



Xi Jinping is elected Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission of China at the fifth plenary meeting of the First Session of the 13th National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on March 17 (XINHUA)

## Xi Jinping steers China toward prosperity

Under the leadership of President Xi Jinping, China is becoming strong

**On March 18, a profile of Xi Jinping, who was unanimously reelected Chinese president at the recently concluded annual session of the 13th National People's Congress, China's top legislature, was published on the website of Xinhua News Agency. An edited version of the article follows:**

As ceremonial music echoed throughout the Great Hall of the People, Xi Jinping took his place on the podium. The music stopped as he reached a large red-bound copy of the country's Constitution.

The 64-year-old, in a dark suit, placed his left hand on the Constitution, raised his right hand to his temple and made a fist of solidarity. "I pledge my allegiance to the Constitution," Xi began.

"[To] safeguard the Constitution's authority, fulfill my legal obligations, be loyal to the country and the people, be committed and honest in my duty, accept the people's supervision, and work hard for a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful."

He bowed, and the nearly 3,000 National People's Congress (NPC) deputies reacted with a spontaneous burst of thunderous applause.

It was the first time a Chinese president had ever taken such an oath upon assuming office. The ceremony was watched by tens of millions of Chinese on television or on their smartphones.

On March 17, Xi was unanimously reelected president of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and chairman of the Central Military Commission of the PRC.

Xi first took over the presidency five years ago, pledging to push forward the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics and strive for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

"In the face of the mighty trend of the times and the earnest expectations of the people for a better life, we cannot have the slightest complacency, or get the slightest slack at work," he said back then.

China has made historic achievements under Xi's leadership. The unanimous vote shows the strong support he enjoys among the people.

Nearly five months ago, Xi was reelected general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee. The Party's 19th National Congress enshrined in the CPC Constitution Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

The thought was added into the country's Constitution at the 13th NPC session as a guiding principle of the state. People have high expectations for the years ahead. The blueprint laid out at the Party congress is being turned into an action plan.

### 'Happiness comes out of arduous work'

Led by Xi, China is becoming strong.

The size of the economy has expanded to more than 82 trillion yuan (\$13 trillion) from 54 trillion yuan (\$8.5 trillion) over the past five years, growing by 7.1 percent a year on average. More than 66 million urban new jobs have been created.

The economy is healthier. Xi's supply-side structural reform worked. Consumption has become a major growth driver, contributing to 58.8 percent of economic growth in 2017, up from 54.9 percent five years ago. The share of the service sector has climbed to 51.6 percent from 45.3 percent.

People live a more comfortable life. More than 68 million people escaped poverty. Personal income increased by 7.4 percent annually on average. Life expectancy reached 76.7 years, leading developing countries.

The environment has improved as strict rules on water, soil and air pollution control have been enforced. A remarkable change: over the past five years, the number of heavily-polluted days in major cities was halved.

Xi made this happen through reform. He is regarded as the chief architect. In these five years, more than 1,500 reform measures were issued, affecting economic, political, social, cultural, environmental fields, national defense and Party building. Government red tape was cut. Foreign investment was made easier.

Xi has said happiness comes out of arduous work.

A week after the 19th Party Congress, Xi took leading officials to the Party's birthplace in Shanghai and Zhejiang, a "roots-tracing" trip to remind cadre of the Party's original aspiration.

"The CPC seeks happiness for the Chinese people," Xi said in an NPC session panel discussion. "Whatever issues the people are unhappy about or dissatisfied with, we must work hard to solve."

Xi's deep connection to the people was formed early in his life.

A son of a revolutionary leader, Xi, at the age of 15, joined numerous "educated youth" bidding farewell to urban life and heading to the countryside to learn from peasants.

Xi was sent to a small, isolated village in Shaanxi Province and stayed on for seven years. These formative years taught him the real situation on the ground and shaped his belief in a pragmatic approach and the mass line.

In the following decades, Xi rose from the grassroots to the very top. His work experience in the military, a poor rural county and wealthy coastal regions enriched his leadership skills.

Xi entered the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in 2007 and was elected general secretary of the CPC Central Committee in 2012. He has become the core of the CPC Central Committee and the whole Party.



