

"We need to better regulate the online news services with the emergence of so many unhealthy news stories that will easily mislead the public," a spokesman with the information office said.

Services that provide online news stories, that have bulletin board systems (BBS) or have the function of sending short messages containing news contents to individual mobile phones are all subject to the regulation. News sites set up by news organisations but publishing not just their own stories, and sites by other organisations featuring news stories must get approval from the State Council Information Office.

Beijing worried by rising unrest as nation risks social meltdown



Two men walk past a woman begging on a street in Beijing. (AFP)

# China gap grows

RICHARD SPENCER

Beijing, Aug. 23: China risks social meltdown within five years because of the stresses provoked by its economic boom, government officials were warned yesterday.

The country was now in a "yellow-light" zone, the second most serious indicator of "social instability", according to an official report focusing on the growing gap between rich and poor. "We are going to hit the red-light scenario after 2010 if there are no effective solutions in the next few years," said the report, commissioned by the labour and social security ministry.

As if to bear out its warnings, police admitted that rioting had broken out in a town in the eastern province of Zhejiang, the latest in a wave of violent protests in the region. Buildings were set alight in clashes led by parents who accused a battery factory of giving their children lead poisoning.

Such unrest is now common in many Chinese towns, often triggered by protests against the mixture of corruption and environmental degradation that the dash for de-

velopment has brought.

The increased publicity given to them is a sign of growing government anxiety. The national leadership, under President Hu Jintao, which came to power two years ago made the plight of the poor its rallying cry.

But it has proved unable to prevent the exploitation of China's manufacturing boom by local officials eager to bolster both their standing and their bank balances. Han Dongfang, a Chinese labour rights activist in Hong Kong, said Beijing's prophecies of doom appeared to be exacerbating local corruption.

"For the moment, the officials have positions and economic power," he said. "They feel they have to hurry up, because otherwise they will lose their last chance to grab what they can."

Ever since market-oriented economic reforms were launched more than 25 years ago, the old Maoist notions of equality have disappeared. Ironically, standard measures of wealth disparity now rank "communist" China as far more unequal than its old adversary, capitalist Taiwan.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Elite police units formed

# China heat on protests

JANE MACARTNEY

Beijing, Aug. 20: China has established elite police squads equipped with armoured vehicles and helicopters under orders to quell riots in a country where a protest erupts every seven minutes.

The squads are to be stationed in 36 cities, but the largest deployments are in Beijing and Shanghai as the Communist Party asserts its hold on power and gears up for the 2008 Olympic Games.

The latest team was inaugurated this week in the city of Zhengzhou, in central Henan province, China's most heavily populated, with more than a hundred million people. More people sue the government in Henan than in any other region.

People are becoming bolder in voicing their grievances in a society in which economic liberalisation has created a yawning gap between urban rich and rural poor, and under an authoritarian system that offers numerous opportunities for officials to get rich through corruption.

Officials said that the squads of 600 men had undergone training to battle terrorism, crush riots and respond to other emergencies. The

men, the elite of the police force, have acquired skills such as survival techniques and fighting in hostile environments.

In recent years, popular protests have surged in China over disputes ranging from land rights to pensions.

Several disturbances have turned violent when local governments have ordered in police or armed men. Zhou Yongkang, the public security Minister, said recently that the number of mass protests across China soared to more than 74,000 last year, with 3.76 million people taking part, up from 10,000 incidents a decade ago.

The authorities are particularly keen to avoid trouble during the games, a showpiece that is seen as a coming-out party for an emerging superpower. In the 1990s, sporadic bombings in the capital were blamed on members of the Muslim Uighur minority from the far western Xinjiang region that borders the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Several violent riots have broken out in Xinjiang among Uighurs demanding an independent state of East Turkestan.

THE TIMES, LONDON

21 AUG 2008 THE TELEGRAPH

## China races to expand N-power capacity

**Qinshan:** The shadows of Chernobyl and Three Mile Island no longer reach the pine-crested hillsides of Hangzhou Bay, where China is rushing to expand a nuclear power station to meet a soaring demand for electricity for its economic boom.

Driven by crushing fuel shortages, smog and ambitions to profit from its hard-won nuclear prowess, Beijing has embarked on a quest to more than double its nuclear power generating capacity by 2020. The push for more N-power means opportunities for US, French and Russian technology suppliers that are competing for up to US\$8 billion in contracts for two new N-power plants—the biggest deals in years for the industry.

French nuclear group Areva; Westinghouse Electric Co, the US unit of British Nuclear Fuels PLC; and Russia's AtomStroyExport are awaiting a Chinese decision on bids for the facilities. AP

0 4 10 2005



# China tightens censorship controls

5-3 118

## JEHANGIR S. POCHA

**Beijing, July 31:** Censorship and limits on freedom of expression are rising in China as the government struggles to contain rising unrest across the country.

New regulations issued by China's State Council last week prevent theatre companies and artists from performing any works that "oppose the basic principles of the constitution that place the Communist Party as the ruling party."

Commercial performances should also refrain from performances that "are deemed harmful to the state ... endanger state unity, sovereignty or territorial integrity, endanger state security or the honour or interests of the state." *The People's Daily*, the official newspaper of China's Communist Party, reported.

Foreign entertainment enterprises are also barred from running song, dance or theatre groups, local visits by foreign performers will require collaboration with Chinese partners. Just last month, the government had also reversed a rule that allowed local media firms to enter into partnerships with overseas media firms and tightened controls on foreign media companies operating in China.

The moves come in the wake of a rising social and political unrest, which senior leaders see as a threat to their control and national stability.

