

China Politics Weekly

Issue No. 113 – November 7, 2016



Dear friends and colleagues,

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.

Ups and downs

Speculation that Wang Qishan will continue on past next year's 19th Party Congress has intensified after comments made by a top official at a press conference last week. Deng Maosheng, senior researcher in the Central Policy Research Office and member of the 6th Plenum communique drafting committee, told reporters that "there is no specific standard age" for PBSC members to retire. He went on to say that the widely cited norm by which PBSC members may not begin a new term after the age of 67 ("seven up, eight down") is "pure folklore".

What's interesting is that Deng's statements were not repeated in mainland media or in CCP-controlled overseas Chinese media. It seems likely then that Deng's statements were meant to test the waters to gauge reaction to potential jettisoning of the norm (which, for all Deng's protestations, is very widely understood to exist).

There have been credible rumors for a long time that Xi wants Wang to stay on for another term. Should this come to pass, what will be key is *how* Xi manages to bring this about. If the "seven up, eight down" norm is revised through a consensual, rules-based process that has the support of much of the Party, then it is nothing to worry about. In fact, it's probably an example of the strength of the Chinese system that it is able to change and adapt to changing circumstances.

The soft sounding that Deng's comments represent are further proof that Xi is careful in his approach to change, and does not want to act in ways that might cause friction within the Party or be otherwise destabilizing.

Careful change

Xi's careful approach is also evident from examining his official "explanation" of the 6th Plenum communique. According to Xi, the process of drafting the new norms on political life and internal supervision regulations started in January 2014. That means that the whole process took nearly three years. It was a highly structured, iterative process that solicited opinions from various stakeholders. Xi did not force these changes through, but rather made sure to embed them in a process that allowed participation by a large group of Party members. In a word, he made sure to garner support for the new rules.

PBSC Week in Review

Xi Jinping <i>Party General Secretary; PRC President; Chairman of Central Military Commission</i>	Nov 5	Xi sent a congratulatory letter to Xinhua News on the 85 th anniversary of its founding.
	Nov 4	Xi sent a congratulatory message to newly sworn-in President of the Republic of Lebanon Michel Aoun. Xi sent a congratulatory letter to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the taking effect of the Paris Agreement on climate change.
	Nov 3	Xi met with Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak.
	Nov 2	Xi held talks with Guinean President Alpha Conde. Xi sent a written instruction to a meeting of a publicity team charged with explaining the key decisions and spirit of the Sixth Plenum to ordinary citizens.
	Nov 1	Xi chaired a meeting of the Leading Small Group for Deepening Overall Reform. <i>The meeting focused on implementing the spirit of the Sixth Plenum. Approved 13 documents at the meeting including on: green agriculture; environmental protection; new circuit courts in Chongqing, Xi'an, Nanjing and Zhengzhou; construction of credit systems; Chinese culture and soft power; evaluation system of professional titles; encouraging college graduates to seek employment in grassroots units; Party-building in state-owned enterprises; ownership registration in natural resources and real estate; and the protection and utilization of wetlands and the coastline.</i> Xi met with Kuomintang Chairwoman Hung Hsiu-chu. Xi met with Myanmar Commander in Chief of Defense Services Sen-Gen Min Aung Hlaing.
	Oct 31	Xi met with Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel. Xi met with French Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean-Marc Ayrault. Xi sent a written instruction to a commendation meeting to honor organizations and individuals for their outstanding safety work.
	Nov 5	Li spoke at the China-CECC Summit in Riga, Latvia.
Li Keqiang	Nov 5	Li spoke at the China-CECC Summit in Riga, Latvia.

Premier

Li held a joint press conference on the outcomes of the China-CECC Summit with Latvian Prime Minister Māris Kučinskis and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.

Li met with Romanian Prime Minister Darcian Ciolos in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Estonian Prime Minister Taavi Rõivas in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Belarussian Prime Minister Andrei Kobyakov in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina Denis Zvizdić in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Serbian Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydło in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Eurasian Sinologists at the National Library in Riga, Latvia.

Li sent a congratulatory letter to the Meeting of China-CEEC Ministers of Agriculture.

Nov 4 Li held talks with Latvian Prime Minister Māris Kučinskis in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Latvian President Raimonds Vejonis in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Slovenian Prime Minister Miro Cerar in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Macedonian Prime Minister Emil Dimitriev in Riga, Latvia.

Li met with Latvian Parliament Speaker Inara Murniece in Riga, Latvia.

Li traveled from Astana, Kazakhstan to Riga, Latvia.

Nov 3 Li met with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Li attended the annual Kazakhstan-China Prime Ministerial Meeting with Bakytzhen Sagintayev in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Li traveled from Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to Astana, Kazakhstan.

Li attended and spoke at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization prime ministers' meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Full text of his speech (in Chinese).