Xi Jinping meets with representatives of model workers and skilled experts at Xuzhou Construction Machinery Group Co. Ltd., in Xuzhou, east China's Jiangsu Province, on December 12, 2017 (XINHUA)

### 'Bite the hardest bones'

In Xi's view, for China to achieve the goals in the new era, the Party's leadership over every area is the key.

To keep the Party clean, he launched an unprecedented anti-corruption campaign, investigating 440 senior officials who held provincial or corps level positions or above, among others.

Overall, more than 1.5 million were punished.

"If we had not offended hundreds of corrupt officials, we would have offended 1.3 billion Chinese people," Xi said.

While the campaign has built into a crushing tide, Xi said it could not stop.

The action to "take out tigers" and "swat flies" continued after the 19th Party congress. The latest fallen high-ranking officials included former head of the cyber-space administration Lu Wei, army generals Zhang Yang and Fang Fenghui, as well as former state councillor Yang Jing.

He also pushed forward the supervisory system reform, strengthening a centralized and unified leadership of the CPC over the graft fight.

Xi has called on officials in charge to "bite the hardest bones and catch the hottest potatoes" to tackle problems.

Xi was in the spotlight at the annual sessions of the NPC and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, commonly known as the Two Sessions.

He stressed adherence to a system of CPC-led multiparty cooperation and political consultation, saying it is a new type of party system growing from China's soil and contributes to the political civilization of humanity.

Political advisor and entrepreneur Yu Minhong couldn't agree more. Yu is a member of the China Democratic League (CDL), one of the eight non-communist parties in China. But he is better known as the chairman of New Oriental, a leading education company.

For years, Yu has been helping poor rural students get proper schooling. His proposal for rural teacher pay raises led to a government policy change.

Ding Zhongli, chairman of the CDL Central Committee, said the ruling party and the non-communist parties cooperate quite well under the system, working toward a common goal of national development.

Fred Teng, President of the America China Public Affairs Institute, said through the multiparty cooperation system, policymakers draw the best policies and achieve the best results.

While joining lawmakers from Guangdong Province in a panel discussion, Xi highlighted development, talent and innovation. Guangdong has been in the frontlines of the reform and opening up.

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The year 2018 marks the 40th anniversary of the reform drive, which has resulted in consistent and fast economic growth for decades.

During an inspection to Jiangsu Province last December, Xi said more emphasis needs to be placed on the economy's quality rather than speed and every industry, every enterprise should follow the change.

China is setting sail toward a modernized economy with Xi at the helm.

Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era was raised at the Central Economic Work Conference last December. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that China had made "Xiconomics" a guiding principle, with a focus on innovation and high-quality growth.

Areas to deepen reform include public institutions, state-owned enterprises, industrial monopolies, property rights protection, taxation, finance, rural development, social security and ecology. A modernized economy is the goal.

At the Two Sessions, Xi's speeches touched upon more fields than the economy, from Party building, rule of law, poverty reduction to environmental protection, social governance and military-civilian integration.

Pony Ma, founder and CEO of Internet giant Tencent, said Xi's speeches were so rich that he took six full pages of notes.

"The general secretary said we should make innovation a powerful driver of quality development, and I think it is an insightful remark," he said. "It will be a new opportunity for our innovative enterprises."

Li Shumu, an NPC deputy and a village Party chief in the county of Yanan, east China's Shandong Province, said farmers in his village feel encouraged as Xi has drawn a heartening blueprint for the countryside.

Air force officer Liu Rui said the armed forces must firmly adhere to Xi's order to make combat capability the fundamental criterion to judge their work.



On February 12, Xi Jinping makes Tofu pudding together with residents in Wenchuan County, southwest China's Sichuan Province, during an inspection tour to the province before the Spring Festival of 2018 (XINHUA)

### Contribution to humanity

People are curious about what changes Xi will bring to China and the world.

The three years to 2020 are crucial. China aims to complete building a moderately prosperous society by then. Extreme poverty will be history.

Looking further ahead, China aims to basically achieve modernization by 2035 and build a great modern socialist country by the middle of the century.

Realizing this Chinese dream of national rejuvenation requires policy continuity and hard work. On top of that, China needs an authoritative, centralized, and unified leadership.

With more than 89 million members, the CPC is driving China toward new economic and social advancement, blazing a brand new trail of socialism.

The year 2018 marks the 200th birthday of Karl Marx and the 170th anniversary of the issuance of *The Communist Manifesto*.

Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era is considered the latest adaptation of Marxism to the Chinese context.

A miracle is unfolding—for the first time in human history, a billion plus people are crossing the threshold of modernization together. Challenges like material shortage and the wealth gap will be overcome. People will feel much more fulfilled, happier and safer.

Shen Jilan, 89, is a witness to the profound changes over time. Born in rural Shanxi Province in north China, Shen was first elected to the NPC in 1954 and was reelected 12 times in a row.

The octogenarian likes to compare her annual commute to the Great Hall of the People over time. In 1954, she spent four days on the back of a donkey, a truck bed and then a train to reach Beijing. Today, the capital is just three hours away by high-speed train.

China is indeed on a high-speed train, one that moves toward the full development of human potential, as envisioned by Karl Marx. This explains China's growing relevance to the world. After all, it is exploring a path to advance humanity.

This year's Two Sessions, like the 19th Party Congress, attracted worldwide attention. Analysts credit China's growing influence to the country's system and Xi's charisma.

China is an economic powerhouse for the world. At more than 30 percent, China's annual contribution to world economic growth is bigger than that of the United States, Japan and the eurozone combined.

China accounts for more than 70 percent of poverty reduction worldwide. It sends the largest group of peacekeepers among the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and makes the second largest contribution to the UN peacekeeping budget.

China raised the Belt and Road Initiative and other major proposals to champion global governance, free trade and an open global economy.

On March 9, Xi had a phone conversation with U.S. President Donald Trump. They discussed the situation on the Korean Peninsula and bilateral relations. Trump said President Xi was right to insist on a dialogue between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The U.S. side highly appreciates and values China's significant role in resolving the Korean Peninsula issue, and is willing to strengthen communication and coordination with China over the issue, according to Trump.

Xi-style diplomacy is highly praised for building a new type of major country relations and a community with a shared future for humanity.

Vladimir Petrovsky, a senior researcher at the Institute of Far Eastern Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, said a feature of the major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics is that China has raised non-confrontational proposals, which did not lead to clashes but contributed to improving the existing international order.

In the past few months, Xi held talks with Trump on bilateral ties, China-U.S. cooperation on regional and international levels. Key progress was made, consensus reached.

Xi maintains close high-level exchange with Russia, pushing for all-round cooperation in all fields and closer communication and coordination on international affairs.

After the 19th Party Congress, Xi received French President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Theresa May and presidents of the Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Gambia and Panama.

He visited Viet Nam and Laos. At the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Da Nang, Xi called for an economic globalization that is more open and inclusive, more balanced, more equitable, and beneficial to all.

In December last year, Beijing held the CPC in Dialogue with World Political Parties High-Level Meeting, attracting over 600 representatives of nearly 300 political parties and organizations from more than 120 countries. Xi told them that people around the world should be one family, with open arms, understanding each other and building a community with a shared future.

He has told Chinese diplomats that the CPC considers it a key mission to both work for Chinese people's happiness and make a greater contribution to humanity.

Afghan political analyst Ghulam Dastgir said that a community with a shared future is the common pursuit of people around the world and that in pushing for that goal, China could create more opportunities for the world and make it thrive.

At the Great Hall of the People, with Xi elected as president, history has opened a new chapter.

# Serving the people

President Xi Jinping promised to continue to serve the people at the closing meeting of the annual session of 13th NPC in Beijing on March 20

**The First Session of the 13th National People's Congress concluded on March 20. Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered a speech at the closing meeting. Edited excerpts of a Xinhua News Agency report on the speech follow:**

Chinese President Xi Jinping vowed to continue to serve the people at the closing meeting of the 13th National People's Congress (NPC) annual session on March 20.

"It is a glorious mission and weighty responsibility to take on this great position of the president of the People's Republic of China. I will, as always, faithfully fulfill my responsibilities empowered by the Constitution, be loyal to the motherland and the people, perform my duty scrupulously, do all my best, be diligent at work, and stay devoted and dedicated," Xi said in a speech he delivered at the meeting.