In recent months hundreds of riots by groups as diverse as retirees demanding withheld pensions, farmers protesting land seizures, citizens incensed by government corruption and ethnic minorities inflamed by prejudice have rock-



**ROCKING?** Fans at a concert in China

ed different parts of China. The worst trouble came in Shenyou, about 90 km from Beijing, on June 16 when thugs attacked locals resisting a forced buyout of their land killing six people and injuring about 50. Authorities had tried to quell news of the unrest by sealing off the affected areas

and detaining journalists trying to cover the situation. But China now connected to the Internet and more than 280 million owning cell phones, news of the riots spread quickly across the country.

Existing controls on the Internet, such as intrusive moni-

toring by about 30,000 human censors as well as advanced filtering techniques developed with help from US corporations such as Cisco, are being strengthened. But the government has also been putting in place new and innovative censorship and control tools.

One plan calls for government operatives to infiltrate Internet chat groups where criticism of the government is rising and improve the Communist Party's image by posting pro-government propaganda, *Southern Weekend*, a newspaper based in southern Guangdong province reported.

The plan has already been operational in Suqian city in the eastern province of Jiangsu since April. The infiltrators are government officials who have been carefully selected by Suqian city's propaganda department on the basis of

their "understanding of official policies, knowledge of (political) theories and political reliability", the weekly said.

A local company, Venus Information Technology, has also been appointed to develop SMS monitoring software and its package has already been implemented in politically sensitive areas, like the central Henan province.

Plans to create a network of 100 satellites capable of monitoring every inch of Chinese territory by 2020 are also in place. In addition to monitoring environment and urban growth, the network would monitor "various activities of society", Shao Liqin, an official in the ministry of science and technology, recently said.

Significantly, pressure on foreign journalists, who were hitherto treated with kid gloves, is also rising.

imposed during

# Beijing justifies 'anti-party' Zhao's ouster

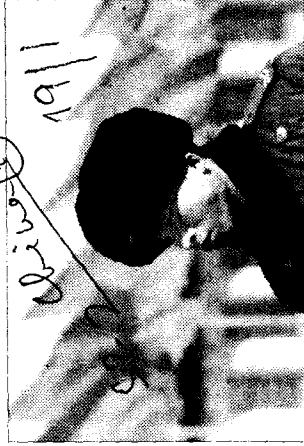
BEIJING, Jan. 18. — Chinese leaders "made the right decision" in 1989 when former Communist Party leader Zhao Ziyang was deposed following the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests, a government spokesman said today, indicating there were no plans to honour him in death. He added that Zhao died due to ill health.

Foreign ministry spokesman Mr Kong Quan said he had no information on possible plans for a state funeral for Zhao, who died yesterday, while his family reportedly said it hasn't decided on its

own plans. A temporary shrine has been set up at the former home of Zhao for his friends to pay their last respects, a rights body said today.

Asked for the government's opinion on Zhao, Mr Kong cited rulings that the 1989 protests were a counter-revolutionary riot and that Zhao, who sympathized with the demonstrators, tried to "split the party".

"Over the past 15 years since the incident, China's development has proved that this final judgment is right," Mr Kong said in the first official comment on Zhao since his death. — AP



A Chinese soldier stands guard at Tiananmen Square on Tuesday. — AFP

# China's new exchange rate system

The long anticipated revaluation of the yuan might have been below market expectations but there is no doubt at all that the announcement by the People's Bank of China has major significance that extends beyond China and its principal trading partners. The yuan had been pegged at 8.28 to the dollar since 1995 and the new rate at 8.11 represents a 2.1 per cent revaluation. After abandoning the decade-old dollar peg and replacing it with a trade-weighted basket of currencies, the new exchange rate system is similar, although not identical, to the 'managed float' system followed with great success in India. The yuan will be allowed to float in a narrow range of 0.3 per cent up or down from its previous closing. The new system gives greater flexibility to the Chinese monetary authorities. It will be watched closely by central banks and currency traders round the world, not only for its mechanics but also to decipher the yuan's movements over the short term. The expectation is that, having moved away from a fixed exchange rate mode, the Chinese central bank might loosen up further in the days to come. Much of the debate has tended to look at the issues from the perspective of the country's trading partners. Beyond the compulsions of trade, the domestic macroeconomic situation also played a major part in the decision.

The fixed exchange rate regime served China well for most of the last decade. It was one of the pillars of a highly successful export-led growth strategy that made the country the world's factory. The yuan emerged unscathed during the Asian crisis of 1998 by remaining pegged to the dollar. Speculative forces that spread uncontrollably wreaked havoc on many other Asian currencies and economies. While the Chinese experience had been favourable and emulated with success by Malaysia under Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad, the time for re-examining the exchange rate system had come. Much has been said of the pressures emanating from the United States and other developed countries that are China's principal trading partners. An artificially low yuan-dollar rate privileged the country's exporters. Indeed protectionist sentiment has been gaining ground recently, with America reimposing quotas on Chinese textiles. It was not just the fear of an external backlash but also the realisation that an exchange rate correction would assist macro-economic consolidation that helped the shift to a flexible system. The dollar peg virtually compelled China to follow the easy monetary stance of the American Federal Reserve while the recipe for its red-hot economy was monetary tightening and higher interest rates. The country's current account surplus, which stood at 4.2 per cent of GDP in 2004, was becoming embarrassingly large. It remains to be seen what impact the recent revaluation of its currency will have on the external trade profile of the world's fastest growing economy.

