

Economy

China is primarily an agricultural country; over 80% of the nation's 850 million people are directly involved in farming. Thus economic planning, including trade policy, reflects the fundamental importance of agriculture, and much of China's industrial production is directed towards supporting this sector. The main crops in north China are wheat, millet, sorghum and soybeans. In the south, the most important crops are rice, sweet potatoes, sugarcane and tea. Barley, corn and cotton are grown extensively in various parts of the country. Agricultural products - rice, soybeans, tea, and canned fruit and vegetables - form the major part of China's exports.

Since early 1969, the basis of the domestic policy of the PRC has been to increase production in both the agricultural and the industrial sectors of the country. Industrial development has followed a double course: establishment and expansion of large-scale complexes in the major cities and, at the same time development of small-scale locally based industry, entirely dependent on local manpower, resources and technology. Economic priorities, after agriculture, are metallurgical and petrochemical industries and transport and communications; more attention, however, has recently been given to light industries and to export industries. With manpower resources fully mobilized, emphasis is now being placed on advanced research and technology, the perfecting of management techniques, and discipline; the future economic growth of China will depend on the growth of productivity and technological progress.

The policy of the Chinese Government is to make the economy as self-sufficient as possible. Therefore, virtually all consumer goods are manufactured within the country and imports are limited to the purchase of foodstuffs and raw materials, semi-manufactured goods, and machinery and equipment. China's overall