

Medals for foreigners' reform roles

The 10 personalities represent the millions who helped China's opening-up process

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Ten foreigners received China Reform Friendship Medals on Dec 18 for their outstanding contributions to the country's reform and opening-up over the past 40 years.

Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum Klaus Schwab was given a medal by President Xi Jinping at a grand gathering in Beijing to celebrate the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up.

Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, lauded the medal recipients as "old friends of the Chinese people", while reading a statement from the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, China's Cabinet.

Wang said the 10 foreigners significantly helped promote exchanges and cooperation between China and the rest of the world, and were deeply involved in China's reform and opening-up process.

"They have made outstanding contributions to the country's reform and opening-up," he said.

Among the medal winners, Panasonic founder Konosuke Matsushita made great contributions to China's modernization in electronics through trade and investment.

Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's first prime minister and one of the most influential Asian politicians, made contributions by sharing Singapore's successful governance experience with China.

Juan Antonio Samaranch, former president of the International Olym-



Alain Merieux, advocate of China's medical, health services and international cooperation.



Werner Gerich, helped China's industry as first foreign factory director in reform and opening-up.



Klaus Schwab, promoter of China's international economic exchanges and cooperation.



Konosuke Matsushita, pioneered in taking part in reform and opening-up.



Masayoshi Ohira, Japanese statesman who pushed normalizing China-Japan diplomatic ties.



Lee Kuan Yew, Singaporean leader, involved city-state in China's reform and opening-up.



Juan Antonio Samaranch, helped link China's Olympic cause to the world.



Stephen Perry, promoter of Sino-British friendship, economic, trade and cultural exchanges.



Maurice Greenberg, boosted economic, trade cooperation and China-US friendship.



Robert Lawrence Kuhn, helps tell contemporary China's story to the world.

pic Committee, was remembered by many Chinese for his great contributions to China's return to the IOC.

In the foreword to *The Sleeping Giant Awakes*, a book compiled by China Watch — *China Daily's* think tank — Schwab said the World Economic Forum has witnessed China's great development process.

"The change brought about by reform and opening-up has been incredible," he said in the foreword.

"In 40 years, China has shifted

from a largely agricultural nation with a planned economy to one that is poised to be a leader in the Fourth Industrial Revolution."

Robert Lawrence Kuhn, a leading China expert and chairman of the Kuhn Foundation, said it is a great honor to receive the medal.

"As I look at my participation among the 10 foreigners who have received the China reform friendship medal, I see my role as representing the importance of international

communication. It's not so much personal as it is representing the importance that China places on communication with the world so as to learn about the world and tell the world the true story of China," Kuhn said.

Conferring the China Reform Friendship Medal on foreigners demonstrates that China's reform and opening-up are closely linked with the international community, said Ruan Zongze, executive vice-presi-

dent and senior fellow at the China Institute of International Studies.

China's reform and opening-up drive has won support from the international community, and in the meantime, global peace and development have benefited from China's growth, Ruan said.

Ruan added that the 10 medal winners are only a representative sampling of millions of foreigners who have made contributions to the country's reform and opening-up.

>> FROM PAGE 4

on the future of the Party and the country, Xi said.

In his speech, the president pledged to uphold a people-centered philosophy and to seek happiness for the people while striving for national rejuvenation.

"The aspirations of the people to live a better life must always be the focus of our efforts on the path of moving ahead," Xi said.

Xi stressed the guiding position of Marxism and pledged to continue theoretical innovation based on actions. It is the historical responsibility of the Communist Party of China to develop Marxism in China today, Xi said.

He emphasized the need to stay on the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics and to uphold and develop socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Over the past 40 years, the theme of

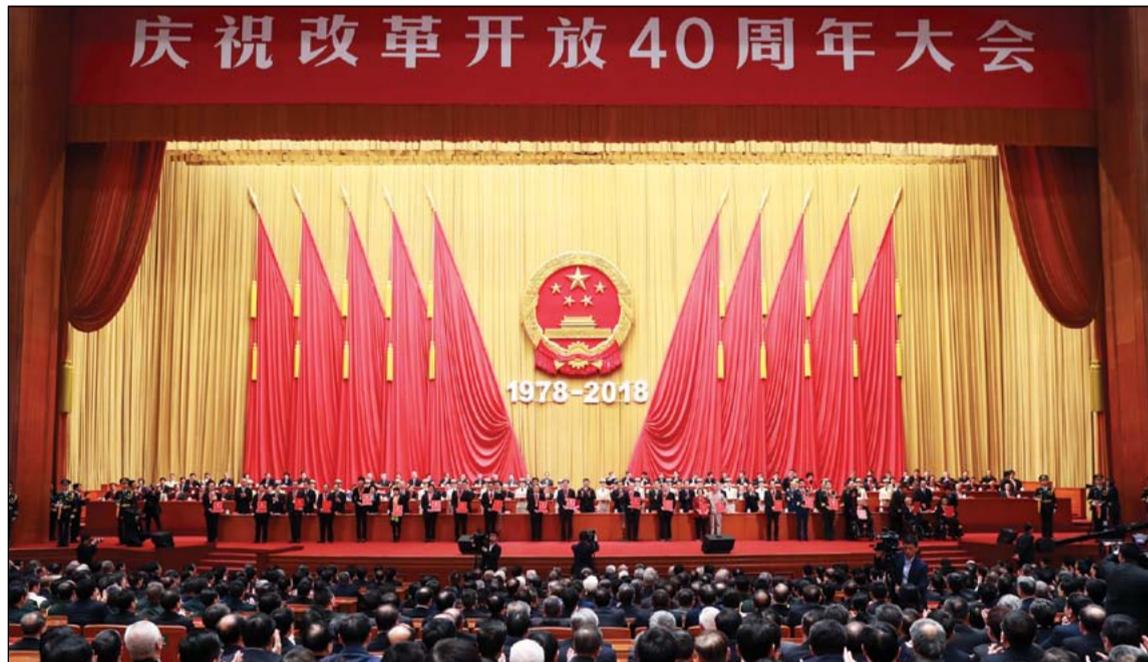
the Party's theories and practices has been to uphold and develop socialism with Chinese characteristics, Xi said.

Xi reaffirmed the commitment to strengthening State-owned businesses while also encouraging, supporting and guiding the development of private business.

He highlighted the importance of clean governance, saying that all corrupt officials must be cleared away to ensure a clean political ecology to push forward reform and opening-up.

"We have firm political resolution and great capability to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity, and not even a slice of the homeland's sacred territory can be split," Xi added.

Also at the gathering, 100 Chinese were awarded the medals of reform pioneers and 10 foreigners were honored with China reform friendship medals.



Outstanding figures are awarded medals of reform pioneers at the gathering. PANG XINGLEI / XINHUA