

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

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The People's Republic of China is situated in the eastern part of Asia and contiguous to the west side of the Pacific Ocean. It is bounded by the Korean peninsula in the northeast and Viet Nam in the south. China faces Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Brunei across the Yellow Sea, East China Sea and South China Sea. It occupies an area of approximately 9.6 million km², with a population of more than 1,200 million. Beijing is the capital.

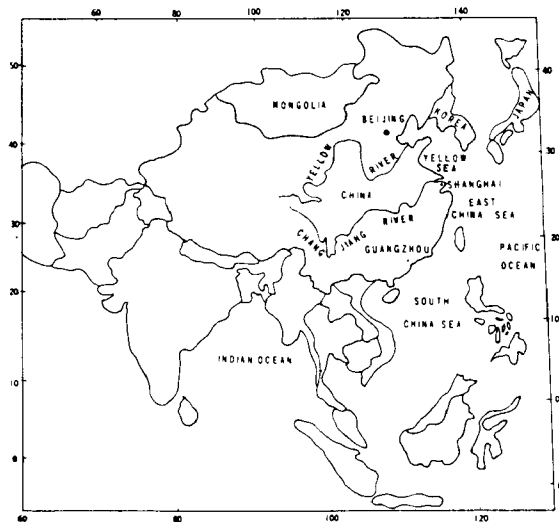


FIG. 1.- People's Republic of China.

From the mouth of Yalujiang river in the north, to Dongxin Port in the south, with the total coastline of approximately 18,000 km, China has many fine natural ports, harbours, sheltered anchorages and also more than 6,500 islands and islets. At present, 66 harbours and ports, including Dalian, Qinghuangdan, Tianjin, Sindao, Shanghai and Huangpu, etc., are opened to foreign vessels. In addition, China has some well known rivers with busy traffic, such as the Changjiang (Yangtze River), Huanghe (Yellow River) and Zhujiang (Pearl River) etc.

Shipping in China has been well developed since ancient times. China now has a total gross tonnage of 14,242,606 tons.

Hydrographic Service

As early as in the Tang dynasty (618-917 AD), Chinese ships sailed as far as to the Persian Gulf and traffic-charts were drawn up to show the shipping routes to Viet Nam, India and Baghdad, etc. Among 1405 and 1433, ZHENG HE, the famous Chinese navigator, sailed to the West seven times, visiting more than 30 countries and regions in Asia and Africa and made the ZHENG HE Navigation Charts.

As a result of the development of shipping, fishery, offshore oil exploration, continental shelf exploitation and marine environment protection in recent years, the hydrographic surveying and charting services in China have been growing rapidly and playing an even greater role in the national economy and defence.

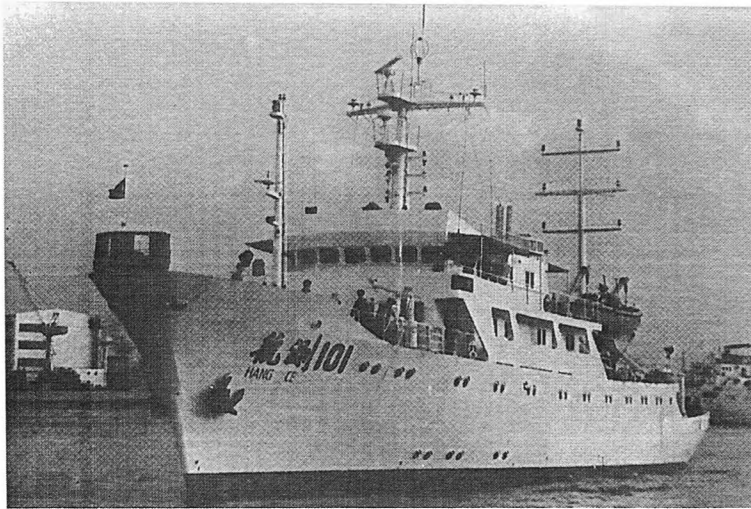


FIG. 2.- 55m Survey Vessel HANG CE 101.

The Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) of the Ministry of Communications and the Navigation Guarantee Department of the Navy Headquarters (NGD) are the principal Chinese authorities for hydrographic surveys and charting. They are in charge of hydrographic surveys in coastal waters, harbours and inland waterways, as well as the compilation and publications of nautical charts and documents, broadcasting of radio navigational warnings and the maintenance of aids to navigation. There are seven hydrographic survey brigades, with 4,600 specialized personnel, and more than 70 survey vessels of from 90 to 3,000 tons.

Since the founding of new China in 1949, more than 4,200 charts with 6,000 editions, 150 atlases of various kinds and 220 different types of nautical publications have been published.

Over recent years, great changes have taken place in both the methodology and means in hydrography and cartography, in which manual work has been gradually replaced by automation, traditional sounding equipment and positioning systems have been replaced by precise and specialized apparatus, drum plotters and precise flat-bed plotters are employed, computer assisted cartography techniques and automatic plotting systems are being developed.

The People's Republic of China has been a member of the IHO since 1979 and joined the East Asia Hydrographic Commission (EAHC) in 1988.

The official representative of the Government of the People's Republic of China for IHB affairs is the Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) of the Ministry of Communications. The Director general of MSA is Mr. Lin YUNAI and the Director of the Aids to navigation and Hydrographic Department is Mr. Hu JIANGSHAN.