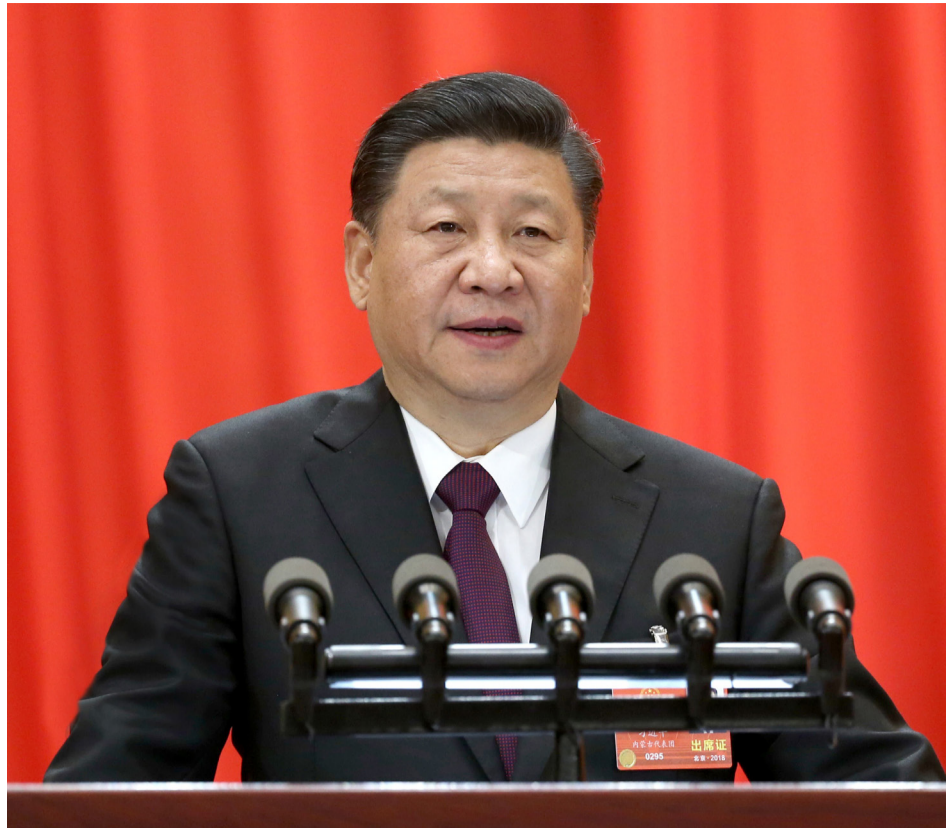
"I will continue to serve as a servant of the people, accept supervision by the people, and will absolutely not betray the great trust from all deputies and Chinese people of all ethnic groups," he added.

Xi asked all personnel of state organs to always put the people in the most prominent place in their hearts, always serve the people wholeheartedly, and always work hard for the people's interests and happiness.

"No matter how high a position one holds, all personnel of state organs should keep firmly in mind that our republic is the People's Republic of China," he noted.

The Chinese people are people with great creativity, Xi stressed in his speech, noting that he is confident that as long as the over 1.3 billion Chinese people keep on developing such great creativity, China will definitely create miracles one after another.

The Chinese people are people with great spirit of struggle, he said, noting that he believes as long as they uphold that spirit,



President Xi Jinping promised to continue to serve the people at the closing meeting of the annual session of 13th NPC in Beijing on March 20 (XINHUA)

China will definitely fulfill the great goal of creating a better life.

The Chinese people are people with great spirit of unity, he said, noting that he believes as long as they uphold the great spirit of unity, China will definitely forge an unstoppable and invincible force.

The Chinese people are people with great spirit of pursuing dreams, he said, noting that he believes that as long as they keep carrying forward this great spirit of pursuing dreams, China can and will realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

