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Keeping up with the Dynasties

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Imperial China

221-206 BC King Ying Zheng of Qin for the first time unites much of the Chinese heartland, becomes the first ruler to use the title "emperor" and builds first Great Wall of China, but his empire quickly collapses after his death.

220 - 589 - Collapse of Han state results in nearly four centuries of division between competing dynasties before China is reunited by the short-lived Sui dynasty. Start of the development of southern China.

960-1279 - Song Dynasty: While weaker than the Tang empire militarily and politically, Song rule marks a high point of Chinese classical culture, with a flowering of literature, scientific innovation and the adoption of Neo-Confucianism as the official state ideology.

206 BC - 220 AD Han Dynasty: first durable state, governing the entire Chinese heartland, Chinese cultural "golden age", growth in money economy, and the promotion of Confucianism as the state philosophy. Buddhism makes its first inroads into China.

618-907 Tang Dynasty united China for nearly three centuries, in what is seen as the second high point of Chinese civilisation after the Han; imperial sphere of influence reaches Central Asia for the first time.



Mongol Rule

1271-1368 - Mongols conquer China and establish their own Yuan Dynasty, founded by Kublai Khan. Marco Polo and other Westerners visit. Beijing becomes the capital of a united China.

1644 - Manchu Qing Dynasty drives out Ming. Chinese empire reaches its zenith, with the annexation of Tibet, Mongolia and present-day Xinjiang (Turkestan).



1368 - Ming Dynasty overthrows Mongols and establishes sophisticated agricultural economy, underpinning strong centralised bureaucracy and military. Great Wall of China completed in the form seen today.

1899-1901 - After a long decline in power for the Qing administration, the "Boxer Rebellion" in Northern China seeks to stifle reforms in the Qing administration, drive out foreigners and re-establish traditional rule. Defeated by foreign intervention, with Western powers, Russia and Japan extracting further concessions from weakened Qing government.



The Republic

1911-12 - Military revolts by reform-minded officers lead to proclamation of Republic of China under Sun Yat-sen and abdication of last Qing emperor. Republic struggles to consolidate its rule amid regional warlordism and the rise of the Communist Party.

1925 - The death of Sun Yat-sen brings Chiang Kai-shek to the fore. He breaks with the Communists and confirms the governing Kuomintang as a nationalist party.

1934-35 - Mao Zedong emerges as Communist leader during the party's "Long March" to its new base in Shaanxi Province.

1937 - Kuomintang and Communists nominally unite against Japanese. Civil war resumes after Japan's defeat in Second World War.

1931- 45 - Japan invades and gradually occupies more and more of China.



Communist victory

1949 - Mao Zedong, having led the Communists to victory against the Nationalists after more than 20 years of civil war, proclaims the founding of the People's Republic of China. The Nationalists retreat to the island of Taiwan and set up a government there.



1962 - Brief conflict with India over disputed Himalayan border.

1958 Mao launches the "Great Leap Forward", a five-year economic plan. Farming is collectivised and labour-intensive industry is introduced. The drive produces economic breakdown and is abandoned after two years. Disruption to agriculture is blamed for the deaths by starvation of millions of people following poor harvests.

1972 - US President Richard Nixon visits. Both countries declare a desire to normalise relations.



1966-76 - "Cultural Revolution", Mao's 10-year political and ideological campaign aimed at reviving revolutionary spirit, produces massive social, economic and political upheaval.

1976 - Mao dies. "Gang of Four", jockey for power but are arrested and convicted of crimes against the state. From 1977 Deng Xiaoping emerges in the leadership. Under him, China undertakes far-reaching economic reforms.

1979 - Diplomatic relations established with the US.

Government imposes one-child policy in effort to curb population growth.

1986-90 - China's "Open-door policy" opens the country to foreign investment and encourages development of a market economy and private sector.



1989 - Troops open fire on demonstrators who have camped for weeks in Tiananmen Square. The official death toll is 200. International outrage leads to sanctions.



1989 - Jiang Zemin takes over as Chinese Communist Party general secretary from Zhao Ziyang, who refused to support martial law during the Tiananmen demonstrations.

Stockmarkets open in Shanghai and Shenzhen.

1992 - Russia and China sign declaration restoring friendly ties.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) ranks China's economy as third largest in the world after the US and Japan.

Three Gorges Project



1993 - Jiang Zemin officially replaces Yang Shangkun as president.

1994 - China abolishes the official renminbi (RMB) currency exchange rate and fixes its first floating rate since 1949.



1995 - China tests missiles and holds military exercises in the Taiwan Strait, apparently to intimidate Taiwan during its presidential elections.

1996 - China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan - dubbed the Shanghai Five - meet in Shanghai and agree to cooperate to combat ethnic and religious tensions in each others' countries.

1998 - Zhu Rongji succeeds Li Peng as premier, announces reforms in the wake of the Asian financial crisis and continued deceleration of the economy. Thousands of state-owned enterprises are to be restructured through amalgamations, share flotations and bankruptcies. About four million civil service jobs to be axed.

2000's

2000 - Crackdown on official corruption intensifies, with the execution for bribe taking of a former deputy chairman of the National People's Congress.

2003 - National People's Congress elects Hu Jintao as president. He replaces Jiang Zemin, who steps down after 10 years in the post.



2008 - China and Russia sign a treaty ending 40-year-old border dispute which led to armed clashes during the Cold War.

2001 - China joins the World Trade Organisation.



2006 - China is part of the first BRIC meeting in New York

2008 November - The government announces a \$586bn (£370bn) stimulus package to avoid the economy slowing

2010's

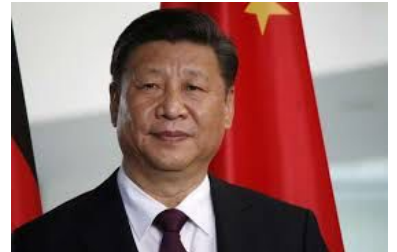
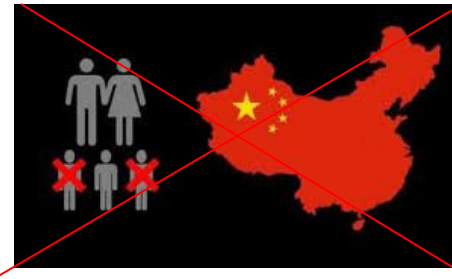
2010 - Vice-President Xi Jinping named vice-chairman of powerful Central Military Commission, in a move seen as a step towards succeeding President Hu Jintao.

2011 - China formally overtakes Japan to become the world's second-largest economy.

2012 - Communist Party chief and potential leadership hopeful Bo Xilai is dismissed on the eve of the party's 10-yearly leadership change, in the country's biggest political scandal for years.

2013 - Xi Jinping takes over as president, completing the once-in-a-decade transfer of power to a new generation of leaders.

2015 - The Communist Party announces it has decided to end the decades-old one-child policy.



Trade War

2017 - As a response to the slow economic growth, President Xi urges trade cooperation with the US at his first official meeting with US President Donald Trump.



2017 - Communist Party votes at its congress to enshrine Xi Jinping's name and ideology in its constitution, elevating him to the level as founder Mao Zedong.

2018 March - National People's Congress votes to remove a two-term limit on the presidency from the constitution, allowing Xi Jinping to remain in office for longer than the conventional decade for recent Chinese leaders.

Reference:
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