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SPECIAL FEATURE

5 China's Ethnic Policies and Challenges *by LAI Hongyi*

Dramatic developments in Tibet and Xinjiang since 2008 have highlighted the challenges to China's ethnic policies. The pillar of China's ethnic policies is regional autonomy for ethnic minorities. Ethnic areas enjoy limited administrative autonomy and have witnessed faster economic growth than the country as a whole. However, China still adheres to a "unitary multiethnic state" and has responded firmly to recent riots in Tibet and violence in Xinjiang.

14 The Urumqi Riots and China's Ethnic Policy in Xinjiang *by SHAN Wei and CHEN Gang*

The Urumqi riots revealed deep-rooted ethnic tensions in China and called into question Beijing's ethnic policies. Ethnic minorities in China enjoy preferential policies in education, family planning, judicial treatment and other areas, but they also face heavy regulations in religious activities. These policies, in combination with economic inequalities between the Han and other groups, have manifested grievances and resentment within the religious minorities.

23 The Tibet Issue: an Impasse of Entrapment? *by HUANG Jing*

The Tibet issue has remained intractable despite numerous rounds of talks between Beijing and the Dalai Lama's envoys. This article argues that China's Tibet Policy over the past decades has been based on faulty convictions and inconsistencies. To break the deadlock over the Tibet issue, this article suggests a two-step approach based on new thinking.

ESSAYS

32 The Chinese Leadership and the Internet *by LYE Liang Fook and Yang Yi*

While maintaining control over the development of the Internet, the Chinese leadership is using the Internet to extend its reach to a wider and tech-savvy generation as well as to improve its communication with and obtain feedback from the public on the work of the Party and the government. The internet is also utilised as a means for the public to exercise limited supervision of the conduct of Party and government officials.

42 Bo Xilai and the Chongqing Model by *BO Zhiyue and CHEN Gang*

Chongqing has become a bright spot amidst China's economic downturn because of its domestic-based economy. In 2008, when China's growth significantly slowed to only nine percent, Chongqing's GDP grew by 14.3%, 5.3 percentage point higher than that of the national level. The hilly city is set to become a manufacturing centre, a logistics hub and a civil aviation hub in southwest China.

50 Women's Political Participation in China by *GUO Xiajuan and ZHAO Litao*

China began to promote gender equality in the 1950s. It made a renewed effort after 1995 when the country hosted the Fourth World Conference on Women. The new initiatives focus more on action and implementation, with new approaches to train and promote woman cadres. A most recent action plan came in April 2009 when China decided to promote human rights, including women's rights to political participation.

61 Implications of China's Naval Deployments to Somalia by *YOU Ji and LIM Chee Kia*

In December 2008, China deployed a naval taskforce to the Aden Gulf to participate in anti-piracy operations. It is a signal that China wishes to participate more actively in international security. The Chinese navy will be another active naval force in the region in the intermediate future. If engaged positively, it may contribute to regional security and stability.

69 Implications of Taiwan-Mainland Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement by *ZHAO Hong and Sarah TONG*

The proposed Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (ECFA) with the mainland is Ma's first effort in establishing more institutionalised cooperation platforms with Taiwan's neighbours. Through stronger economic ties, the mainland hopes to bring Taiwan closer and create conditions for cross-strait political integration. For Taiwan, an ECFA will help reduce risks of cross-strait hostility and improve its economic outlook.

78 Internationalisation and Immigration: Coping with the Ageing Population Problem in Japan by *LAM Peng Er*

In 2007, 18.2 percent of Japan's labour force was in the manufacturing sector, one of the highest among G7 countries. If there is no large infusion of young immigrant workers into Japanese industries in the long run, the nation's industrial base will shrink concomitantly. Immigration could be the answer but the country is arguably still culturally insular and lacking in political will to adopt this policy choice.