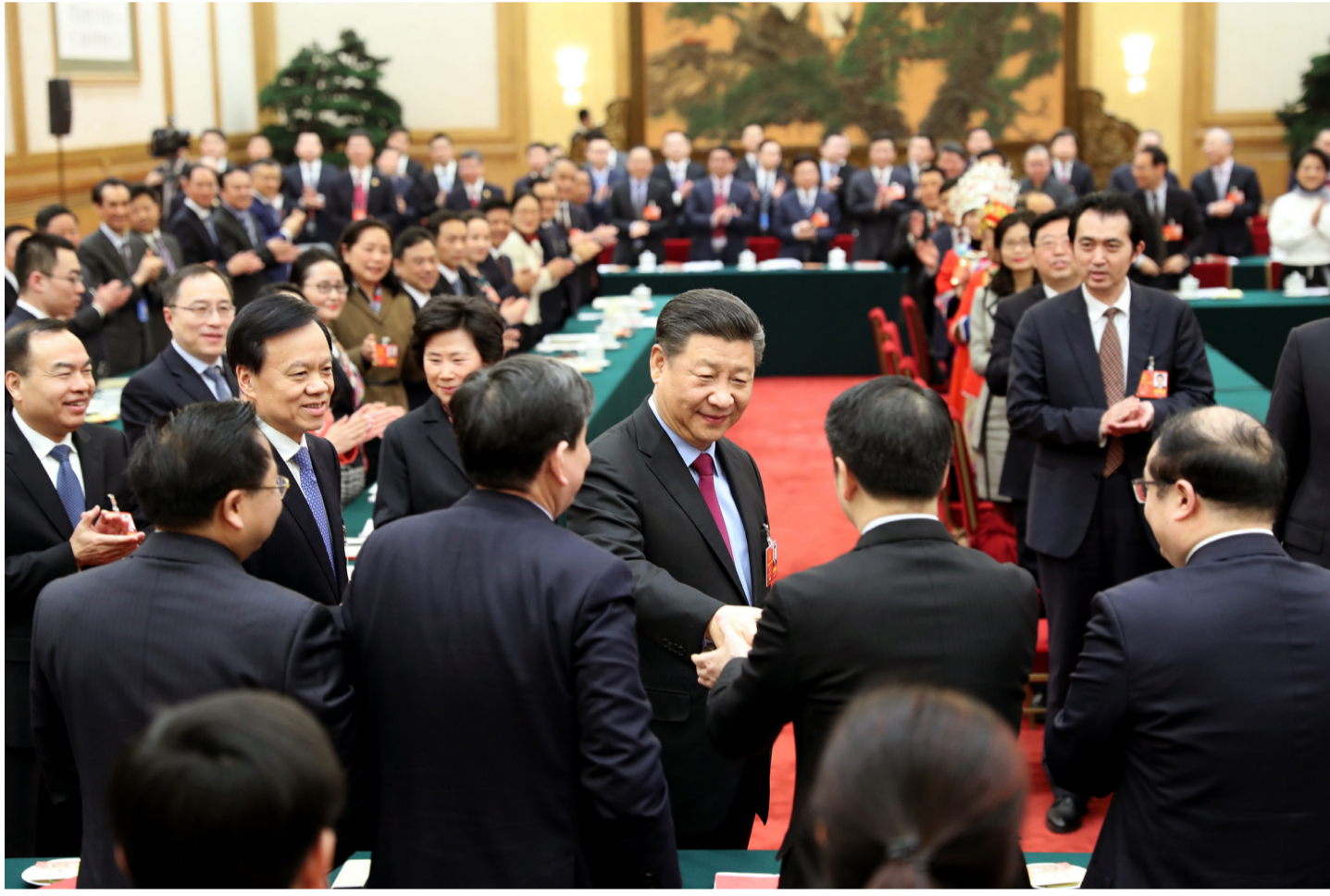
"It is a country where all power of the state belongs to the people. We must base our efforts on the interests of the people, ensure the principal status of the people, humbly learn from the people, and heed their needs and draw on their wisdom," he said.

Expressing his full confidence in China's future, Xi urged everyone to adapt to the new historic juncture for the development of the country and act in response to the evolution of the principal contradiction in Chinese society.

The Chinese people have always had the sense of justice and compassion and tied their destiny closely to that of the people around the world, he said.

"The Chinese people are always ready to do their utmost to contribute to the peace and development of humanity," he said.

Xi stressed that the leadership of the Communist Party of China is the defining feature of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the Party is the highest force for political leadership and the fundamental guarantee of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.



