

China launching reform again

BEIJING, Jan 13: China's ruling Communist Party issued a strong call Monday for making 1992, the year of the monkey, also the year of economic reform, reports AP.

The call follows three years of stagnation in earlier efforts to carry out free-market reforms, and signals that the party's liberal faction is retaking the initiative after near-collapse by hard-line ideologues.

It came in the form of a front-page commentary in the party newspaper, the People's Daily, entitled "Further Develop the Spirit of Reform." The commentary echoed a theme that has appeared lately in speeches by officials and economists alike that instead of threatening social stability, reform is needed to guarantee it.

"Stability is not stagnation. If we stagnate, we will not dare to get rid of the age-old malpractices that we should abolish," the commentary said "and in the end that will hurt stability."

"We must, under the premise of stability, boldly push forward reform and use the achievements of reform to achieve longer-term stability," it said.

"Stability over all" has been the leadership's slogan since 1989, when massive demonstrations for democracy brought aged ideologues out of semi-retirement to crush the protests and impose tight political and economic controls.

However, the heavy burden of bailing out inefficient state factories and stores has convinced even conservatives such as Premier Li Peng that changes are needed. The collapse of the Soviet Union last year also may have strengthened the hand of China's reformers, who warned that a major factor was Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's failure to carry out economic reform.

"I think we're going to be looking at this particular commentary as saying the liberal folks have the upper hand in government," a Western diplomat said, speaking in condition of anonymity.

"The stability thing — you can't forget that. It will be theme in whatever they do," he said, "But it's time now to move ahead in a measured way."

The commentary said reforms "must be continuously deepened" in the economic planning system, finance,

banking, commerce, education, social security and the labour system. Other recent articles in the official media have said some cities will experiment this year with housing reform and some artificially low prices will be raised.

The official Xinhua News Agency quoted Li as saying Friday that China must end its system of guaranteeing jobs for life, free enterprise managers from daily government interference, and increase the role of free market forces.

All these reforms have been talked about since the early 1980s, but nothing concrete has been done since 1988-1989, when the combination of political unrest and 30 to 40 per cent inflation froze reform activity.

The diplomat said private comments by Chinese officials indicate they really intend to make changes this year. It remains to be seen whether they can overcome opposition from middle-level officials who stand to lose power and perks from the reforms.

The biggest problem will be trying to streamline factories without laying off workers. The government has conducted a major campaign over the past year to revitalize the many in-

efficient, debt-ridden state factories through pep talks and some product adjustment.

But efficiency eludes the factories because they would have to lay off millions of workers, considered too politically risky. No one expects substantial layoffs.

There are no prospects for significant political reform to accompany the economic relaxation. The People's Daily gave it only a token mention.

More daring in this regard was a commentary Friday in the newspaper Workers' Daily, which called for "emancipating the mind" a phrase associated with purged liberals.

It called for "encouragement to explore boldly, to create bravely, to dare to make breakthroughs and open up forbidden territory, to not stick political labels on rashly."

It said this will encourage production and help decide the question of "who will win, socialism or capitalism."

EC refusal to accept cut in farm subsidies a mistake: US

WASHINGTON, Jan 13: Commerce Secretary Robert Mombacher said Sunday the European Community is making "a big mistake" if it refuses to accept big cuts in farm subsidies in global trade talks, reports AP.

"It's good for the world and they should relent," Mombacher said on CNN's "Newsmaker Sunday."

"They're making a big mistake," he said.

The European Community ministers balked at accepting cuts of that magnitude.

The United States, Canada and others had pushed Europe to cut its farm subsidies by as much as 90 per cent. But the United States in recent months has lowered its demands, moving closer to the community's offer of 30 per cent in limited areas.

Indefinite strike in West Bengal jute sector from Jan 28

CALCUTTA, Jan 13: All the 18 workers unions including those affiliated to the CITU and INTUC will go for an indefinite strike in West Bengal Jute Industry from January 28 in protest against, among others, non-payment of minimum wages, reports PTI.

They also protested the central move to privatise six jute mills under the public sector National Jute Manufacturers Corporation and close down the JCI office in Calcutta. The unions also demanded nationalisation of the jute industry.