# China's latest decision signals flexibility

closed  
15  
110-2577

## Close to Indian model of exchange rate management

**L**AST THURSDAY's announcement by the People's Bank of China of a 2.1 per cent revaluation of the yuan, also known as the renminbi (RMB) might have fallen short of market expectations as many economists had been forecasting a revaluation of 10 per cent or even more. Yet the fact that China is finally revaluing its currency after resisting pressures from the U.S. and others is by itself big news.

Even more significant is the accompanying announcement that China is substituting the dollar linkage with one based on a basket of trade-weighted currencies of its trading partners. Although the American dollar is certain to have a large weight in the basket, it is clear that the days of the fixed dollar peg are over. The yuan will be

2004, most of it arising out of its strong export performance. Being pegged to the dollar at 8.28 for a decade since 1995, the yuan was kept at a low level. Chinese exporters therefore have had a huge advantage. As the trade balance with the U.S. and Europe moved relentlessly in favour of China, protectionist fears in the developed world were stoked. The Chinese economy has grown robustly on the back of an export led manufacturing strategy. That made China the factory to the world. Invariably that meant job losses in the U.S. and the West as many companies set up facilities in China for exporting the manufactured products back or to other countries. So

mark up of the yuan there will be a notional loss on the holding of its dollar reserves. However the yuan revaluation will not change, at least for now, the seemingly irrational act of Asian central banks of continuing to invest in the U.S. Over the past two to three years, as the U.S. dollar lost ground against the euro and other major currencies, there were expectations that central banks will shift their investments to other currencies. But for a variety of reasons this has not happened, a possible clue to the shape of things to come post yuan revaluation.

### Chinese exports may gain

There is also a strong likelihood that the relentless Chinese export drive will not slow down. This is because manufactured exports have a strong import component, of almost 40 per cent by some estimates. A costlier yuan translates into a lower import bill for the exporters who thus get a cushion. However the protectionist lobbies in the West may be mollified by the act of revaluing the Chinese currency, even if that does not translate into a significant commercial advantage.

In fact speculation is rife among analysts as to whether more currency alignments will take place in the near future. The logic here is that having moved away from a ten year old peg — a major decision — supplemental changes will become routine. Whether that happens or not, there is no doubt that the Chinese authorities get the much needed flexibility in managing the external value of their currency.

One last point that should not be missed. All the talk of moving towards a more flexible exchange rate regime should not obscure the fact that China has not loosened its controls over capital. Like the rupee, the yuan, despite its recent strengths, is not fully convertible. In fact, with the latest developments, the Chinese authorities have moved closer to the exchange rate management model developed by the Reserve Bank of India.

C. R. L. NARASIMHAN

## FINANCIAL SCENE

allowed to float within a narrow band of plus or minus 0.3 per cent around the currency parity calculated by the central bank on the basis of the previous day's closing rates.

All these by no means indicate a downgrading by China of the American currency. Newspaper headlines proclaiming the abandonment of the dollar peg may be technically correct but are misleading: the U.S. dollar's influence over Chinese (or for that matter Indian on any other country's) exchange rate management strategy will continue to be strong. The U.S. economy may be saddled with the twin burden of trade and fiscal deficits. Its currency may come under pressure from time to time but there is no way any central bank can avoid using the dollar as a reference currency.

### U.S. pressures

In fact the U.S. deficits have considerable relevance for the Chinese currency revaluation. China has been running a huge trade surplus with the U.S. and Europe. Its current account surplus as a proportion of its GDP was as high as 4.2 per cent in

## DESPITE THE REVALUATION, THE DOLLAR'S INFLUENCE OVER CHINESE EXCHANGE RATE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY WILL REMAIN STRONG.

strong have been those fears, that lawmakers in the U.S. have actually reimposed quotas on imports of Chinese textiles. The other reason why the U.S. deficits are relevant is this: in the process of defending the peg that keeps its currency low, the Chinese central bank was mopping up huge amounts of dollars (export remittances primarily, but also "hot money" flows betting on a stronger yuan in the near future). Surging forex reserves were an inevitable outcome. By last count, China had \$650 billion in reserves. (India has \$135 billion). The major outlet for that kind money has been the U.S. treasury and bond markets.

China is not the only country to finance U.S. budgetary deficits but is certainly among the biggest. As often pointed out in India, investments by the Chinese and other central banks in U.S. government paper fetch low yields. Incidentally, with the

# China to work for progress in talks

The fourth round of six-party dialogue to begin in Beijing on Tuesday

BEIJING: China will work closely with the other parties and try to make the upcoming new round of six-party talks proceed smoothly and achieve substantive progress, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said here on Thursday.

Spokesman Kong Quan told Xinhua that as a member of the six-party talks and the host nation, China will take a "serious and responsible attitude" and work closely with the other parties in the talks on the nuclear issue of the Korean Peninsula.

## Common aspiration

"We hope the new round of talks would proceed smoothly and achieve progress, and this is also the common aspiration of all parties concerned and the international community," Mr. Kong said.

The fourth round of talks will begin in Beijing next Tuesday, involving China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the United States, Russia, the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Japan. According to Mr. Kong, the head of the Chinese delegation will be Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Dawei, and the head of the DPRK delegation is Vice-Foreign Min-

ister Kim Kye-gwan. The ROK delegation will be headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Song Min-soon, the U.S. delegation by Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill, the Russian delegation by Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Alexeyev, and the Japanese delegation by Sasae Kenichiro, director general of the Asia and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

The six parties held three rounds of talks in Beijing more than one year ago, but no substantive progress was made. The new round of talks will begin at 9:00 a.m. local time on Tuesday at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse, the venue for the previous three rounds, said Mr. Kong.

