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Contents:

China's economy grows 10.6% in Q1 1

Revolutionizing Befouls in Canada.....2

Presentation of Chinese city: Shanghai..3

Representative(s) wanted4

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China's economy grows 10.6% in Q1

China's economic growth slowed down slightly to 10.6 percent in the first quarter, compared with 11.7 percent in the same period of last year, the government said Wednesday.

China maintained steady and fast growth since the beginning of the year, despite the unprecedented freak winter weather and the widespread subprime mortgage crisis, the National Bureau of Statistics spokesman Li Xiaochao said at a press conference Wednesday in Beijing.

The world's fourth-largest economy expanded at a blistering 11.9-percent pace for all of 2007, the fifth consecutive year its annual economic growth exceeded 10 percent.

Industrial production rose 16.4 percent year-on-year in the first three months. The increase was 1.9 percentage points lower than that in the same period of 2007.

China's consumer price index (CPI), a measure

of inflation, was up 8.3 percent in March of this year, as against the 8.7 percent level for the previous month.

Li said the country's CPI for the first quarter of this year was 8 percent.

In the January-March period, the inflation indicator rose 7.8 percent for urban areas, and up 8.7 percent for rural areas.

In breakdowns, food prices soared 21.0 percent, driving CPI up by 6.8 percentage points. Housing prices and rents went up 6.6 percent on average, dring the inflation gauge by one percentage point.

The first quarter also saw retail prices up 7.4 percent, 5.3 percentage points higher than the year-earlier level, and producer price index, or PPI, up 6.9 percent, 4.0 percentage points higher.

Prices of raw materials, fuels and power supply increased 9.8 percent in the first three months of this year, 5.7 percentage

points higher than the level for the same period of last year. Meanwhile, housing prices in 70 major cities rose 11.0 percent on average, 5.4 percentage points higher.

Retail sales of consumer goods in the first quarter rose 20.6 percent year on year to 2,555.5 billion yuan (US\$365 billion), Li said. The growth was 5.7 percentage points higher than that in the same 2007 period.

Industrial production rose 16.4 percent year-on-year in the first three months. The increase was 1.9 percentage points lower than that in the same period of 2007.

Fixed asset investment reached 2.18 trillion yuan (\$311 billion), up 24.6 percent, which was 0.9 percentage points higher than a year ago.

(source: China daily)

福娃 Fuwa



Revolutionizing Biofuels in Canada




Canada is in a position to become a world leader in the production of biofuels. One of Canada's advantages in the renewable fuels industry is feedstock. The theoretical potential of Canadian biofuels feedstock is truly staggering. Canada has close to one billion hectares of land, of which 42 per cent is forest and seven per cent agricultural. The renewable resource potential is more than 600 exajoules (exajoule=1018 joules), some 30 per cent more than the total amount of energy consumed globally in 2005. Needless to say, using all, or a large percentage of Canada's arable landmass to produce biofuels will never happen, nor should it, but this number does demonstrate the tremendous untapped potential of renewable energy stored in biomass.

Vision for the Future of Biofuels
Sustainable Development Technology Canada, a not-for-profit corporation created by the Canadian government has an admittedly more humble goal in mind. Their vision is for Canada to produce about one-thousandth of

14-fold increase in biofuels production over 2006 levels, and builds on the federal government mandate to increase to five per cent, the portion of biofuels used in transportation fuel. To remain on track we would need our annual production to reach about 3 billion litres (equivalent to 0.11 exajoules) by 2010.



Current production of ethanol is derived primarily using existing technologies, with corn and wheat as the primary feedstocks. To meet this vision and fulfill the federal government's renewable fuels mandate in a sustainable manner will require the development of cutting-edge technology aimed at using other feedstocks as a source for biofuels. SDTC, through its Sustainable Development Technology Fund, has worked closely with

organizations such as Enerkem Technologies Inc., Lignol Innovations Corp. and Woodland Biofuels Inc. to advance efforts to produce biofuels from sources as diverse as municipal solid waste and forestry wood waste.

These solutions play to several of Canada's strengths—cellulose-based feedstock technology, multiple feedstock technology, and those technological solutions capable of generating beneficial co-products.

As mentioned, Canada has an abundance of cellulose-based feedstocks. They have the potential to produce more ethanol per hectare than most other grown fuel sources. Cellulosic feedstocks typically consist of materials that are considered waste or having little agricultural value, can be grown on low-grade soil, and need little or no fertilizing. They also have greater potential for co-products.

With governments, industry and the private sector working together, Canada is well positioned to build on the advances made to date by the biofuels sector. Canada

has an opportunity to become the global leader in the next generation of biofuels.

Adapted from Vicky J. Sharpe's article "Revolutionizing Biofuels With Emerging Technologies"
Vicky J. Sharpe is the president and CEO of Sustainable Development Technology Canada.



Presentation of Chinese city: Shanghai

Shanghai situated on the banks of the Yangtze River Delta in East China, is the largest city of the People's Republic of China and the eighth largest in the world. Widely regarded as the citadel of China's modern economy, the city also serves as one of the nation's most important cultural, commercial, financial, industrial and communications centers.



Administratively, Shanghai is a municipality of the People's Republic of China that has province-level status. Also, Shanghai is one of the world's busiest ports, and became the largest cargo port in the world in 2005.

Originally a fishing town, Shanghai became China's most important city by the 20th century and was the center of popular culture, intellectual discourse and political struggle during the Republic of China era. After the communist takeover in 1949, Shanghai languished due to heavy central

government taxation and cessation of foreign investment, and had many of its supposedly "bourgeois" elements purged. Following the central government's authorization of market-economic redevelopment of Shanghai in 1992, Shanghai has now surpassed early-starters Shenzhen and Guangzhou, and has since led China's economic growth. Some challenges remain for Shanghai at the beginning of the 21st century, as the city struggles to cope with increased worker migration, a huge wealth gap, and environmental degradation. Despite these challenges, Shanghai's skyscrapers and modern lifestyle are often seen as representing China's recent economic development.

Shanghai is often regarded as the center of finance and trade in mainland China. Modern development began with economic reforms in 1992, a decade later than many of the Southern Chinese provinces, but since then Shanghai quickly overtook those provinces and maintained its role as the business center in mainland China. Shanghai also hosts the largest share market in mainland China.



Shanghai is one of the world's busiest ports. In 2005, Shanghai ranked first of the world's busiest ports in terms of cargo throughout, handling a total of 443 million tons of cargo. In terms of container traffic, it is the third busiest port in the world, following Singapore and Hong Kong.

Shanghai and Hong Kong have had a recent rivalry over which city is to be the economic center of China. Hong Kong has the advantage of a stronger legal system, international market integration, superior economic freedom, greater banking and service expertise. Shanghai has stronger links government, in addition to a stronger base in manufacturing and technology. Shanghai has increased its role in finance, banking, and as a major destination for corporate headquarters, fuelling demand for a highly educated and modernized workforce. Shanghai has recorded a double-digit growth for

14 consecutive years since 1992. In 2006, Shanghai's nominal GDP posted a 12% growth to 1.0297 trillion yuan (US\$128.8 billion).

As in many other areas in China, Shanghai is undergoing a building boom. In Shanghai the modern architecture is notable for its unique style, especially in the highest floors, with several top floor restaurants which resemble flying saucers.

The bulk of Shanghai buildings being constructed today are high-rise apartments of various height, color and design. There is now a strong focus by city planners to develop more "green areas" (public parks) among the apartment complexes in order to increase the quality of life for Shanghai's residents, quite in accordance to the "Better City - Better Life" theme of Shanghai's Expo 2010.





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