

CHINA

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF COMMUNIST RULE



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On Oct. 1, The People's Republic of China marked its 60th anniversary with a parade in Beijing's historic Tiananmen Square. The celebration included a 60-gun salute and hundreds of thousands of participants marching past Tiananmen Square in costume and uniform. It was a commemoration of 60 years of Communist rule over China when the Communist Party first came into power on Oct. 1, 1949 while relegating the defeated Kuomintang Party to Taiwan. It was a very special day for the citizens of China who have experienced numerous transformations, which has resulted in China becoming a leading economic and political power.

er. The whole ceremony was dedicated to displaying to the entire world its strength and wealth. According to senior Kevin Nguyen, "I believe that in a purely economical sense, their political system is what got them to where they are today and where they will go in the future."

The 21st century has been labeled as the "Chinese Century," and rightfully so with the abundance of high rises and skyscrapers that have been constructed in Chinese cities, most prominently in Beijing and Shanghai. The stigma that afflicted China for so long was being labeled as a country that was only agriculturally based and unable to feed and/or assist its increasing population. However, all of that has been pushed aside

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due to China's unbelievable turnaround since the passing of Mao Zedong.

China is the third largest economy after the United States and Japan and has the second largest GDP after the United States. The two most important sectors of the Chinese economy belong to agriculture and industry, which employ more than 70 percent of the workforce and contribute to 60 percent of China's

GDP. In the past, China has employed the tactic of isolating itself from the rest of the world in terms of trade and instead choosing to trade with other Asian countries around them. However, the Chinese government has been more open-minded to the idea of foreign trade after President Nixon visited China in 1972, which has allowed China to export trillions of dollars of products to different countries, as well as have foreign corporations invest billions of dollars into China, including IBM and Microsoft.

On the other hand, China has endured many hardships during its ascension from being an underdeveloped country to a more developed country. China has often faced criticism from

the United States and other countries around the world for their human rights violations, especially in Tibet and the Xinjiang province.

The past few years have seen China in the national spotlight for their use of military force in Tibet while trying to quell a riot as well as thousands of foreign journalists and civilians that have been jailed because of their public outcry against the government. Back when China was preparing for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, there were a lot of protests not only in China but all across the world condemning China for their position on Tibet. Several countries such as France and Germany threatened not to send representatives to Beijing because of their concern

of the situation taking place in Tibet.

On a societal front, China faces the issue of a generation gap between young and old in terms of how the younger generation of Chinese will be able to find permanent employment and support themselves in an ever-growing economy. Traditionally, it was the older generations who were the ones responsible for being the backbone of the economy, working long hours into the night, but that trend seems to be less of a factor since China's population is now headed toward a youth movement that is most prevalent in bustling cities all throughout China.

Yet, China has been one of the major players in lending its aid in international

issues such as the North Korean and Iranian nuclear program crises. The past few years have seen North Korea and the countries involved in the 6-party talks (the United States, China, Japan, South Korea and Russia) go back

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and forth with each other trying to terminate North Korea's aspirations of becoming a fully functional nuclear power with the threat of sanctions and inspections from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Those talks have broken down a multi-

tude of times but have always been jump started because of the relationship that China has with North Korea. North Korea views China as its "big brother" and that has placed China in the forefront of the 6-party talks because of Kim

Jong Il's willingness to speak with President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao.

On the topic of Iran, China and Iran have recently engaged in talks that have been seen as sign that the 6-party talks are being resurrected.

1949

1972

1976

2008

2009

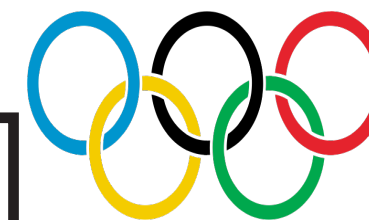
The Communist Party takes power.

Mao Zedong dies, shifting politics in China.



China leads the 6-party talks regarding the nuclear program crisis.

The 2008 Olympics take place in Beijing, despite controversy.



China celebrates 60 years of communist rule.