As for how long the new round of talks will last, Mr. Kong said it will depend on how the talks proceed, and China will "respect the will of all relevant sides."

The specific agenda of the talks is still under discussion, he added. As for whether the six parties could reach agreement on a certain form of written document, the spokesman said, it will be decided after the talks begin. — Xinhua

22 JUL 2005

THE HINDU

# Member of China's Gang of Four dead

Associated Press

BEIJING, May 10. — Zhang Chungiao, a member of the infamous Gang of Four blamed for the worst violence of China's 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, died last month of cancer, the government said today. He was 88.

Zhang was imprisoned along with Jiang Qing, the widow of Mao Zedong, and two others following show

trials in 1981 on charges that they persecuted thousands of people following Mao's call to wage permanent revolution.

Their arrest one month after Mao's death in 1976 marked the end of the Cultural Revolution. New leaders restored order, leading to adoption of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms in 1979. Zhang and Jiang were both sentenced to death in 1981 but his penalty was later com-

muted to life in prison. The Xinhua News Agency said he was released in 1998 on medical parole.

Jiang died in 1991 in captivity, reportedly a suicide. Another gang member, Wang Hongwen, died in 1992. Yao Wenyuan was released in 1996 and there has been no official word on his status since then.

Zhang died on 21 April, Xinhua said. It didn't say where he was living at the time of his death or give

details of survivors.

There was no explanation for the delay in announcing Zhang's death, but the communist government often takes weeks to report the passing of politically sensitive figures.

Born in 1917, Zhang had risen to Communist Party secretary of Shanghai by 1966, when Mao launched the Cultural Revolution to cleanse China of "bourgeois remnants". The ultra

leftist Red Guards, gangs of students and workers, destroyed antiques, religious artifacts and foreign books. They dragged government officials to mass criticism sessions on charges of being corrupted by capitalist ideas.

Zhang and Wang set up a Shanghai Revolutionary Committee that tried to turn the city, China's most prosperous and Westernised, into a bastion of Maoist radicalism.

# China for talks with Taiwan oppn

**Beijing:** In a significant move to ease cross-straits tensions, China has invited a senior Taiwanese opposition leader to visit the mainland later this month for the first high-level political exchange between the two sides since 1949.

Lien Chan, chairman of the Kuomintang Party of Taiwan, will hold a historic meeting with Hu



Lien Chan (right) and Lin Feng Cheng

Jintao, Chinese President and general secretary of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC), on April 29.

The schedule was jointly decided by the Taiwan work office of central committee

of the CPC and the relevant department of the Kuomintang Party here. On April 18, Chen Yunlin, director of the Taiwan work office of the CPC's central committee, held talks with secretary-general of the Kuomintang Party Lin Feng-Cheng to finalise details of Lien's trip.

Apart from Beijing, Lien will also visit other mainland cities like Nanjing, Xian and Shanghai from April 26 to May 3. Kuomintang is the main opposition party of Taiwan.

Lien's meeting with Hu will mark the first high-level contact in almost 56 years between the two parties since the defeated nationalist government retreated to Taiwan after a bitter civil war and the founding of the People's Republic in 1949.

It follows a recent ice-breaking trip to Beijing by the party's vice chairman Chiang Pin-Kung, during which he met with Jia Qinglin, the fourth-ranked leader in the CPC's hierarchy. Agencies



# China, Taiwan 'to end' tensions

China Daily/ANN

BEIJING, April 28. — The Communist Party of China (CPC) and Taiwan's Opposition Kuomintang Party, whose leader Mr Lien Chan arrived in Beijing today in a historical visit, are reportedly to end decades of hostilities at a meeting between their leaders tomorrow.

After his arrival here, Mr Lien (69) told repor-

ters: "It is a historical mission for all of us to shoulder and represents the irresistible trend of public opinions to build a peaceful and win-win future through reconciliation and dialogue."

He added: "I myself and my delegation will exchange views with Mr Hu Jintao (the Chinese President) and other leaders on major issues concerning peace and economic, trade and cultural

exchanges across the Straits," he said.

The KMT ruled all of China until it was ousted from power by the CPC led by Mao Zedong and fled across the Taiwan Strait after the 1945-49 civil war.

According to reports, Mr Lien and Mr Hu may jointly announce a formal end to decades of animosity after their landmark meeting, quoting Chinese political analysts.

29 APR 2005

THE STATESMAN

# Zhao kin take on party bosses

The Times, London

BEIJING, Jan. 25. — The family of Zhao Ziyang is locked in a row with the Chinese government over how to bury the former Communist Party chief.

The family is demanding a state burial and recognition of his achievements, but the men responsible for his incarceration have shown little enthusiasm for lining up at his grave.

Official media has made no mention of Zhao except for a four-sentence death notice more than a week ago. He lost power in 1989 after sympathis-



ing with pro-democracy protesters on Tiananmen Square. Chinese troops killed hundreds in crushing the demonstrations.

A state funeral would entail flying the Chinese flag at half-mast on the square and such a move would come close to an

admission of past mistakes by the leadership.

Foreign and Chinese observers had expected Beijing to have arranged a burial plan to avoid the possibility of protests. Zhao had been unwell for years and was in hospital for a month before his death. "It's amazing they hadn't worked this out," one observer said. "They knew it was coming and that it had the potential to embarrass them."

Beijing's strategy of downplaying Zhao's death appears to have backfired. Denying him all recognition has offended moderates in the party without taming pro-democracy activists.

