

China Politics Weekly

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Dear friends and colleagues,

A mega issue for a mega *lianghui*!

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Little opposition to Xi's reign

It's official. Presidential term limits have been abolished. On Sunday the National People's Congress (NPC) approved that and several other changes to the PRC constitution (Xinhua).

The vote was nearly unanimous. Only 0.07% of NPC delegates had the temerity to vote against the changes. That's a higher rate of approval than for past amendments – in 2004, there were over five times as many “no” votes, for example.

Other constitutional changes may be more significant

The removal of term limits gets all the attention, but other amendments – enhancing the leadership of the Party and creating a new National Supervisory Commission – are arguably more important.

NPC is making a lot of laws

The NPC on Sunday released its legislative plan for the coming year. It's ambitious. The legislature is looking to draft nine new laws: 1) Foreign Investment Law, 2) Vehicle Purchase Tax Law, 3) Resource Tax Law, 4) E-commerce Law, 5) Law on Promoting Basic Medical and Health Care, 6) Law on the Prevention and Control of Soil Pollution, 7) Farmland Occupancy Tax Law, 8) Property Tax Law, and 9) Community Correction Law.

They will also revise a further eight laws: 1) Law on Tax Collection and Administration, 2) Law on the Contracting of Rural Land, 3) Land Administration Law, 4) Law on the Prevention and Control of Environmental Pollution Caused by Solid Waste, 5) Criminal Procedure Law, 6) Organic Law of the People's Courts, 7) Organic Law of the People's Procuratorates, and 8) Civil Service Law.

There's no way, frankly, that they get all of that done this year. But they are likely to make solid progress, especially as Li Zhanshu sets out to set the tone for his tenure at head of the NPC.

Don't forget the CPPCC

They call it the “two meetings”, but nobody pays much attention to the CPPCC annual session.

While nobody was looking the CPPCC has also revised its constitution. The new changes require the CPPCC to start holding more regular sessions to advise on government policies.

That matters because CPPCC proposals can and do become actual policies. For example, the CPPCC was behind the push to deal with overcapacity in the shipbuilding sector.

And Wang Yang will be eager to give the body a bigger say. Wang's a capable politician, and succeeded in enhancing the role of the CPPCC in Guangdong when he was Party secretary there from 2007-2012.

PBSC Week in Review

Xi Jinping

Party General Secretary; PRC President; Chairman of Central Military Commission

Mar 12

Xi met with Chung Eui-yong, South Korean national security advisor.

Chung briefed Xi on Chung's recent visits to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the United States. "We expect a smooth DPRK-ROK summit and DPRK-U.S. dialogue," Xi said, expressing his hope that there will be substantial progress in denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula and normalization of relations between the parties.

Xi joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from the People's Liberation Army and the People's Armed Police.

Mar 11

Xi attended the third plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.

Meeting adopted amendments to the PRC constitution by a vote of 2,958 to two, with three abstentions.

Mar 10

Xi joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Chongqing.

Xi compared political ecology to natural ecology in that both can be easily polluted and, if damaged, will cost a huge price to be rehabilitated. Xi stressed that a clean and upright political ecology is an essential requirement for safeguarding the authority and centralized and unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee, an urgent need for ensuring full and strict governance over the Party, and a vital guarantee for fulfilling reform and development targets.

Mar 9

Xi talked to United States President Donald Trump by phone.

Xi told Trump that he appreciates the U.S. president's desire to resolve the Korean Peninsula issue politically. Xi pointed out that China remains persistent in denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula, maintaining peace and stability on the peninsula, and resolving the nuclear issue through talks. "I believe that as long as all parties adhere to the general direction of political and diplomatic settlement, we will surely push forward the Korean Peninsula issue in the direction that the international community has been looking forward to," Xi said. Xi also said he has been in close

contact with Trump since the beginning of this year and they both agreed that the two sides should seize every minute to promote wide-range cooperation and dialogue to maintain a healthy and stable development prospects for China-U.S. relations. Xi hoped that with the joint efforts and on the basis of mutual respect and benefit, China and the United States will focus on cooperation, control differences, promote win-win economic cooperation, and push for new advancement of bilateral relations in the new year.

