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China has developed in spectacular fashion: Singapore expert

by Zhang Yongxing

SINGAPORE, Aug. 27 (Xinhua) -- China has developed in a spectacular fashion over the past six decades, and what makes the Chinese model of development or China model unique is its special combination of political stability and economic reforms, a well-known Singapore expert has said recently.

In an exclusive interview with Xinhua, Kishore Muhubani, Dean of Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, said that when the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, few would have dreamt that 60 years later China would have the third largest economy in the world, send a man to walk into outer space and host the best ever Olympic games.

These multi-dimensional successes of China demonstrate that the Chinese society has emerged as one of the most dynamic societies of the world.

He believes that there have been at least two key phases in China's development.

The first phase was from 1949 to 1979, and the main outcome of this phase was the consolidation of political unity and stability. The second phase was from 1979 to 2009, and for thirty years, China provided the fastest growing economy in the world as a result of the brave and dramatic reforms introduced by the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping.

No other society in human history has done as much as China has in reducing poverty. Hence, it is the unique combination of political stability and bold economic reforms that have led to the great achievements of China over the past 60 years, he said.

As for the China model over the past six decades, he said that every society is unique, and each society has to develop according to its unique and special circumstances.

The best way to understand the power of the China model, he said, is to contrast it with the "Gorbachev model" of development, which failed because Gorbachev tried to implement both political and economic liberalization at the same time.

He stressed that if China had mistakenly chosen the "Gorbachev model" as many in the West asked China to do, the Chinese people would have suffered as much as the Russian people in the 1990s. Instead by choosing

the China model, the Chinese people benefited enormously.

In his opinion, all development models have some common elements, and the main advantage of the China model is that it demonstrates development can be successful in the more populous countries in the world. It is unusual for the country with the world's largest population to provide the world's fastest growing economy.

"China's success has removed the excuse from other countries with large populations who had claimed that they could not develop because of large populations," he said.

The dean said that the China model has already had a huge impact on the world. It is clear that China's success, which has inspired other countries, is likely to inspire both Islamic countries and African countries to develop faster.

Every model has problems and challenges, the more China develops, the more challenges China will face. It is only natural that a more developed and a more wealthy China will have different problems from the China of the past.

Regarding the perspective of the China model, he said that after having succeeded so well in economic development, especially over the last 30 years, the time has come for China to engage in deep reflection about how it will move forward in the next 60 years.

Talking about the current global economic crisis, he said that this crisis has illustrated how China may have to change course in response to the new circumstances.

Over the last two decades, China was able to grow rapidly by exporting its products overseas, especially to the United States. With the enormous economic crisis in United States, which will take several years to resolve, China can no longer rely on exports to provide the main engine of growth, he said.

He advised that China have to grow its internal economic markets and develop closer economic links with its Asian neighbors, especially Japan, India and the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN).

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