26 JAN 2005

THE STATESMAN

# Zhao Ziyang dead

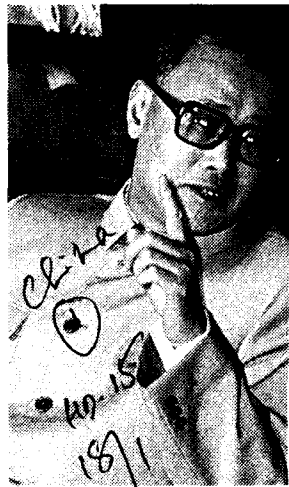
**BEIJING, JAN. 17.** The former Chinese Communist Party chief, Zhao Ziyang, died of illness in a local hospital here today, the state media reported. He was 85.

"Comrade Zhao had long suffered from multiple diseases affecting his respiratory and cardiovascular systems, and had been hospitalised for medical treatment for several times," the official Xinhua news agency reported.

Zhao's condition worsened recently, and he passed away today after failing to respond to all emergency treatment, the agency said.

Zhao had been placed under house arrest for opposing the Chinese army crackdown on pro-democracy protests in Tiananmen Square here in 1989. He had been confined to his courtyard home here in the Chinese capital for over 15 years.

Zhao was last seen in public on May 19, 1989, when he tearfully pleaded with the



**Zhao Ziyang**

student protesters to leave Tiananmen Square, close to the Chinese parliament building. The then Chinese Government declared martial law the next day.

The Chinese Government yesterday said that the physical health of Zhao had become "stable" after treatment. — PTI

# Zhao threatens Communist bosses even in death

Handwritten initials and scribbles.

Handwritten numbers: 45-11 and 2391.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIJING, Jan. 22. — Authorities are recording the names of anyone visiting a makeshift memorial at the Beijing home of ousted Communist Party leader Zhao Ziyang, who died this week, a relative said today.

“Even more road blocks and police,” said a cell phone text message from a family member who requested anonymity. “People are led into a small coffee shop to have their names recorded before they are let in.” Zhao (85) lived under house arrest for 15 years after being purged for expressing support for pro-democra-



*Zhao Ziyang*

cy demonstrators who occupied Tiananmen Square in May 1989, shortly before Chinese troops killed hundreds, maybe thousands, of the protesters.

In the past week, mourners have been trickling into a Beijing al-

ley to pay respects at the villa where Zhao spent his last years.

Until today, security had been inconsistent. Officials turned some away without giving reasons. Others were let through without questioning.

Zhao's family said earlier this week that a memorial service at Babaoshan Cemetery — the main burial site for China's revolutionary heroes — was being planned.

“No date has been set,” Zhao's son-in-law Mr Wang Zhihua said today. “We are still going over some important details with the government.” He didn't elaborate.

# China relents, will allow funeral for Zhao

The New York Times  
Beijing, January 21

THE CHINESE authorities will hold a low-key funeral service for Zhao Ziyang, the purged Communist Party chief, and have given permission for his burial in a cemetery reserved for senior party officials, a government spokesman and members of his family said on Thursday.

The decision signals a softening of the government's position on how to handle Zhao's death. Top officials previously banned nearly all news coverage and denied Zhao the usual honours accorded to senior



Candles and flowers are laid in front of a portrait of late Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang at Hong Kong's Victoria Park on Friday.

leaders when they die.

It remains unclear whether the party will present a eulogy

at the funeral, as is customary.

Zhao, who died on Monday aged 85, lost power in 1989 after

he opposed the use of force against democracy protesters in Tiananmen Square and spent nearly 16 years under house arrest. The authorities have scaled back the police presence at Zhao's house in central Beijing, allowing more mourners to visit the memorial shrine that his family set up there.

The moves suggest that Vice President Zeng Qinghong, who was appointed by President Hu Jintao to handle the funeral arrangements, is seeking to dilute criticism that the party has diminished Zhao at a time when it should be recognising his contributions.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

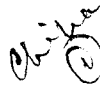
22 JAN 2005

# Keeping alive minority cultures

110-11  
4578

Yunan province is a showpiece of China's efforts to promote the cultures of its ethnic minorities.

Nirupama Subramanian



IN A world in which multiculturalism and pluralism are bywords for every progressive society, China is actively seeking to dispel the notion that the Government has over the years forced minority ethnic groups to assimilate with the country's Han majority. The Government has turned Yunan, a province in south-western China that shares borders with Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar, into a showpiece of its efforts at promoting minority cultures. The province boasts of 25 ethnic minority groups who form one-third of its 44.15 million population.

No other city showcases the varied ethnic heritage of the province better than Li Jiang, where 60 per cent of the 1.12 million people are minorities. The city has two ethnic minority counties, and the sights and sounds of the 22 groups that live here are everywhere — in the language, the music, the architecture and in the clothes.

Yang Yiben, the vice-mayor, is a woman from the Naxi who number about 280,000 and are the city's biggest minority ethnic group. The Naxi, who claim greater antiquity than the Han, have a pictographic language that Ms. Yang said was the world's only such living language. "We are trying to promote the Naxi language, to make different generations in the family speak and interact in it," she said in a meeting with a team of South Asian journalists touring the city on invitation from the Chinese Government.

Back in 2000, a local government survey found that about 30 per cent of Naxi primary students could speak the language and 50 per cent could understand it. After representations by local officials, the central government approved a regulation to make it compulsory for schools to teach Naxi students in the language. Beijing also finances a research institute in Li Jiang that studies the pictographs and has translated Naxi religious texts, using the services of Dongpas or Naxi shamans to interpret the ancient pictographs.