President Xi Jinping joins a panel discussion with deputies from the southwestern municipality of Chongqing during the First Session of the 13th National People's Congress in Beijing on March 10 (XINHUA)

## CPC releases plan on deepening reform of Party and state institutions

### Deepen reform of CPC Central Committee institutions

- Form the **national supervisory commission**.
- Form a **central committee for comprehensive law-based governance**.
- Form a **central auditing committee**.
- The central leading groups for deepening overall reform, cyberspace affairs, financial and economic affairs, and foreign affairs are transformed to be **central committees for deepening overall reform, cyberspace affairs, financial and economic affairs, and foreign affairs**.
- Form a **central leading group for education**.
- Form a **working committee for central and state organs**.
- Form a new **Party School of the CPC Central Committee (Chinese Academy of Governance)**.
- Form an **institution for Party history and literature research**.
- The state commission office of public sectors reform and the work on civil servants will be under the administration of the **Organization Department of the CPC Central Committee**.
- The **Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee** administrates press and publication sector.
- The **Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee** administrates film sector.
- The **United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee** exercises unified leadership over the State Ethnic Affairs Commission.
- The **United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee** administrates religious affairs.
- The **United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee** administrates overseas Chinese affairs.
- Optimize the functions of the **Office of the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission**.
- Abolish the **Central Leading Group for Safeguarding Maritime Rights and Interests**.
- Abolish the **Central Committee for Comprehensive Management of Public Security and its office**.
- Abolish the **Central Leading Group for maintaining stability and its office**.
- Transfer the duties of the central leading group for preventing and handling cult issues and its office to the **Committee for Political and Legal Affairs of the CPC Central Committee** and the **Ministry of Public Security**.

### Deepen reform of the National People's Congress (NPC) institutions

- Form a **social development affairs committee of the NPC**.
- The Internal and Judicial Affairs Committee of the NPC was renamed the **supervisory and judicial affairs committee of the NPC**.
- The Law Committee of the NPC was renamed the **constitution and law committee**.

### Deepen reform of State Council institutions

- Form a **ministry of natural resources**.
- Form the **Ministry of Ecology and Environment**.
- Form the **Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs**.
- Form the **Ministry of Culture and Tourism**.
- Form the **National Health Commission**.
- Form a **ministry of veterans affairs**.
- Form the **Ministry of Emergency Management**.
- Restructure the **Ministry of Science and Technology**.
- Restructure the **Ministry of Justice**.
- Optimize the functions of the **Ministry of Water Resources**.
- Optimize the functions of the **National Audit Office**.
- Form the **State Administration for Market Regulation**.
- Form the **State Administration of Radio and Television**.
- Form a **central station for radio and television**.
- Form a **China banking and insurance regulatory commission**.
- Form an **international development cooperation agency**.
- Form a **state medical insurance administration**.
- Form a **state grain and reserves administration**.
- Form the **State Immigration Administration**.
- Form a **state forestry and grassland administration**.
- Regroup the **State Intellectual Property Office**.
- Merge the State Council Three Gorges Project Construction Committee, the State Council South-to-North Water Diversion State Council Committee and its office into the **Ministry of Water Resources**.
- Submit the administration of the National Council for Social Security Fund to the **Ministry of Finance**.
- Reform the **state and local taxation systems**.

### Deepen reform of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee

- Form an **agriculture and rural affairs committee of the CPPCC National Committee**.
- Rename the Committee of History and Study of the CPPCC National Committee to the **Committee of Culture, History and Study of the CPPCC National Committee**.
- Rename the Committee of Education, Science, Culture, Health and Sports of the CPPCC National Committee to the **Committee of Education, Science, Health and Sports of the CPPCC National Committee**.

### Deepen reform of the administrative law enforcement system

- Form a **market supervision law enforcement team**.
- Form an **ecological and environmental protection law enforcement team**.
- Form a **cultural market law enforcement team**.
- Form a **traffic and transportation law enforcement team**.
- Form an **agricultural law enforcement team**.

### Deepen military-civilian reform

- Demobilize the **border police** from the **Armed Police Forces**.
- Demobilize the **fire brigade** from the **Armed Police Forces**.
- Demobilize the **police guards** from the **Armed Police Forces**.
- Change the administration of coast guards from the State Oceanic Administration to the **Armed Police Forces**.
- The **Armed Police Forces** no longer administer the gold, forest, hydro-electric forces.
- The **Armed Police Forces** no longer take on duties at customs.

(Source: Xinhua. Official names of the newly formed institutions are to be confirmed.)



# How China made it

The political philosophy behind the world's most remarkable success story

By Zhang Weiwei



Solar panels of a photovoltaic power generation project in Gulong Village in Changxing County, Zhejiang Province (XINHUA)

China's dramatic rise in recent decades has taken many Western observers by surprise. Those who forecast a pessimistic future for the country have turned out to be wrong. China is now the world's largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity, with the world's largest middle class, foreign exchange reserves, propertied class and number of globe-trotting tourists. China is also the world's leader in renewable energy in terms of both investment and output, and a champion for multilateralism and globalization.

