

# Chinese leaders join political advisory discussions

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and other senior leaders on Saturday joined political advisors in their panel discussions concerning the nation's economic and social development.



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang goes to join political advisors in their panel discussions on Saturday. [Photo by China.org.cn]

Meeting with advisors from economic and agricultural sectors during the the ongoing session of the 12th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the premier highlighted the main theme of "seeking progress while maintaining stability" in economic work.

He stressed the need to keep the continuity and stability of the macro-policy with the supply-side structural reform as the focus.

Under the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core, China witnessed a good start for its 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), said Li.

Despite economic woes at home and abroad, stabilization and improvement were seen in both social and economic areas, he said, citing progress in employment, structural adjustment, new growth impetus and improvement in people's livelihood.

Li pledged to consolidate the trend of economic stabilization and improvement by comprehensively deepening reform.

Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, joined in a panel discussion of political advisors from Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions.

Zhang said Hong Kong and Macao maintained overall stability over the past year, witnessing new and positive development.

Zhang said the central government attaches great importance to elections to be held this year respectively in Hong Kong and Macao, which concern the regions' prosperity and stability.

Zhang hoped the election in Hong Kong will be held orderly and in accordance with the law.

A chief executive who loves the motherland and Hong Kong, who is trusted by the central government and supported by Hong Kong people, and who is able to govern Hong Kong effectively, should be elected, Zhang said.

Yu Zhengsheng, chairman of the CPPCC National Committee, joined political advisors from the circles of social sciences as well as press and publication in a panel discussion.

Yu called for promoting the development of philosophy and social sciences, and media and publicity work, in order to fuel China's drive to build a well-off society and realize its great national rejuvenation with "huge positive energy."

In the process, Yu said, Xi's instructions and new ideas, thoughts and strategies on state governance should be implemented.

He also stressed upholding the correct political direction, guidance of public opinion and values, and continuing efforts to boost the development of socialist core values.

Liu Yunshan, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, joined political advisors from the literary and art circles in a panel discussion.

Liu said confidence in the country's culture is an important issue concerning the independence of ethos, and a significant pillar of confidence in the country's path, theory and system.

Liu attributed cultural confidence to the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Xi as the core, the highly effective political system, as well as shared ideals and aspirations that unite all Chinese.

The CPC Central Committee with Xi as the core has opened a new era for state governance, Wang Qishan, head of the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, said at a panel discussion of political advisors from the Communist Youth League of China, the All-China Youth Federation, the All-

China Federation of Trade Unions and the All-China Women's Federation.

The CPC's leadership is the essence of socialism with Chinese characteristics, Wang said.

Wang added that organizations under the CPC's leadership should unite people around the CPC and consolidate the political basis for the Party's governance.

Meeting with advisors from the China Zhi Gong Party, the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese and the group for friendship with foreign countries, Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli called for joint efforts from Chinese people both at home and abroad for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Zhang asked the CPPCC members to step up friendly exchanges with foreign countries.

He asked them to help explain China's stories and solutions, and introduce to the world the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative to contribute to the shared future for mankind.

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## [China clears 1,845 cases of suspects in long custody without trial](#)

China has cleared and settled 1,845 cases involving 4,459 suspects, who were placed in custody for more than three years without being charged, said sources with the Supreme People's Procuratorate on Saturday.

The number represents all the cases unveiled in a nationwide rectification campaign on prolonged custody in 2013, said Yuan Qiguo, a senior SPP prosecutor during an online interview.

Among the suspects, 3,451 had been placed in custody for less than five years, 926 for five to eight years, and 82 for eight years or above.

"Prolonged custody without trial not only infringes upon the suspect and the defendant's litigation rights, but also tarnishes the judicial organ's image and credibility and impairs social harmony and stability," Yuan said.

Amid enhanced supervision over the duration of criminal custody in recent years, the number of suspects, placed in custody for more than three years without being charged, had notably decreased, reducing from 4,459 in 2013 to six by 2015, the SPP figures show.

The prosecutor said China's procuratorates will continue to make efforts to prevent and settle new cases involving prolonged detention of suspects in

order to safeguard the rights of the suspects and the defendants.

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## [If the Tories continue to ignore the big issues then British consumers will continue to be short-changed – Gill Furniss](#)

**Gill Furniss MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for Steel, Postal Services and Consumer**

**Protection**, responding to news that the Chancellor will unveil details of the Government's upcoming Consumer Green Paper in the Budget, including action on subscription traps and simplifying small print said:

"The data from Citizens Advice makes clear that misleading consumer practices are extremely widespread, with over 40 per cent of British people paying for a subscription they don't use.

"Consumers need much better protection from stealthy subscriptions which often start automatically after a free trial. Clear notifications that billing or price changes are about to begin should be the minimum that consumers can expect. At present, companies have no incentive to improve, so allowing enforcement bodies to impose fines is a positive step.

"While these changes are welcome, the Tories with their light-touch approach have an abysmal track record on protecting consumers. Only last summer they sat back and watched Ofgem and the Competitions and Markets Authority effectively blame consumers for allowing energy companies to rip them off to the tune of £1.4 billion a year. And to the surprise of no one, energy bills have just been hiked yet again. Labour would implement a price cap to properly protect consumers.

"These are sensible proposals, but if the Tories continue to ignore the big issues then British consumers will continue to be short-changed. It's about time this government started taking its responsibility to UK consumers seriously."

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## **The UK does not have to pay a single Euro to exit the EU – and is making a very generous and friendly Brexit offer to the EU**

I am glad the Lords have confirmed what I have long argued that the UK has no legal obligations under the EU Treaties to pay any one off exit payment or any continuing contributions after departure.

They missed out the even more important point – UK Ministers have no legal power to make any one off or continuing payments after leaving. The payments would not be authorised. The legal base of the Treaty supports our regular contributions but not the payments the EU have in mind.

The EU may well think it a good idea to ease the problems they have on our departure by charging us a huge sum for daring to leave. The answer is a simple and polite No to that request.

The EU needs to concentrate on making sure it still has tariff free access to our market, which they also need. The good news is we are happy to offer them that. The bad news is they do not seem to be able to agree anything amongst themselves about how to respond to Brexit. The EU Commission also seems to think it should try and threaten and bully us, when the sensible approach is to be helpful and courteous, as we are towards them.

The UK is offering them tariff free trade and the full rights of EU citizens to stay and work in our country. That's a great and generous offer. Why can't they simply do the same civilised thing? Why don't they take seriously their legal obligations under their own Treaty to have good relations with a neighbouring state with a flourishing trade?

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## **Environmental court opens in NW China province**

A special court for environmental cases has been established in northwest China's Qinghai Province to provide legal service for environmental protection work in the Sanjiangyuan area.

The Sanjiangyuan environmental court, affiliated with the Yushu City People's

Court, was approved by the Higher People's Court in Qinghai Province and was established on Tuesday, according to the government of the Tibetan prefecture of Yushu.

The court hired six people to handle environmental protection cases and civil suits related to pollution prevention and environmental damage in the area.

Sanjiangyuan literally means "the source of three rivers," referring to the Yangtze, Yellow, and Lancang (Mekong) rivers. The ecology in the area has degraded due to human activities such as overgrazing.

The environmental court is the first such specialized judiciary organ in the province, said Man Zhifang, vice president of the Higher People's Court in Qinghai Province.

Planning began on a national park in the area last year, aiming to protect the headwaters of the three rivers. It is expected to officially open in 2020. Endi