Ms. Yang is now engaged in a campaign to preserve the Naxi dress, a white skirt with pintuck pleats and a white satin blouse with an embroidered cap for women, and baggy white trousers and shirt with a turban for men. "As a government official, I am taking the lead in this regard and wear my traditional dress on many occasions," she said.

Tourists from all over China — and abroad — come to Li Jiang just to experience the uniqueness of the place. Unlike Beijing or Shanghai, the city is not a concrete jungle and revels in its own

style of architecture. Everyday, a number of spectacular cultural programmes are put up, showcasing the music and dance of the Naxi, the Dai, the Bai, the Yi, the Moso, among others.

Ms. Yang counts herself as a good example of the non-discriminatory attitude of the Chinese Government towards minorities. She went to the prestigious Peking University and among several other jobs she held before she became the vice-mayor, one was as head of the Li Jiang Municipal Library and another as head of its Cultural Bureau. "I don't think in my experience I have faced any discrimination. Over the past five decades, the ethnic groups have reached the realisation that they can become more prosperous and enjoy development along with the rest of the country only under the leadership of the Communist Party of China," she said.

She said the people in Li Jiang had benefited greatly from the Government's "preferential policies" for ethnic minorities. Students from these groups need to have 20 points fewer than non-minority students to gain admission to colleges. Over 100 Naxi hold doctorates; as many as 500 hold senior teaching positions in universities; and 22 are presidents of universities across China. Naxis also get bank loans at preferential interest rates. "The financial input from the central government is higher in non-minority areas," she said, ticking off assistance for road, rail, and other infrastructure projects.

But she admitted that keeping the minority cultures alive was a "major challenge" in the face of the rapid changes in Li Jiang advancing globalisation and a main reason behind the campaign to save the Naxi language. "We fear Naxis will also be assimilated by the global economy," Ms. Yang said.

## 'Open attitude'

According to her, the "miracle" of the Naxi survival for all this time owed to the group's "open attitude" to other cultures. "We have learnt from other civilisations for our own development. Although we have an open attitude to the culture of the Han, we have kept our own cultural distinctiveness."

While the efforts to keep the traditions of these ethnic groups alive give Yunan province a more multicultural look than many other parts of China, it is also an inescapable fact that the population of China's ethnic minorities is a minuscule percentage of its total population. The population of some groups is as low as 5,000. The Government has relaxed the one-child norm for some of the groups with endangered populations, the Naxi included.

# ঝাঞ্জি ঝাও জিয়াং (১৯১৯—২০০৫)

ঝাও জে দং মারা যাওয়ার কয়েক  
মাস আগে ঝাও এন লাই মারা

যান ১৯৭৬ সালে। তখন  
বেজিংয়ের রাস্তায় স্বতঃস্ফূর্ত বিক্ষোভ  
দেখিয়েছিল মানুষ। আরও পরে  
১৯৮৯ সালে চিনা কমিউনিস্ট পার্টির  
সাধারণ সম্পাদক হু ইয়াও বাং মারা  
গেলে ছাত্ররা তিয়ানয়ানমেন স্কোয়ারে  
জড়ো হয়ে গণতন্ত্রের জন্য যে বিক্ষোভ  
দেখিয়েছিল, তা এখন ইতিহাস। এবার  
দেশের প্রাক্তন প্রধানমন্ত্রী ও পার্টির  
প্রাক্তন সাধারণ সম্পাদক ঝাও জিয়াং  
মারা যাওয়ার পরে সে ভাবে বিক্ষোভ  
দানা বাঁধার সম্ভাবনা নেই। কারণ, সে  
দিনের চিনা সমাজ এখন অনেকটাই  
বদলে গিয়েছে। আর বদলে যাওয়ার  
সূত্রপাত ঘটেছিল মুষ্টিমেয় যে ক'জন  
নেতার হাত ধরে তাঁদের প্রথম সারিতে  
দেং জিয়াও পিং থাকলেও ঝাও  
জিয়াংকে রাখতে হবে তাঁর পরেই।

মাও মারা যাওয়ার পরে দেং যখন  
ধীরে ধীরে চিনা অর্থনীতিকে  
পুঁজিবাদের পথে নিয়ে যেতে শুরু  
করেন, তখন তাঁর ঘনিষ্ঠ সঙ্গী ছিলেন  
ঝাও। আশির দশকের বেশির ভাগ  
সময় জুড়েই ঝাও চিনা অর্থনীতির  
সংস্কার প্রক্রিয়ার হাল ধরেছিলেন। এই  
সময়ে তিনি দেশের প্রধানমন্ত্রী  
হয়েছেন, পার্টির পলিটব্যুরোর সদস্য  
হয়েছেন, এবং পার্টির সর্বোচ্চ, সাধারণ  
সম্পাদকের পদেও আসীন হয়েছেন।

আনুষ্ঠানিক ভাবে এই সব পদ  
আগেই ছেড়ে দিলেও দেং তখনও চিনা  
পার্টি ও সরকারের একমাত্র  
অভিভাবক। চিনের সামরিক বাহিনীর  
নিয়ন্ত্রক প্রতিষ্ঠান সামরিক কমিশনের  
চেয়ারম্যানের পদটি নিজের দখলে  
রেখে কার্যত তখনও আড়াল থেকে  
তিনিই ক্ষমতা নিয়ন্ত্রণ করছিলেন।  
ফলে, যখন তিয়ানয়ানমেন স্কোয়ারের  
ছাত্রবিক্ষোভের ঘটনায় ঝাওয়ের  
সহানুভূতি কোন দিকে টের পেলেন,  
বিন্দুমাত্র দ্বিধা না করে ঝাওকে সব  
রকম ক্ষমতা থেকে টেনে নামিয়ে স্থায়ী  
নির্বাসনে পাঠাতে দ্বিধা করেননি তিনি।

