



Ground-Breaking

A container ship is delivered to its buyers on January 8 in Dalian, northeast China's Liaoning Province.

It is the first 10,000-TEU (the 20-foot equivalent unit) ship independently developed, designed and constructed by a Chinese shipbuilder.



Inflation in Check

On January 9, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) revealed that China's consumer price index (CPI), a major gauge of inflation, had grown 2.5 percent year on year in December, and 2.6 percent for the whole of 2013, well below the government's full-year limit of 3.5 percent.

December's CPI was 0.5 percentage points lower than the previous month, according to the NBS.

December's inflation was 2.5 percent in both cities and rural

areas. Food prices, which account for roughly a third of the CPI, rose 4.1 percent in December compared to a year ago, while other products edged up by 1.7 percent.

On a month-to-month basis, December's CPI edged up slightly by 0.3 percent from November. Food prices increased 0.6 percent from November while prices of other products increased 0.1 percent, according to the NBS.

The producer price index (PPI), which measures inflation at the wholesale level, fell 1.4 percent year

on year in December. The NBS data showed that annualized PPI for 2013 fell 1.9 percent year on year.

Pension Boost

The State Council will increase the pensions of enterprises' retirees by 10 percent.

The decision was made at the cabinet's executive meeting on January 8. The move will benefit more than 74 million retirees.

The State Council urged government departments to reform their

endowment insurance and pension systems.

The meeting also pledged to improve the social assistance system, which helps disadvantaged groups.

The social assistance system, when revamped, will offer financial aid that will improve standards of living for disadvantaged group.

The Central Government has allocated more than 98 billion yuan (\$16 billion) to help disadvantaged groups, and has asked that local authorities make sure the money will be given to the needy in a timely manner. It also encouraged nonprofit organizations to take part in the relief effort.

Private Banks

China will set up three to five fully private banks on a trial basis this year in a bid to further open up the banking sector to domestic and foreign capital, according to a statement made on January 6 by the China Banking Regulatory Commission (CBRC).

Private capital will be introduced to restructure current banking institutions or set up new ones which bear their own risks, the CBRC said at



CLEANER AIR

Workers examine equipment at a PetroChina oil refinery in Yinchuan, capital of northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. The city raised its auto emissions standards on January 3, which reduced allowed sulfur emissions by two thirds



HARVEST

Farmers pick vegetables at a plantation base in Jiujiang, Jiangxi Province. Since the province established the first plantation base in 2003, Jiangxi has become a major exporter of vegetables to Hong Kong, with an output of more than 24,000 tons every year



CHEN ZHUA

a work meeting.

Strict procedures and standards will be set for the pilot banks, with demanding set-up criteria, limited licenses, enhanced supervision and a risk handling system.

The CBRC will try to relax the threshold for foreign capital to enter China's banking sector and ease operation requirements for the yuan, while more policies will be issued to support banking reform in the Shanghai free trade zone and the financial reform pilot zone.

Yuan Bonds

The Bank of China's London Branch issued 2.5 billion yuan-denominated bonds on January 8.

This issuance marked the first yuan bonds issued in the London

market by the British branch of a Chinese bank, which will be listed on the London Stock Exchange.

The funds raised from the deal will be retained in London to support further development of the London offshore yuan market as well as UK-China bilateral trade and investment, the Bank of China said.

"By leveraging the Bank of China Group's leading position in other major offshore yuan markets, our London Branch has introduced a full range of yuan products and services in London," said Fang Wenjian, General Manager of Bank of China London Branch.

Logistic Slowdown

China's logistics sector grew at a slightly slower pace last December

compared to its growth in the previous month, according to figures released on January 6.

The logistics performance index for December stood at 52.4 percent, down 0.6 percentage points from November, the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing said.

A reading above 50 percent indicates expansion compared to the previous month, while a reading below indicates contraction.

He Hui, Deputy Director of the China Logistics Information Center, attributed the decline to a slowdown in production activities at the end of last year.

The federation began collecting index data from more than 300 logistics companies in December 2011. Since then, the index has stayed above 50 percent.

Numbers

51.95 tln yuan

Revised GDP growth for China in 2012

5.1 mln

Sales of SAIC Motor Corp., China's largest carmaker, in 2013, up 13.7 percent year on year

300

Estimated number of initial public offerings to occur in 2014, which are expected to raise up to 250 billion yuan (\$41 billion)

Horse Year Coming

A shop owner at the Zhejiang Yiwu China Small-Commodities City decorates a horse mascot.

Sales at the market located in Yiwu, east China's Zhejiang Province, reached 68.3 billion yuan (\$11.28 billion) in 2013, up 17.76 percent from 2012.



YAN JIN

700 mln tons

China's estimated annual crude oil and natural gas output by 2030, double the current amount