Li met with Tajik Prime Minister Qohir Rasulzoda on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization prime ministers' meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Nov 2 Li arrived in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Li will also visit Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia and attend a series of international conferences.

Li held talks with Kyrgyz Prime Minister Sooronbay Jeenbekov in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Li met with Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Li arrived in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Li met with German Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel.

Li spoke at a China-Japan Dialogue.

Nov 1 Li attended a meeting of the Leading Small Group for Deepening Overall Reform.

Li held talks with Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak.

Li met with Guinean President Alpha Conde.

Li sent a written instruction to the World Life Sciences Convention.

Oct 31 Li held talks with Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel.

Li chaired an executive meeting of the State Council.

The meeting discussed reports of the third nationwide inspection, setting out measures to promote effective policy implementation to support growth and people's livelihood, and build a more transparent and effective government.

Li sent a written instruction to a commendation meeting to honor organizations and individuals for their outstanding safety work.

Zhang Dejiang <i>Chair of the National People's Congress</i>	Nov 6	Zhang chaired an NPC Standing Committee chairperson's meeting.
	Nov 5	Zhang attended an NPC Standing Committee Full Committee session. <i>The meeting deliberated a draft explanation of Article 104 of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, a State Council report on the immigration management, and a special report on the Supreme People's Court.</i>
	Nov 4	Zhang chaired a joint inquiry meeting of the NPC Standing Committee. <i>Legislators reviewed an inspection report on the enforcement of the Environmental Protection Law.</i>
		Zhang chaired an NPC Standing Committee chairpersons' meeting.
	Nov 2	Zhang chaired a bi-monthly session of the Standing Committee of the NPC. Zhang met with Guinean President Alpha Conde.
	Nov 1	Zhang met with Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak. Zhang attended a deliberation session of an NPC Standing Committee Subgroup. <i>The session deliberated draft amendments to the private education law and adjustments to the draft law on marine environment.</i>
	Oct 31	Zhang chaired the first meeting of the bi-monthly session of the NPC Standing Committee. <i>The session will hear reports relating to the situations of proposals and draft laws, including a report on the draft Cybersecurity Law; a draft law on the promotion of the film industry; draft amendments to the private education law, marine environment law, and to the law on ensuring public cultural service; the PRC-Tajikistan Extradition Treaty and the PRC-Sri Lanka Criminal Justice Aid Treaty; a bill on the adjustment of the 2016 central budget plan; a report on qualifications of certain delegates; a report on the draft explanation of Article 104 of the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; the session also heard a report on Zhang's September visit to Israel, Palestine, Finland and France.</i>
		Zhang met with Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel.
Yu Zhengsheng <i>Chair of the Chinese People's Political Consultative</i>	Nov 4	Yu delivered a speech at a council meeting of the China Soong Ching Ling Foundation.
	Nov 3	Yu met with Chairman of Armenia's Public Council Vazgen Manukyan.

Conference

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Nov 2 | <p>Yu chaired the closing ceremony of the CPPC Standing Committee two-day session on the spirit of the Sixth Plenum.
 <i>The meeting approved addition and dismissal of several CPPCC National Committee memberships.</i></p> |
| Nov 1 | <p>Yu attended and spoke at the closing session of the CPPCC National Committee Standing Committee.</p> <p>Yu met with Kuomintang Chairwoman Hung Hsiu-chu.</p> <p>Yu met with delegates attending the Cross-Strait Peaceful Development Forum.</p> <p>Yu chaired the opening ceremony of the CPPCC Standing Committee two-day session on the spirit of the Sixth Plenum.
 <i>Wang Qishan delivered a report.</i></p> |

Liu Yunshan
Head of Party Secretariat; Head of Propaganda

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Nov 4 | Liu attended an autumn semester graduation ceremony at the Central Party School. |
| Nov 2 | Liu chaired a meeting of a publicity team charged with explaining the decisions and spirit of the Sixth Plenum to ordinary citizens. |
| Nov 1 | Liu attended a meeting of the Leading Small Group for Deepening Overall Reform. |

Wang Qishan
Secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Nov 2 | Wang attended a meeting before the launch of the 11th round of inspections. |
| Nov 1 | Wang chaired a meeting of the Discipline Inspection Commission.
<i>The meeting focused on studying the spirit of the Sixth Plenum.</i> |
| Oct 31 | Wang delivered a report at the opening ceremony of the CPPCC Standing Committee. |

Zhang Gaoli
Executive Vice Premier

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Nov 1 | Zhang attended a meeting of the Leading Small Group for Deepening Overall Reform. |
|--------------|--|

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.

Want more? We offer tailored briefings and research reports for senior management who need to know more about China. Our network of analysts and associates have experience across a range of sectors. Please email us to discuss your needs and get a quote.