China has its share of problems, some of which are serious and require dedicated solutions, but the country's overall success throughout these years is beyond doubt. How to explain this success? Some claim that it is due to foreign direct investment (FDI), but Eastern Europe has received far more FDI in per-capita terms; others claim that it's due to an abundance of cheap labor, but India and Africa provide less expensive offerings in this regard; some claim that it's due to an "authoritarian" style of government, but these so-called "authoritarian" governments abound in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Arab world without the same level of achievement as China.

If these explanations alone prove insufficient in explaining how exactly China has achieved its success, we should look elsewhere for answers. In essence, it has to do with the fundamental nature of China as a state and the Chinese model of development.

China is not an enlarged East Germany, nor is it any other ordinary socialist state. China is a civilizational state, arguably the world's only one since it is the only country in the world with a history of unified statehood for over 2,000 years. It is also the world's only civilization to last continuously for over 5,000 years, now coalesced in a huge modern nation.

Any such country is bound to be unique. China today is an amalgam of four factors, namely, a super-large population, a super-sized territory, super-long traditions and a super-rich culture. China has a population larger than the total populations of the European Union, the U.S., Russia and Japan combined. China's annual Spring Festival sees an average of over 3 billion trips on the country's vast transportation networks, equivalent to moving the populations of the Americas, Europe, Russia, Japan and Africa from one place to another in less than a month. This goes some way to depicting the scale of the country as well as the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

China's "four supers" have largely shaped the country's development as well as its unique development model, of which a few features can be distilled.

The country's guiding philosophy is termed "seeking truth from facts." This ancient Chinese concept was revived by Deng Xiaoping, the architect of China's reform program, after the "cultural revolution" (1966-76). Deng believed that facts—whether emanating from the East or West—should serve as the ultimate criterion

for establishing truth. Through examining contemporary facts, China concluded that neither the Soviet model of communism, nor the Western system of liberal democracy could really empower a developing country in achieving modernization. China decided to explore its own path of development and in 1978 adopted a pragmatic, trial-and-error approach for its massive development program. This decision constitutes the philosophical underpinning of the China model.

Putting people's livelihoods first is a traditional concept in Chinese political governance. Deng prioritized the eradication of poverty as China's primary national objective and pursued a realistic strategy to this end. China's reform began in the countryside, as most Chinese were at the time rural residents. The success of these initial reforms set the Chinese economy moving and instigated a chain reaction leading to the rise of millions of small and medium-sized enterprises, which soon accounted for more than half of China's industrial output, paving the way for the rapid expansion of China's manufacturing industries and foreign trade.

China approaches human rights from a different angle than the West. While the latter tends to focus exclusively on civil and political rights, China's attention to "putting people's livelihoods first" can have long-term positive implications for expanding and improving the economic, social and cultural rights of its people.

The gradual nature of reform is another crucial aspect of China's development. Given the size and complexity of the country, Deng set out a circumspect strategy described as "crossing river by feeling for stepping stones," encouraging experimentation in all major reform initiatives, an approach exemplified by China's special economic zones in which new ideas such as land sale, hi-tech joint ventures and an export-oriented economy were tested. Only when new initiatives are proven to work are they then extended nationwide. China has rejected "shock therapy" and worked through its existing, imperfect institutions while gradually reforming them to better serve the country's development and modernization. This cautious approach has allowed China to maintain much needed political stability and avoided the paralyzing political and economic failures of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.

China has tried to combine the strength of the market's invisible hand with the visible hand of state intervention to correct market failures in what has become known as the socialist market economy. As market forces have been released by China's seismic economic change, the Chinese state has ensured macro political and economic stability, steering the country away from financial disasters in 1997 and 2008. Now the government is pursuing a strategy to promote renewable energy and embrace the new industrial and scientific revolution.

The mixed economy model is not perfect, but

since its inception in 1992, China is the only major world economy that has not experienced financial or economic crises, while people's living standards are rising faster than anywhere in the world and the country's contribution to the growth of the world economy is now larger than that of the U.S., Europe and Japan combined. In other words, the model is not perfect, but it's proving better than other models, including that of the West.