ধনী ভূস্বামীর ঘরের সন্তান হয়েও  
বিপ্লবের পরে পরেই কৃষিক্ষেত্রে  
সংস্কার আনতে ঝাওয়ের উদ্যোগ দেখে  
কমিউনিস্ট পার্টি তাঁকে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ  
দায়িত্ব দিয়ে ক্ষমতার সিঁড়িতে ওপরে  
তুলে আনতে শুরু করে। গুয়াংদঙ  
প্রদেশের শীর্ষ সরকারি পদে তাঁকে  
বসানো হয়। কিন্তু ষাটের দশকে তিনি  
মাও জে দঙের রোযানলে পড়েন। তার  
জেরে সাংস্কৃতিক বিপ্লবের সময়  
'সামন্ততন্ত্রের পুঁতিগন্ধময় অবশেষ'  
বলে চিহ্নিত করে মাওয়ের লালরক্ষীরা  
গুয়াংদঙের রাস্তায় অন্য অনেকের সঙ্গে  
ঝাও জিয়াংকেও গাধার টুপি পরিয়ে  
প্যারেড করতে বাধ্য করেছিল।

১৯৭৩ সালে ঝাও এন লাই তাঁকে  
রাজনৈতিক পুনর্বাসন দিয়ে চিনের



সবচেয়ে বড় প্রদেশ সেঝুয়ান-এর  
দায়িত্ব দেন। তার আগেই মাওয়ের  
'গ্রেট লিপ ফরওয়ার্ড' পরীক্ষানিরীক্ষার  
মাসুল দিতে গিয়ে সেঝুয়ানের আর্থিক  
অবস্থা শোচনীয় হয়ে উঠেছিল। ঝাও  
দায়িত্ব নিয়ে ক'বছরের মধ্যে প্রদেশের  
আর্থিক হাল ফিরিয়ে আনেন, কৃষি ও  
শিল্পে উৎপাদন বাড়তে শুরু করে।

ততদিনে ক্ষমতায় দেং এসেছেন।  
ঝাওয়ের এই সাফল্য দেংয়ের নজরে  
পড়ে। ফলে, দ্রুত উত্থান। ১৯৭৭ সালে  
ঝাও পলিটব্যুরোর অস্থায়ী সদস্য,  
১৯৭৯ থেকে পূর্ণ সদস্য। ১৯৮০  
সালে দেশের প্রধানমন্ত্রী হন এবং  
আরও পরে পার্টির সাধারণ সম্পাদক।  
মোটামুটি দেংয়ের উত্তরসূরি হিসাবেই  
তাঁর নাম ভাবা হচ্ছিল তখন।

কিন্তু চিনের উত্তর সীমান্তের  
ওপারে তখন আরও পটপরিবর্তন  
হচ্ছিল। সোভিয়েত ইউনিয়নে গ্লাসনস্ত  
ও পেরেস্ট্রোইকার ধাক্কায় গোটা  
ব্যবস্থাটা ভেঙে পড়ছে। পাছে রাশিয়ার  
মুক্ত হাওয়া এসে চিনা কমিউনিস্ট  
পার্টির ক্ষমতার ভিতকেও টলিয়ে দেয়,  
তা নিয়ে শঙ্কিত চিনা নেতারা। এই  
সময় তিয়ানয়ানমেন স্কোয়ারে আরও  
গণতন্ত্রের জন্য ছাত্রদের আন্দোলনে  
সেই অশনি সংকেত দেখে দেংয়ের  
নেতৃত্বে চিনা নেতারা দেরি না করে  
পাল্টা আঘাত হানতে সিদ্ধান্ত করেন।  
রাষ্ট্র ও দলের সেই যুগপৎ আক্রমণের  
সামনে ছাত্রদের ঢাল হতে চেয়েছিলেন  
ঝাও। তাঁকে নির্মমভাবে নির্বাসনে  
পাঠাতে দ্বিধা করেনি নেতৃত্বদ।

আজ চিনে আর্থিক সংস্কার  
পুঁজিবাদেরই প্রবেশ ঘটছে। ঝাও এই  
কাজটাই শুরু করেছিলেন। কিন্তু তিনি  
পরিবর্তন আনতে চেয়েছিলেন  
রাজনৈতিক ও সামাজিক ক্ষেত্রেও।  
নেতারা চিনের অর্থনীতিতে খোলা  
হাওয়া বইতে দিলেও তা রাজনৈতিক  
ও সামাজিক জীবনে বইতে দিতে রাজি  
ছিলেন না। ঝাও সেটা বোঝেননি। তাঁর  
এই রাজনৈতিক বাস্তবজ্ঞানের অভাবই  
সম্ভবত সংস্কারের অন্যতম উদ্যোগ  
হয়েও ঝাওকে ক্ষমতার কেন্দ্রে থেকে  
ছিটকে যেতে বাধ্য করেছিল।



# Veterans seek Zhao honours

**Beijing, Jan. 21** (Reuters): A group of veteran China Communist Party members has urged the leadership to assure proper funeral honours for Zhao Ziyang, purged as party chief in 1989 for sympathising with the Tiananmen Square democracy protests.

The move by some veterans to request a memorial service rather than a scaled-down ceremony exposes differences between liberal party elders eager to ensure due respect for a man who once headed the party and his successors nervous that publicity could spark protests.

