

China Politics Weekly

Issue No. 51 – April 27, 2015



Dear friends and colleagues,

A busy week this week, so limited commentary. Thanks to all of those who responded to last week with offers of assistance; apologies that I have not replied to many of you- climbing out from under a mountain of work and admin, so you should hear from me soon.

Your comments and feedback are always welcome. Old issues are always available at www.chinapoliticsweekly.com. Sign up or unsubscribe by sending an email to info@chinapoliticsweekly.com.

One step closer to common destiny.

Xi made a state visit to Pakistan, where he upgraded the bilateral relationship to an “all-weather strategic partnership of cooperation”. He then headed to Jakarta, Indonesia to attend the 2015 Asian-African Summit and commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Bandung Conference. The visits come as China reorients its foreign affairs to give priority to regional diplomacy. China lavished money on Pakistan and promised in Jakarta to support developing countries with no political strings attached. The visits served to reinforce the perception that China is increasingly becoming the center of gravity for the region.

Tiny thaw

In Jakarta, Xi met with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Optics from the meeting looked a lot better than the famously frosty handshake in Beijing last November. Hopefully this means relations are thawing. 2015 could still be an explosive year as WWII commemorations to be held in both countries have the potential to stoke nationalist passions and further strain the relationship.

State Council

Monday’s State Council meeting stated that there is “growing pressure on employment” and announced several measures to address the issue. These include: tax benefits for companies hiring people who have been jobless for more than six months; easing location restrictions for new businesses; raising the maximum amount of guaranteed loans for startups; and other measures.

The meeting marks a distinctive shift in tone. Previously, Premier Li has touted the fact that employment grew by 13 million last year, well above the government target of 10 million. That the official line is now that there is “growing pressure” points to further weakening of the economy- and increasing anxiety in Beijing.

Allow the people to buy with confidence

China's legislature held its bimonthly Standing Committee meeting this week. They passed new versions of the Food Safety Law and Advertising Law. The general thrust of revisions is towards enhancing consumer protection.

Free trade with the rebel province

After Monday's State Council meeting, Li Keqiang headed to Fujian for a three-day inspection tour in Fujian. The purpose of the trip was to give support and momentum to the newly inaugurated Fujian Xiamen Free Trade Zone. The new FTZ is focused on promoting cross-straits trade and investment. During the trip Li was explicit in telling Taiwanese businessmen that new regulations limiting the ability of local governments to offer tax breaks and other investment incentives would not affect already existing agreements with Taiwanese firms. Yu Zhengsheng delivered the same message during his inspection tour to Nanjing.

Cross-strait relations don't get much press these days, but they still constitute perhaps the greatest risk to regional stability. Despite increased economic integration, Taiwanese identity continues to develop in a way that makes reunification with a CCP-led mainland increasingly unpopular on the island. Presidential elections in January 2016 could very well see a return of the DPP to power; this would almost certainly complicate cross-strait relations. Beijing is right to make sure that it continues to court favor with Taiwanese businessmen as they provide an important pro-Beijing voice in Taipei.

PBSC Week in Review

Xi Jinping	Apr 25	Xi sent a message of condolences to Nepalese President Ram Baran Yadav over the earthquake in Nepal.
	Apr 24	Xi took place in activities to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Bandung Conference. Xi flew back to Beijing.
	Apr 23	Xi met with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. Xi met with President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe. Xi met with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen.
	Apr 22	Xi attended and spoke at the opening of the 2015 Asian-African Summit. <i>Full text of the speech (in Chinese).</i> Xi Jinping met with Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe. Xi met with Indonesian president Joko Widodo. Xi met with President of Myanmar U Thein Sein.

Apr 21 Xi addressed the Pakistani parliament.
Full text of the speech (in Chinese).

Xi met with Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain.

Xi met with Pakistani Senate Chairman Mian Raza Rabbani and National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq.

Xi attended the inauguration ceremony project Green Parliament, designed to provide the Pakistani parliament house with solar energy.

Xi flew to Jakarta, Indonesia.

Apr 20 Xi held talks with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Xi planted a China-Pakistan Friendship Tree with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the lawn of the Prime Minister House in Islamabad.

Xi met with the Chairman of Pakistan's Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Rashad Mahmood, and the chiefs of the army, navy and air forces.

Xi met with leaders of major Pakistani parties, including Asif Ali Zardari, former Pakistani president and co-Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party.

Xi conferred the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friendship Award on several Pakistani groups and individuals.

Xi arrived in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Xi left for Pakistan.

Li Keqiang	Apr 24	Li went on inspection tour to Fujian.
	Apr 23	Li went on inspection tour to Fujian.
	Apr 22	Li inspected the Fujian Xiamen Free Trade Zone.
	Apr 21	Li chaired an executive meeting of the State Council.

Zhang Dejiang	Apr 25-27	Zhang led an inspection tour to Chongqing to check on implementation of the Vocational Education Law.
	Apr 24	Zhang presided over the closing of the NPC Standing Committee meeting. Zhang chaired an NPC Standing Committee special lecture on IT and information security.

Lecture delivered by newly appointed MIIT Vice Minister Huai Jipeng.

- Apr 23** Zhang chaired and NPC Standing Committee chairmen's meeting.
- Apr 22** Zhang chaired a full meeting of the NPC Standing Committee.
- Apr 21** Zhang participated in group discussions of various laws at the NPC Standing Committee meeting.
- Apr 20** Zhang chaired an NPC Standing Committee meeting.
- Zhang met with Jan Hamacek, president of the chamber of deputies of the Czech Republic.

- Yu Zhengsheng**
- Apr 23-25** Yu went on inspection tour to Nanjing, Jiangsu.
- Apr 22** Yu chaired a biweekly CPPCC symposium.
Discussed controlling air pollution in Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei.
- Apr 21** Yu met with leaders of the Buddhist Association of China.
Yu told Buddhist leaders they should study the guidelines of President Xi Jinping's important speeches and serve the greater interests of the Party and country. They should uphold patriotism, hold correct political views and firmly safeguard the interests of the country and people.

- Liu Yunshan**
- Apr 23** Liu attended events to commemorate World Book Day.
- Apr 21** Liu attended and spoke at a symposium to promote the "three stricts and three honests".
"Be strict in morals, power and disciplining oneself; be honest in decisions, business and behavior."

Wang Qishan

- Zhang Gaoli**
- Apr 24** Zhang went to Wuhan, Hubei to inspect construction of the Yangtze River Economic Belt.
- Apr 23** Zhang went to Nanyang, Henan to inspect the South-North Water Diversion Project.
- Zhang went to Wuhan, Hubei to inspect construction of the Yangtze River Economic Belt.
- Apr 22** Zhang went to Danjiangkou, Hubei to inspect the South-North Water Diversion Project.

- Apr 21** **Zhang met with Russian Vice Premier Arkady Dvorkovich.**
- Apr 20** **Zhang attended a symposium to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Kang Shi'en, former vice premier and one of the founders of the country's petroleum industry.**

About CPW

China Politics Weekly aims to keep business leaders, investors, diplomats, scholars and other China hands up to date on important trends in China. It is produced by Trey McArver, a London-based consultant providing advice and intelligence to firms and investors engaged in China and the region. You can find out more about Trey and CPW in [this interview](#).

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