

China Politics Weekly

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Dear friends and colleagues,

A week in Wuhan offered a different perspective to the negativity in Beijing. Wuhan looks and feels very much like the go-go China we have known for the past 15 years. It was hard to find many people who were worried about social stability or the economy, despite the recent announcement that Wuhan Iron and Steel is poised to lay off 50,000 workers.

It's not to say that all was light and sunshine. Everybody is feeling the effects of the slowdown- particularly those in heavy industry. But overall, most companies we talked to are still making money and feel that they can successfully adapt to the new normal.

Politically, we found more liberal-minded contacts to be anxious, but resigned to Xi's leftist tendencies. On the whole, we found Xi to still be very popular, and were surprised at the positive impressions that many had of their interactions with local government.

It was refreshing to find so much relative optimism (or perhaps relative lack of pessimism) in Wuhan. However, while Beijing may be overly focused on the negative, we think those in Wuhan are probably giving too little heed to the underlying problems that are increasingly evident in China's political economy. When asked about some of the big questions of the day- debt, unemployment and political tensions- few could articulate how these problems would be ameliorated.

So who is right- the Cassandra in Beijing or the Pollyannas in Wuhan? The answer is...Both! Things are heading in the wrong direction, but we are not near imminent catastrophe.

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.

PBSC Week in Review

Xi Jinping <i>Party General Secretary; PRC President; Chairman of Central Military Commission</i>	Mar 18	Xi heard a report on the preparation of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympic Games.
	Mar 16	Xi attended the closing meeting of the NPC annual session.
	Mar 15	Xi sent a congratulatory message to Htin Kyaw on his election as president of Myanmar.

	Mar 14	Xi attended the closing meeting of the CPPCC annual session.
Li Keqiang <i>Premier</i>	Mar 18	Li chaired an executive meeting of the State Council. <i>Meeting laid out 50 key reform tasks in 10 sectors including government function transformation, tax and finance, SOEs, agriculture and rural areas, opening up, and social services.</i>
	Mar 16	Li gave a press conference after the closing meeting of the NPC annual session. <i>Full text of the press conference Q&A (in English).</i> <i>Full text of the government work report (in English).</i>
		Li attended the closing meeting of the NPC annual session.
	Mar 14	Li attended the closing meeting of the CPPCC annual session.
Zhang Dejiang <i>Chair of the National People's Congress</i>	Mar 18	Zhang left Beijing for Zambia. <i>Zhang will also visit Rwanda and Kenya.</i>
	Mar 16	Zhang chaired the closing meeting of the NPC annual session.
	Mar 15	Zhang chaired the fourth presidium meeting of the NPC annual session.
		Zhang chaired the third presidium meeting of the NPC annual session.
		Zhang chaired the second presidium meeting of the NPC annual session.
		Zhang toured the Xinhua News Agency news center and praised journalists' coverage of the two sessions.
	Mar 14	Zhang attended the closing meeting of the CPPCC annual session.
Yu Zhengsheng <i>Chair of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference</i>	Mar 16	Yu attended the closing meeting of the NPC annual session.
	Mar 14	Yu chaired and spoke at the closing meeting of the CPPCC annual session. <i>Full text of his speech (in Chinese).</i>
		Yu chaired a meeting of the CPPCC Standing Committee.
		Yu visited and praised news workers' coverage the CPPCC annual session.
Liu Yunshan <i>Head of Party Secretariat; Head of Propaganda</i>	Mar 19	Liu met with Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg.
	Mar 16	Liu attended the closing meeting of the NPC annual session.

- Mar 14** **Liu attended the closing meeting of the CPPCC annual session.**
- Mar 13** **[Liu joined group deliberations with NPC delegates from Jiangxi Province.](#)**

Wang Qishan
*Secretary of the
Central
Commission for
Discipline
Inspection*

- Mar 16** **Wang attended the closing meeting of the NPC annual session.**
- Mar 14** **Wang attended the closing meeting of the CPPCC annual session.**

Zhang Gaoli
*Executive Vice
Premier*

- Mar 17** **[Zhang met with United States Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz.](#)**
- Mar 16** **Zhang attended the closing meeting of the NPC annual session.**
- Mar 14** **Zhang attended the closing meeting of the CPPCC annual session.**

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](#).

Want to help? Please tell us how we can make this newsletter more useful to you. Feedback on both form and content are always welcome, as are suggestions for topics to be covered. Please contact us at info@chinapoliticsweekly.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

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