

**THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY
AT NINETY:
CELEBRATION AND CHALLENGES**

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Executive Summary

1. On 1 July 2011, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) turned 90. As a culture that pays particular attention to every 10th anniversary, China has been consumed in a celebrative mood in recent months.
2. Initiated in Chongqing in 2008, singing red songs has become a nation-wide phenomenon. Schools, hospitals, hotels, government offices, and business operations have all been involved in the singing of revolutionary songs in various forms.
3. Even religious groups, be they Buddhist, Christian, Daoist, Islamic or Catholic, have been invited to take turns to sing “loving the Party” songs.
4. It seems that the Party does have something to celebrate on its 90th birthday. The Party membership has been expanding rapidly, and under the leadership of the CCP, the country has become the second largest economy in the world in terms of total GDP.
5. The majority of the three-million-plus new members recruited in 2010 were young people, especially college students. About 82 percent of them were 35 years old or younger, and 40 percent were college students.
6. With a membership of 80.3 million by the end of 2010, the CCP is almost as large as Germany in terms of population. In the meantime, the composition of the CCP is shifting from mainly workers and peasants to people of diverse backgrounds.
7. Under the veneer of the celebrative mood, however, there is uneasiness. The CCP is faced with a lot of challenges and uncertainties from within and outside the Party.

8. First, the CCP leadership is at a loss for directions for itself and for China. Though the Party has adapted well to the market economy and played an important role in economic reforms, it is divided over political directions. Liberal leaders have urged for political reforms to rid the Party of corruption, while conservative leaders have steadfastly opposed to any substantial changes.
9. In his speech on the CCP delivered on 1 July 2011, Hu Jintao attempted to strike a delicate balance between the Left and the Right. He acknowledged contributions of Mao Zedong on the one hand and urged for political reforms on the other.
10. Second, the CCP has yet to find more effective ways to handle social issues. Due to economic and social transformations in the past three decades, social conflicts are on the rise and mass incidents have become more frequent and are on larger scales.
11. With the approach of the Eighteenth Party Congress scheduled for 2012, the CCP leadership is preparing for another generational change, from the fourth generation leadership to the fifth. The new leadership would have to come up with new solutions to the existing challenges and new problems.