Xi attended the second plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.

The meeting listened and deliberated the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate work report. SPC President Zhou Qiang delivered the SPC work report. SPP Chief Procurator Cao Jianming delivered the SPP work report.

Mar 8 Xi sent a message of condolences to Governor-General of Papua New Guinea Bob Dadae over the strong earthquakes that hit his country.

Xi joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Shandong Province.

Xi said he rural vitalization strategy is the leading agenda for government work on agriculture, rural areas, and rural residents. Xi urged local authorities to reenergize rural industries, increase incomes of rural residents, alleviate poverty, and enrich rural life. He pointed out that national food security should be ensured, agricultural structure optimized, and establishment of a modern rural industry system quickened. The president underlined ecological vitalization and green development in rural areas. The three-year action plan to improve the rural living environment must be implemented, while the ongoing "toilet revolution" will be carried forward. Xi asked authorities to respect the wishes of rural residents and turn their desire for a better life into a force driving rural vitalization, protecting their fundamental interests and bringing them common prosperity. Xi also stressed the strategic importance of the ocean in China's pursuit of high-quality development, urging progress in the construction of world-class sea ports, a modern maritime industry system, and a green and sustainable marine ecological environment to push for the building of maritime power.

Mar 7 Xi joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Guangdong.

Xi said he fully endorsed the proposed constitutional amendments. Hailing it a major move to advance law-based governance and modernize China's system and capacity for governance, Xi said the drafting process of the bill has fully practiced democracy, pooled wisdom from various sectors and embodied the common will of the Party and the people. Xi also stressed economic restructuring, scientific innovation, opening-up and better governance, as well as efficient social governance and promotion of social justice. Finally, he told leading officials to prevent relapse of undesirable work practices and consolidate implementation of the eight-point decisions on improving Party and government conduct.

Mar 5 Xi joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Inner Mongolia.

Xi emphasized high-quality economic growth and poverty reduction. To achieve high-

quality growth, it is important to upgrade the industrial structure and build strong real economies, Xi said, adding that more effort is needed to develop new, high-end and technology-intensive industries. Xi highlighted the importance of developing a modern-energy economy, following the global trend of an energy technology revolution, and improve the efficiency of energy consumption.

Xi attended the opening ceremony of the annual meeting of the National People's Congress.

Xi appointed new ambassadors.

The United Nations Office at Geneva, the United Nations, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, Lithuania, Iceland.

Li Keqiang <i>Premier</i>	Mar 11	Li attended the third plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.
	Mar 10	Li Joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Ningxia. <i>Li called for implementation of the country's "go west" strategy to make the region an inland pioneer in reform and opening up. He also asked the region to improve the business environment by consistently deepening reforms, improve living standards, and resolutely secure a victory in poverty alleviation.</i>
	Mar 9	Li attended the second plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.
	Mar 8	Li joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Liaoning. <i>Li urged the northeastern province to carry out policies made by the CPC Central Committee and State Council that aim at reviving old industrial bases in northeast China, maintain the favorable momentum of economic growth through reform and opening-up, and work for a comprehensive revival of the province.</i>
	Mar 7	Li joined a panel discussion with the delegates from Zhejiang. <i>Li said he fully endorses the draft constitutional amendment, which was a major move to implement the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress and to uphold Constitution-based governance. He also called for further transforming government functions and releasing market dynamics and creativity.</i>
	Mar 6	Li joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Guangxi. <i>Li said local governments should not only fully implement national reform policies, but also launch tailored measures of their own to create a business-friendly environment for the benefit of enterprises and the public. Local governments were also told to practice frugality but increase spending on programs for people's livelihood and focus on poverty alleviation.</i>
	Mar 5	Li delivered the government work report during the opening ceremony of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.