The authorities have offered Zhao's family a ceremony to bid farewell to his remains, one notch below a memorial service in Communist protocol, giving as their reason that the party has simplified funerals for leaders in recent years.

No date has been set for Zhao's funeral.

The size and timing of the event remained unclear. It was also not known how widely any funeral would be covered by China's state media, which have played down Zhao's death this week for fear of triggering a popular outpouring of sentiment.

"He was Premier for two terms and general secretary of

the party. A memorial service befitting a national leader should be held," Di Sha, 75, a liberal former reporter of the official *China Youth Daily*, said today.

"This is the wish of many old comrades," said Di, wife of Hu Jiwei, reform-minded editor-in-chief of the *People's Daily*, mouthpiece of the party, from 1977 to 1983.

Zhao, who died on Monday aged 85, was deposed for opposing a decision to use troops and tanks to clear Tiananmen Square of protesters on June 3-4, 1989. He spent the last 15 years of his life under house arrest in his Beijing courtyard home.

# Fearless reformer with roller-coaster career

**ZHAO ZIYANG**  
(1919-2005)

ZHAO ZIYANG, a former premier and dapper, articulate protégé of the late supreme leader Deng Xiaoping, helped to forge bold economic reforms in the 1980s that brought China new prosperity and flung open its doors to the outside world.

In the end, he fell out of favour with Deng and was purged on June 24, 1989, after the military crushed the student-led pro-democracy protests. He was accused of "splitting the party" by supporting demonstrators who wanted a faster pace of democratic reform. Zhao had lived under house arrest since then.

During the Tiananmen protests, Zhao called for compromise and expressed sympathy for some of the student's demands. But his adversaries, led by Premier Li Peng, overruled him, called in the military and used the turmoil to attack Zhao and his supporters.

Zhao was last seen in public on May 19, 1989, the day before martial law was declared in Beijing, when he made a tearful visit to Tiananmen Square to talk to student hunger strikers. He

apologised to the students, saying "I have come too late."

Reports said he occasionally travelled to the provinces. He sometimes was sighted teeing off at Beijing golf courses or paying respects at the funerals of dead comrades, but otherwise remained hidden. Usually seen dressed in Western suits, Zhao served as premier in 1980-1987, then took over as general secretary of the Communist Party, the most powerful post in China.

He helped initiate sweeping changes that invigorated an economy mired in the ruins of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution. Austerity central planning gave way to material incentives and market forces that made China the world's fastest-growing economy. Those changes also brought inflation, income gaps between the rich and poor, corruption and other problems Zhao would be blamed for when the conservatives drove him from power.

Zhao's 1989 downfall was not his first. Mao's youthful "Red Guards" dragged him from his home in Guangzhou in 1967 and paraded him through the streets with a dunce cap on his head before sending him off for years of internal exile.

The son of a landlord, he was



**REUTERS**  
A worker puts up a poster showing the last public appearance of Zhao Ziyang (left in poster) in Tiananmen Square during the 1989 protests.

born in 1919 in Henan Province. He joined the Communist Youth League in 1932 and became a full-fledged party member in 1938.

An agriculture expert in a coun-

a harsh purge in Guangdong province of cadres accused of corruption, ties to the Nationalists on Taiwan and opposition to land reform. In 1957, he oversaw a rectification campaign in which 80,000 officials were sent to the countryside to live, work and receive criticism.

After four years in disgrace during the Cultural Revolution, he resurfaced in 1971 as a party secretary in Inner Mongolia. He won favour for his agricultural management there and in the southern province of Guangdong in 1971-75. Zhao was named party secretary and governor of Sichuan, China's most populous province, in 1975. With Sichuanese Deng's backing, he dismantled the communist commune system, restored private plots and sideline rural businesses, raised farm prices and revived bonuses for extra work.

His pragmatic policies there turned food shortages that had left people on the verge of starvation into bumper harvests. Between 1977 and 1980, Sichuan's farm output went up 25 per cent and production rose 81 per cent. The "Sichuan Experience" became a model for the nation.

Zhao was known as a solid believer in the party. But he de-

veloped socialism much differently than Mao and other Leftists. "Of course we must keep to the socialist road. But what is socialism?" Zhao said. "The hallmark of socialism is the public ownership of the means of production, and the principle of socialism is to each according to his work."

Deng brought Zhao to Beijing in 1980 as a vice premier and member of the party's powerful Politburo. Six months later, he was named premier, becoming a role model for the younger technocrats installed by Deng in key positions to carry out his ambitious modernisation plans.

But the reforms' expansion to urban areas sparked overheating of the economy in late 1984 and 1985, forcing Deng and Zhao to slow the pace of growth. In November 1987, Zhao was named general secretary of the Communist Party following the ouster of Hu Yaobang, who was blamed for pro-democracy student unrest. Little was known about Zhao's personal life. A 40-minute-a-day jogger, he revealed he sometimes argued with his family at the dinner table. He was known to have been married twice and had four sons and a daughter.

**Associated Press**

## Dissidents call for open funeral

CHINA'S DISSIDENT community demanded the government hold an open and public funeral and make a fair assessment of the accomplishments of Zhao Ziyang.

"The Chinese government, at the very least, should have an open and public funeral for Zhao Ziyang," Jiang Peikun, whose 17-year-old son was gunned down in the streets of Beijing during the 1989 protest, said. "The government should have a correct assessment of Zhao's accomplishments. It must be acknowledged, they cannot avoid this. They must allow the people to mourn and participate in mourning activities, they should not suppress these activities."

Jiang described Zhao as a great leader whose efforts to resolve the protests peacefully would be remembered.

**AFP, Beijing**