The state INTUC chief, Subrata Mukherjee, said that his union would join the strike since all other striking unions had accepted its demand that during the strike non-payment of minimum wages by some mills outside the purview of the Indian Jute Mill Association would be highlighted.

The New Central Jute Mill which was run by workers co-operative should be excluded from the purview of the bandh was another INTUC demand

endorsed by all. Besides, he said, the left trade unions assured that the Chief Minister, Jyoti Basu, would intervene after the strike was launched.

Niren Ghosh, CITU leader, said that over 1.5 lakh workers in 54 jute mills would participate in the strike.

Transport strike in Rangamati hits trade

RANGAMATI, Jan 13: An indefinite transport strike disrupted life and economic activities in the district for the third consecutive day Monday, reports UNB.

Transport workers backed by owners went on the strike protesting the abduction of two drivers by the outlawed Shantibahini men on the Mahalchhari road at Shukorchhari on Jan 9.

The outlaws also looted cash and valuables worth about Tk 5 lakh from 150 passengers of 27 vehicles plying on the road.

Sanyo scientist dreams of solar-powered world

SUMOTO (Japan), Jan 13: Within decades, deserts will shimmer with solar panels that supply most of the world's energy. That is what Yukinori Kuwano predicts, and he's no idle dreamer, reports AP.

Because of Kuwano's dreams, his company, Sanyo Electric Co, became a leading manufacturer of solar cells.

Kuwano, general manager of research and development at Sanyo, says the world's energy needs in 2000 could be met by 836.6 square kilometers of solar panels covering four per cent of its deserts. Superconducting cables would carry the power to regions with less sunlight.

"It's achievable," he said, although some other industry experts are skeptical about relying so heavily on a single energy source particularly one that still is prohibitively expensive.

Kuwano spent years working on his own projects at Sanyo, staying late at night and using money saved from his regular research budget.

He did not achieve his initial dreams producing computer memory chips from amorphous silicon, a cheaper form of the element used to make semiconductors.

In 1973 the research paid off when the world oil crisis arrived and Kuwano used his experience to develop solar cells.

As a result, Sanyo became the first company to make solar cells of amorphous silicon. It now is the world's leading maker of amorphous silicon cells, which are frequently used in calculators and other consumer goods.

Kuwano dreams of a world powered by huge arrays of solar cells linked in international grids, with the sunny side of the world providing electricity to the dark side.

Such a system, he says, would replace declining petroleum supplies and dramatically lessen pollution, acid rain and global warming.

In 2000, he calculates, 836.6 square kilometers of solar cells could produce energy equivalent to 3.65 billion gallons of oil, or the anticipated annual consumption of oil, coal, hydropower and all other primary energy sources.

"There's no doubt in the long term that solar cells will play a large role in supplying the world's electricity," said Dr. Jinzaburo Takagi, head of the Citizens' Nuclear Information Center, which

studies nuclear power and alternative energy.

What is important, he said, is "to have a mix of different sources of energy that are appropriate to each area, including wind power, a hydroelectric power."

The most serious obstacles to widespread solar power are economic.

"What will be really challenging," said Roger Taylor, senior utility engineer at the US Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado, "is bringing the cost of solar power down." Solar power, he notes, is still four to five times as expensive as the kinds of power now plentiful.

A solar panel that produces one watt of electricity costs about five dollars today, compared to nearly 2000 dollar 15 years ago, and should drop to 50 cent by 2015, Kuwano said, making solar power competitive with electrical generating plants.

"If we achieve that target, all electricity can be provided by solar cells," he said. Annual power production by solar cells now is estimated at only 46.5 megawatts, the output of a small generating plant.