- Li Zhanshu**
Chair of the National People's Congress (expected)
- Mar 11** **Li chaired a meeting of the NPC Presidium.**
Li attended the third plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.
- Mar 10** **Li chaired a meeting of the NPC presidium.**
The meeting decided on matters about the draft constitutional amendment. It adopted a draft decision on special committees of the 13th NPC, a draft voting method for directors, deputy directors and members of the special committees, as well as a candidate list of directors, vice directors and members of some committees. The documents will be sent to delegations for discussion. It also adopted a name list of 35 scrutineers who will oversee the upcoming voting on the constitutional amendment and elections of state leadership and decided to put it for vote by all NPC deputies at a plenary meeting.
Li joined a panel discussion with delegates from Yunnan.
Li said he hopes the province will build itself an exemplary region in promoting ethnic unity and progress, ecological development, as well as a center of opening up towards South Asia and Southeast Asia.
- Mar 9** **Li attended the second plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.**
Li joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Hubei.
Li said all deputies have shown great consistency in their recognition for an agreement with the draft constitutional revision, which is under deliberation at the session, and have expressed their great trust in the CPC Central Committee with Xi at the core.
- Mar 8** **Li chaired a meeting of the NPC presidium.**
The meeting decided on matters about the draft constitutional amendment. The presidium was briefed on the deliberation of the bill among all NPC delegations and a revised version of the bill drafted by the executive chairpersons based on opinions of delegations.
- Mar 7** **Li joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Beijing.**
Li said he completely agreed with the proposed amendments to the Constitution, adding that the incorporation into Constitution of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era and other theoretical, practical and institutional progress made at the 19th CPC National Congress would provide constitutional guarantee for safeguarding the authority and centralized, unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Xi at the core.
- Mar 5** **Li joined a panel discussion with delegates from Jiangxi.**
Li stressed the important role of the CPC Central Committee with Xi at the core. He said it will be essential to fully implement Xi's thought, especially his thought on

economy, which is mainly based on a new vision for development, and the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress to ensure this year's economic and social development.

Li opened the annual session of the 13th National People's Congress.

Wang Yang Chair of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (expected)	Mar 12	Wang chaired a meeting of the CPPCC presidium. <i>Adopted a recommended name list of candidates for national committee new leadership. The list included nominees of the chairperson, vice chairpersons, secretary-general and standing committee members of the 13th CPPCC National Committee. A draft method of election was also adopted in principle. Participants deliberated a draft resolution on the work report of the Standing Committee of the 12th CPPCC National Committee, a draft resolution on an amendment to the CPPCC charter, and a draft political resolution on the first session of 13th CPPCC National Committee.</i>
	Mar 11	Wang attended the third plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.
	Mar 10	Wang attended the third plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th CPPCC National Committee. <i>14 National Committee members delivered a speech .The meeting put forward proposals covering areas including the CPPCC, employment, fight against bureaucracy, education, judicial reform, targeted poverty reduction, social etiquette in rural areas, disease prevention, cultural communication, maritime assistance, religion, and exchanges across the Taiwan Strait.</i>
	Mar 9	Wang attended the second plenary meeting of the first sessions of the 13th National People's Congress. Wang joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Shanghai. <i>Wang stressed full implementation of Xi's thought, adherence to the new vision for development, and deepened supply-side structural reform, with a focus on developing real economy. Reform and opening up are the most powerful engines for economic and social development, said Wang, who called for practical measures to ensure the First China International Import Expo, slated for November in Shanghai, is a success.</i>
	Mar 8	Wang attended the second plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th CPPCC National Committee. <i>The National Committee listened to an explanation of the draft amendments to the CPPCC constitution. 13 National Committee members delivered speeches on the comprehensive deepening of reform and high-quality economic growth.</i>

Mar 7 **Wang joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Taiwan.**
Wang said he fully endorses the draft constitution amendment. He called to persevere with the “peaceful reunification” and the “one country, two systems” policy, push for peaceful development of bilateral relationships and push for the peaceful reunification with the PRC. He also said to persevere with the one China principle and the 1992 consensus and firmly oppose and contain any separatist Taiwanese Independence movements.

Mar 6 **Wang joined a panel discussion with political advisors from ethnic minority groups.**
Wang called for concrete efforts to secure victory in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects in areas with large ethnic minority populations. He asked them to focus on targeted poverty reduction and environment protection.

