

China's top political advisor stresses unity with Xi's leadership

China raised the curtain on its annual political season on Friday, with top political advisor Yu Zhengsheng pledging conformity to the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee with Xi Jinping as the core.

As chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee, Yu delivered a work report to more than 2,000 political advisors gathered in the heart of Beijing to discuss the political, economic and social issues facing the world's most populous nation and second-largest economy.

Yu said that in the course of the nation's great rejuvenation, the importance of 2016 was assured by the endorsement of Xi Jinping as the core of the CPC Central Committee.

Xi's core status embodies the fundamental interests of the Party and the people, and will be of far-reaching significance. His political ideas should be a guidance for all, Yu told the political advisors.

During the gathering, attendees are expected to fully align their thinking with Xi's strategic blueprint of the "four comprehensives" – comprehensively achieve a moderately prosperous society, deepen reform, advance rule of law and govern the CPC strictly, which is crucial to the drive of China becoming a well-off society by 2020.

The CPPCC is an important vehicle for multiparty cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC, and the key to socialist democracy.

Political advisors come from various walks of life and ethnic groups. They serve as a think-tank for the government, legislative and judicial organs, and put forward proposals on major political and social issues.

Their proposals can be considered a rough barometer of public opinion, signaling issues of concern on anything from industrial policy to domestic violence, and telegraph the general national agenda for the next year and beyond.

In the past year, seminars have convened to discuss a plethora of topics including new development ideas, supply-side structural reform, revitalization of the northeast region, and rural poverty relief. Agendas also included creation and management of national nature reserves, preservation of land resources and prevention of pollution, Yu said.

Yu commended the advisors for their work on the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), saying 2017 is a more important year for the plan's implementation.

The CPPCC will help the country better adapt to the “new economic normal” of steady and healthy economic development, he said.

Friday’s CPPCC session was the start of the most important two weeks on China’s political calendar. The National People’s Congress (NPC), China’s top legislature, is set to begin its annual session on Sunday.

Together dubbed the “Two Sessions,” the meetings are where political and economic developments are reviewed and discussed and key policies are made. This year, attendees will also discuss the general provisions of civil law.

In his speech, Yu saw room for improvement in some aspects of CPPCC work.

“Discussion of state affairs needs to go deeper and to be more practical, work on democratic oversight needs to be further standardized, and CPPCC National Committee members need to do better in the performance of their duties,” Yu noted.

The advisors’ main efforts this year should be directed toward stable and healthy economic development, communication with representatives of public opinion in Taiwan, and maintaining social harmony and stability.

Yu said communication between political advisors and the youth in Taiwan should be strengthened to consolidate public support for the peaceful development of cross-strait relations.

Political advisors will continue to oversee the implementation of CPC Central Committee policies and raise practical proposals.

While praising the Standing Committee of CPPCC National Committee for promoting unity and friendship, Yu called for work on solidarity and friendship with the people in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, as well as overseas Chinese.

[Website launched to commemorate late Premier Zhou Enlai](#)

A website was launched on Friday to commemorate late Premier Zhou Enlai, born in 1898, in the lead-up to the 120th anniversary of his birth.

The website, zhouenlai.people.cn, featured a 366-day countdown to the anniversary, an introduction to his life, and poems, calligraphy and paintings that pay tribute to Zhou, as well as Zhou’s family letters and links to memorial halls dedicated to him in China and abroad.

Visitors can offer virtual “flowers” and pay homage to Zhou online as well as post messages to the website. Endi

[Procuratorates see fewer petitions in 2016](#)

The number of petitions and complaints to procuratorial agencies across China in the first 10 months last year has dropped by 9.8 percent from the same period of the previous year.

Gong Ming, a senior prosecutor with the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP), said on Friday that numbers of extreme cases, repeated petitions and petitions that involve mass participation have also decreased, while the involvement of lawyers in petitions is increasing.

Gong said this shows that more members of the public are willing to resort to the law rather than extralegal means in solving their grievances.

Procuratorial authorities at the provincial level have established systems to integrate petitions into judicial proceedings, rectify wrongful decisions and provide judicial assistance in such cases.

Prosecutors have also accepted over 10,000 petition cases via online video in 2016, which could help people make their voices heard, according to Gong.

[State Council appoints, removes officials](#)

The State Council on Friday announced the appointment and removal of several leading officials.

Ding Xuedong was appointed State Council deputy secretary-general in place of Xiao Jie.

Wang Shuangquan was named vice justice minister, and Tang Jun has replaced Liu Yuting as deputy head of China's State Administration for Industry and Commerce.

Guo Shuqing was appointed chairman of China Banking Regulatory Commission. Shang Fulin no longer holds the post.

Chen Gang was nominated deputy director of the Office of the South-to-North Water Diversion Project Construction Committee under the State Council.

Wang Kun was named deputy head of China Geological Survey, and Luo Liming was removed from the post of deputy director of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission.

[China's top political advisory body starts annual session](#)



Yu Zhengsheng, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), delivers a report on the work of the CPPCC National Committee's Standing Committee at the fifth session of the 12th CPPCC National Committee at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, March 3, 2017. The fifth session of the 12th CPPCC National Committee opened in Beijing on March 3. [Photo/Xinhua]

China's top political advisory body started its annual session Friday in Beijing, ushering in a political high season that will continue with the opening of the country's top legislature Sunday.

Yu Zhengsheng, chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, delivered a work report to more than 2,000 political advisors who gathered to discuss major political, economic and social issues in the world's most populous nation and second-largest economy.

Top Communist Party of China and state leaders Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, Zhang Dejiang, Liu Yunshan, Wang Qishan and Zhang Gaoli attended the opening meeting at the Great Hall of the People.