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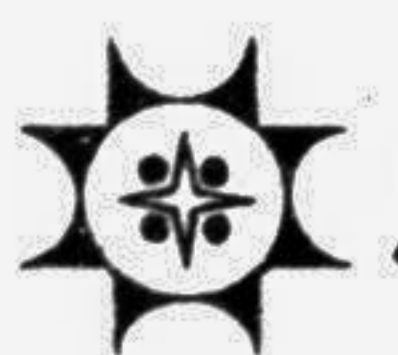
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Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong Port

Name of Vessels	Berthed	ETD	Berth	L Port No	L Agent
Banglar Kokohi	02/01	14/01	J/1	Male	BSC
Al Salma	05/01	17/01	J/2	Hong	ASLL
Ping Yin	28/12	15/01	J/4	Kand	OWSL
Disppach	11/01	18/01	J/5	Darb	ROYAL
Optima	12/01	14/01	J/6	Singapore	RSL
Clare	10/01	18/01	J/7	Indo	ROYAL
Blue Shark	09/01	18/01	J/8	Kore	PROG
Al Reza	09/01	18/01	J/9	Mong	AQUA
Fong Shin	06/01	15/01	MPB/1	Singapore	BDSHIP
Smit Cyclone	06/01	15/01	MPB/2	Singapore	SW
Peyo Yavorov	11/01	16/01	CCJ	Vua	KHASON
Banglar Kiron	12/01	15/01	TSP	Aquaba	SSST
Banglar Yyoti	12/01	NA	RM/3	Singapore	OTL
Fong Yun	06/01	NA	DDJ/1	Singapore	BDSHIP
Banglar Maya	11/01	15/01	DDJ/2	NA	BSC
Mild	11/01	16/01	RM/8	Singapore	OSA
Banglar Swapna	05/12	20/01	RM/9	NA	BSC

Vessels Due At Outer Anchorage

Name of Vessels	ETA	L Port Call	L Agent
Seabul Hope	14/01/92	Col	RSL
Ocean Voyager	14/01/92	NA	AML
New Genlord	15/01/92	Singapore	BDSHIP
Samudra Samrat	15/01/92	NA	SSI
Shaplaeverette	15/01/92	NA	EBPL
Ronjoy Victory	16/01/92	NA	PSAL
Prabu Puni	16/01/92	NA	SEACOAST
Atlantic Clipper	16/01/92	Singapore	BDSHIP
Blue Ocean	16/01/92	Ind	TSLL
Hai Hing	17/01/92	Ind	TSLL
Este Presco	17/01/92	Singapore	JF
Prince Shaul	17/01/92	Aquaba	UMAL
Smolny	17/01/91	Col	BSA
Kota Buana	18/01/92	Singapore	CTS
Loyal Bird	18/01/92	Pena	ALAMIN
Continent-1	18/01/92	Col	BSC
Shalmar	19/01/92	NA	BSC
Knud Jespersen	19/01/92	NA	CT
NGS Ranger	20/01/92	NA	BDSHIP
Banglar Shobha	20/01/92	NA	BSC
Tabuk	20/01/92	Kand	ENCL
Jiang Cheng	20/01/92	NA	BDSHIP
Banglar Kollol	20/01/92	Munda	GLOBE
Stonewall Jackson	21/01/92	Phuk	ULA
Lilas	21/01/92	NA	PROG
Pollid Sampaguita	22/01/92	NA	PROG
Endurance Sea	23/01/92	Aquaba	UMAL
Vishva Pankaj	23/01/92	NA	SSL

Vessels At Outer Anchorage

Name of Vessels	ETA	L Port Call	L Agent
Hang Dong	14/01	Singapore	OSA
Vishva Prafulla	14/01	Mad	SSL
Piya-1	14/01	Singapore	PSAL
Olga	15/01	Kand	OWSL
Aghion Oros	14/01	Cal	KSL

Mongla Port

Name of Vessel	Berthed	ETA	ETD	L Port	L Agent
Aning		14/01	NA	Chittagong	TMIL
Tea Chong		15/01	NA	Quingca	BRIGHT
Banglar Kakoli		14/01	26/01	Chittagong	BSC
Stefan Czaraicki		15/01	NA	Calcutta	BSA
NGS Ranger		25/01	NA	Chittagong	BSLL
Andrian Goncharov		14/01	NA	Chittagong	CT
Tungoon Aegulho		19/01	NA	Indone	BRIGHT

NOTE: Berthed= Vessel At Port Jetty. ETD = Expected Time of Departure. ETA = Expected Time of Arrival. NA = Not Available. ETB = Expected to Berth.

Source : Aquamarine Limited.

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