China's transformation has been led by an enlightened, development-oriented state. The Chinese state is capable of shaping national consensus on the need for reform and modernization and ensuring overall political and macroeconomic stability as well as pursuing hard strategic objectives such as enforcing the reform of state-owned enterprises and the financial sector, and stimulating the economy against the global downturn. This originates from a Confucian tradition of a benevolent strong state supported by meritocracy at every level.

Despite its weaknesses, over the past four decades the Chinese state has presided over the fastest economic growth and improvement of living standards in human history, and key independent surveys, including those by PEW and Ipsos, show a consistent pattern in which the Chinese central authorities command a high degree of respect and support within the country. The Ipsos survey (2016) showed that 90 percent of Chinese were satisfied with the country's path, while only 37 percent of Americans and 11 percent of the French said the same for their respective countries. Depicting China's polity as lacking legitimacy or even on the verge of collapse, as sometimes appears in the Western media, is out of touch with the reality in China.

The Chinese experience since 1978 shows that the ultimate test of a good political system is to what extent it can ensure good governance as judged by the people. The hallowed dichotomy of democracy versus autocracy is a vacuous one in today's complex world, given the large numbers of poorly governed democracies across the globe. China's experience may eventually create a paradigmatic shift in international political discourse away from this old dichotomy to a new one of good versus bad governance, in which good governance may look either like a Western political system or a non-Western one. Similarly, bad governance may take the form of the Western political system or it may not.

In response to Francis Fukuyama, author of *The End of History and the Last Man*, now is not the end of history, but the end of the end of history. This is not only good for China, but for the West and the whole world, as we can now jointly explore new ways and means for better governance and development in the interest of our common humanity.

(The author is director of the China Institute at Fudan University)



A Chinese tourist pays her bill with her mobile phone in a city in Finland on January 21 (XINHUA)

## Major events in March

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### [March 4: China mulls new law to promote, protect foreign investment: spokesperson](#)

**Keywords:** NPC; foreign investment; law

Chinese lawmakers are planning to combine the country's three foreign investment laws and work on a new basic law to promote and protect foreign investment, said Zhang Yesui, spokesman for the First Session of the 13th National People's Congress.

### [March 6: China's economic planner says confident of 6.5 percent annual growth](#)

**Keywords:** NDRC; 6.5; domestic consumption

He Lifeng, head of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), on March 6 expressed confidence in achieving the 6.5 percent annual growth target as domestic consumption is expected to become a stronger force driving economic development.

### [March 7: China capable of forestalling systemic risks: finance minister](#)

**Keywords:** finance minister; Xiao Jie; debt control

China is confident of fully forestalling systemic risks, the country's Finance Minister Xiao Jie said in Beijing on March 7, voicing firm stance on debt control. According to him, the country's debt-to-GDP ratio has decreased to 36.2 percent by the end of 2017 from 36.7 percent in 2016, far below the international alert line of 60 percent.

### [March 17: Xi Jinping unanimously elected Chinese President, CMC Chairman](#)

**Keywords:** Xi Jinping; Chinese President; CMC Chairman

Xi Jinping was elected Chinese president by a unanimous vote on the morning of March 17 at the ongoing session of the 13th National People's Congress. He was also elected chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) by a unanimous vote.

### [March 17: China's massive cabinet restructuring plan passed](#)

**Keywords:** NPC; cabinet; restructuring plan

China's national legislature on March 17 adopted a massive cabinet restructuring plan to make the government better-structured, more efficient, and service-oriented. The plan was passed at a plenary meeting of the ongoing first session of the 13th National People's Congress (NPC).

### [March 18: Newly-appointed Chinese Premier pledges allegiance to Constitution](#)

**Keywords:** Chinese Premier; Li Keqiang; Constitution

Newly-appointed Chinese Premier Li Keqiang took an oath of allegiance to the country's fundamental law on March 18.

### [March 26: China launches crude oil futures trading](#)

**Keywords:** yuan-denominated; crude oil futures; Shanghai International Energy Exchange

China on March 26 launched trading of yuan-denominated crude oil futures contracts at the Shanghai International Energy Exchange, the first futures contracts listed on China's mainland to overseas investors.

### [March 28: Xi presides over first meeting of central committee for deepening overall reform](#)

**Keywords:** Xi Jinping; deepening overall reform

Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), presided over the first meeting of the central committee for deepening overall reform on March 28.