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economist with IHS Markit, said the economic reform priorities adopted by the NPC will continue to build on key economic strategies initiated during the first five years of President Xi's leadership.

"A key priority for the CPC Central Committee under the leadership of Xi Jinping as general secretary will be to modernize the structure of the Chinese economy to ensure it can maintain strong growth momentum in the long term," he told *China Daily Asia Weekly*.

"As China has become an upper middle income country, a key focus of government reforms is to develop new strategic industries as highlighted in the Made in China 2025 strategy launched in 2015."

Biswas said the Belt and Road Initiative will also be an important economic priority, to accelerate infrastructure development in developing countries and improve connectivity to boost South-South trade and investment flows.

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

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

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

In the past few months, Xi has

held talks with US President Donald Trump on bilateral ties and China-US cooperation on regional and international levels. Key progress has been achieved and consensus reached.

Xi maintained close, high-level exchanges with Russia, pushing for all-around cooperation in all fields and closer communication and coordination on international affairs.

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

The son of a revolutionary leader, at the age of 15 he joined numerous "educated youth" who bid farewell to urban life and headed to the countryside to learn from farmers.

Xi was sent to a small, isolated village in Northwest China's Shaanxi province and stayed on for seven years. These formative years taught him the real situation on the ground and shaped his belief in pragmatic approaches 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.

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

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

Overall, more than 1.5 million officials 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 must not stop.

The action to "take out tigers" and "swat flies" continued after the 19th Party Congress. The most recently fallen high-ranking officials include the former head of the cyberspace administration, Lu Wei, army generals Zhang Yang and Fang Fenghui, and former State councilor Yang Jing.

He also pushed forward reform of the supervisory system, strengthening the CPC's centralized and unified leadership in the graft fight.

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

At the two sessions, Xi stressed adherence to a system of CPC-led multiparty cooperation and political consultation, saying it was a new type of party system growing from China's soil and contributed to the political civilization of humanity.

Political adviser and entrepreneur Yu Minhong could not 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 changes to government policy.

Ding Zhongli, chairman of the CDL party's central committee, said

the ruling party and the non-Communist parties cooperate well under the system, working toward the common goal of national development.

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

Xi, in a panel discussion with lawmakers from South China's Guangdong province, highlighted development, talent and innovation.

Guangdong has been on the front line of reform and opening-up. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the drive, which led to decades of consistent and fast economic growth.

During an inspection in East China's Jiangsu province in December, Xi said more emphasis needed to be placed on the economy's quality rather than speed, and every industry and every enterprise should follow the change.

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

Xi Jinping Thought on Socialist Economy with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era was raised at the Central Economic Work Conference in December.

Areas for deepening reform include public institutions, State-owned enterprises, industrial monopolies, property rights protection, taxation, finance, rural development, social security and the environment. A modernized economy is the goal.

At the two sessions, Xi's speeches touched more fields than the economy, including Party-building, rule of law, poverty reduction, environmental protection, social governance and

military-civilian integration.

Ma Huateng, also known as Pony Ma, the Internet tycoon and chairman of Tencent Holdings, said Xi's speeches were so profound 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 secretary in the county of Yinan, East China's Shandong province, said farmers in his village feel encouraged as Xi has drawn a beautiful 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.

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

The two years to 2020 are crucial. China aims to complete the building of 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 authoritative, centralized, unified leadership.

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

Timeline

The 13th Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and the National People's Congress (NPC), also known as the two sessions, saw the election of national leaders to lead the country in the next five years. Here is a timeline of the elections.

March 14

Wang Yang was elected chairman of the National Committee of the CPPCC, the top political advisory body.



The fourth plenary meeting of the first session of the 13th CPPCC National Committee — at which 24 vice chairpersons and 300 Standing Committee members were also elected by more than 2,100 CPPCC National Committee members — took place.

The vice-chairpersons are Zhang Qingli, Liu Qibao, Pagbalha Geleg Namgyai (ethnic Tibetan), Tung Chee-hwa, Wan Gang (China Zhi Gong Party), Edmund Ho Hau Wah, Lu Zhongong, Wang Zhengwei (ethnic Hui), Ma Biao (ethnic Zhuang), Chen Xiaoguang, Leung Chun-ying, Xia Baolong, Yang Chuantang, Li Bin (female), Bater (ethnic Mongolian), Wang

Yongqing, He Lifeng, Su Hui (female), Zheng Jianbang, Gu Shengzu, Liu Xincheng, He Wei, Shao Hong and Gao Yunlong.

Xia Baolong was elected secretary-general of the CPPCC National Committee.

March 17

Xi Jinping was elected Chinese president and chairman of Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China at the 13th NPC.



Li Zhanshu was elected chairman of the 13th NPC Standing Committee at the annual session of China's national legislature.



Wang Qishan

was elected vice-president of the People's Republic of China.

Nearly 3,000 lawmakers also elected 14 vice-chairpersons. Yang Zhenwu was elected secretary-general of the NPC Standing Committee.

The vice-chairpersons are Wang Chen, Cao Jianming, Zhang Chunxian, Shen Yueyue, Ji Bingxuan, Arken Imirbaki, Wan Xiang, Chen Zhu, Wang Dongming, Padma Choling, Ding Zhongli, Hao Mingjin, Cai Dafeng and Wu Weihua.

March 18

Li Keqiang was endorsed as Chinese premier at the first session of the 13th NPC, the country's national legislature.



Xu Qiliang and **Zhang Youxia** were endorsed as vice-chairmen of the Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China.

Yang Xiaodu

was elected director of the national supervisory commission.



Zhou Qiang

was elected president of the Supreme People's Court.



Zhang Jun

was elected procurator-general of the Supreme People's Procuratorate.



March 19

Han Zheng, Sun Chunlan, Hu Chunhua and Liu He were endorsed as vice-premiers after being nominated by Premier Li Keqiang at the 13th NPC.

Wei Fenghe, Wang Yong, Wang Yi, Xiao Jie and Zhao Kezhi were endorsed as State councilors. Also endorsed were ministers, central bank governor, auditor general, secretary-general of the State Council and leaders and members of specialized NPC committees.