

**THE REVAMP OF THE CHINESE
COMMUNIST PARTY IN 2014**

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EAI Background Brief No. 989

Date of Publication: 7 January 2015

Executive Summary

1. The 2014 Chinese Communist Party (CCP) reform—dubbed “party-building institutional reform”—aims to rebuild the CCP with a set of modern institutions. The thrust is to purge the Party of corruption and modernise the Party.
2. The triple objectives are to enhance internal cohesion, external legitimacy and the capability of the CCP to meet the challenges of a rapidly ascending nation. To enhance internal cohesion (or to maintain the integrity of a Leninist party), Xi has attempted to restore Marxist orthodoxy and resurrect some of the Maoist practices such as the mass line, criticism and self-criticism.
3. To shore up Party legitimacy, the new regime has waged a massive anti-corruption campaign, worked towards restoring traditional values such as frugality and purged the Party of unqualified members.
4. To enhance the ruling capability of the Party, the Politburo passed the “Action Plan for Deepening Party-building Institutional Reforms” on 2 September. It outlines 26 concrete reforms in four key areas to be completed by 2017: party institutions, cadre management, grass-roots consolidation and human resources management.
5. Party-building under Xi has shown some notable departures. Firstly, the re-emphasis on ideological unity tops the list. Xi stresses the continuity between the eras of Mao and Deng under the same Marxist rubric instead of their differences to bridge the gap between the left and the right in the Party. He also invoked traditional Chinese cultural values to supplement the official ideology.
6. Secondly, Xi has rolled back on intra-party democracy of the Hu-Wen leadership, such as nomination by voting and cadre evaluation by opinion polls etc. Party chiefs as gate keepers in personnel decisions are emphasised instead. Xi opts for strengthening party discipline and regulations, institutionalised accountability for decision making, personal virtue etc. to curtail power abuse.

7. Thirdly, for the first time the Party began to seriously consider controlling the growth of its size. The bar for recruiting new members is raised; quality is prioritised over quantity. Pilot programmes are being run in many localities to explore institutionalised mechanisms to get rid of party members who are no longer qualified.
8. Finally, a five-year intra-party legislation plan has been adopted. The rule of law within the Party is considered the key to establishing the rule of law in the country.
9. There are inherent dilemmas in building a Leninist party in a globalised market economy. The Marxist ideology is by nature sterile as a guide to policy making. Societal pluralism and the re-emergence of classes will continue to undermine its internal cohesion by generating vested interests and factionalism within the Party.
10. The market will continue to erode the Party's grass-roots organisations; corruption will continue to bring liability to the Party. The premise of maintaining an all-encompassing Leninist party in a market economy is questionable, especially at the grass-roots level.