Mar 5 **Wang joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Sichuan.**
Wang highlighted the firm leadership that the CPC Central Committee with Xi at the core exercised in achieving historic changes in the causes of the Party and country, urging efforts to safeguard its authority and centralized, unified leadership and fully implement its decisions and policies.

Wang attended the opening ceremony of the annual session of the 13th National People’s Congress.

Wang Huning
Head of Party Secretariat

Mar 11 **Wang attended the third plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People’s Congress.**

Mar 9 **Wang attended the second plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People’s Congress.**

Mar 8 **Wang presented awards at a meeting hosted by the All-China Women’s Federation to mark International Women’s Day.**
The meeting called on women nationwide to follow the leadership of the CPC, contribute to the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and practice socialist core values.

Wang joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Anhui.
Wang instructed the province to achieve high-quality growth under a new vision of development, fuel economic growth by innovation, forestall and defuse major risks, carry out targeted poverty alleviation, and prevent and control pollution.

Mar 7 **Wang joined a panel discussion with delegates from Guizhou.**
Wang said he fully endorses the draft constitution amendment, which embodied the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress and the second and third plenary sessions of the 19th CPC Central Committee as well as the will of the people.

Mar 6 **Wang joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Hong Kong and Macau.**

Wang stressed implementation of the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress on work related to the two regions, urging efforts to act in strict compliance with China's Constitution and the basic laws of the two special administrative regions, support the governments and chief executives of both regions in exercising law-based governance.

Mar 5 **Wang joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Hebei.**

Wang acknowledged the remarkable achievements made by the CPC Central Committee with Xi at the core and urged his fellow deputies to well understand the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress and Xi's thought and lead the public to safeguard Xi's core status and keep in line with the central leadership. He urged hard work to establish a middle-class society.

Wang attended the opening ceremony of the annual session of the 13th National People's Congress.

Zhao Leji

Secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection

Mar 11 **Zhao attended the third plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.**

Mar 10 **Zhao joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Tibet.**

Mar 9 **Zhao attended the second plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.**

Mar 8 **Zhao joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Shanxi.**

Zhao stressed that the campaign against corruption and undesirable work practices will not ease off nor halt, promising not only to hunt down "tigers," high-ranking corrupt officials, but also swat "flies", the low-ranking ones, and to step up actions against corruption occurring on the people's doorsteps.

Mar 7 **Zhao joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Jiangsu.**

Zhao said he fully endorses the draft constitution amendment, which established the guiding position of Xi's thought in the Constitution, and further clarified the supreme political principle of the Party's overall leadership.

Mar 5 **Zhao joined a panel discussion with the delegation of Heilongjiang Province during the annual session of the 13th NPC.**

Zhao Leji underscored the historic achievements China has made under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Xi at the core and called for developing a modernized economy and pursuing high-quality growth to implement Xi Jinping Thought on Socialist Economy with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

Zhao attended the opening ceremony of the annual session of the 13th National People's Congress.

Han Zheng

Mar 11 **Han attended the third plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.**

Executive Vice
Premier
(expected)

- Mar 9** **Han attended the secondary plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th National People's Congress.**
- Han joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Henan.**
Han encouraged Henan to upgrade its industrial structure, pursue innovation-driven development and new types of urbanization, and improve its fundamental capabilities.
- Mar 8** **Han joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Fujian.**
Han called for the efforts to speed up industrial restructuring, achieve high-quality development, improve people's livelihood, and protect the environment.
- Mar 7** **Han joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Tianjin.**
Han said he fully endorses the draft constitution amendment, which constitutionalized major theoretical, practical and institutional progress made under the Party's leadership, and was an important arrangement to ensure the sustainable development and long-term stability of the Party and the country.
- Mar 6** **Han joined a panel discussion with NPC delegates from Shaanxi.**
Han encouraged people to strive to achieve more efficient, fairer, and more sustainable development with better quality by following the philosophy of innovative, coordinated, green, and open development that is for everyone.
- Mar 5** **Han attended the opening ceremony of the annual session of the 13th National People's Congress.**

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, co-founder of Trivium/China. You can find out more about Trey and CPW in [this interview](#). You can find out more about Trivium/China [here](#).