

Super seven

Five members who are past 68 years old will have to retire if an age-based convention is followed.



PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY

1. XI JINPING, 64

President

Paramount leader since 2012, most powerful Chinese leader since Deng Xiaoping. Named "core" leader last October, all eyes on whether he grooms potential successors, or moves towards pursuing a third term as president.

POLITBURO STANDING COMMITTEE (PSC)

The PSC currently has seven members, including President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang. It is the highest decision-making body in China.



2. LI KEQIANG, 62

Premier

Mr Xi's No. 2 and head of government. His key portfolios are the economy and finance. But the Hu Jintao ally saw his power reduced as Mr Xi absorbed more decision-making functions through high-level committees.



3. ZHANG DEJIANG, 70

NPC* chairman

Capable administrator with regional governance chops. Also top official responsible for Hong Kong and Macau. Has strong party confidence: the Jiang Zemin ally was appointed Chongqing party secretary in 2012 after the Bo Xilai scandal.



4. YU ZHENGSHENG, 72

CPPCC** chairman

In charge of religious and ethnic minorities, including in restive Xinjiang and Tibet. A Jiang ally. A speech he gave last year raised eyebrows as it was seen by some as a rebuke to Mr Xi's consolidation of power.



5. LIU YUNSHAN, 70

Secretary of CCP secretariat

Former school teacher and Xinhua reporter, and China's top official in charge of ideology, propaganda, and party organisation. While an ally of Jiang Zemin, he has risen in importance with Mr Xi's focus on strengthening party ideology.



6. WANG QISHAN, 69

Secretary of the CCDI***

Considered Mr Xi's closest confidant and right-hand man, he is key enforcer of Mr Xi's anti-corruption campaign to take down dirty officials. Whether he retires or not will be an indication of Mr Xi's willingness to bend two-decade-old succession rules.



7. ZHANG GAOLI, 70

First Vice-Premier

A top-ranked vice-premier, he is in charge of foreign affairs and is Mr Li's key lieutenant. Also co-chairman of the annual Joint Council for Bilateral Cooperation overseeing cooperation between Singapore and China.

POLITBURO

Most of the 25 Politburo members hold key positions in the provinces and autonomous regions, or in the central government.

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Of the 376 members, only 200 have full voting rights for the Politburo and the PSC.

NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS

2,287 delegates will attend the 19th Party Congress. They will pick the members of the Central Committee.

Footnote: The number of members in each layer is not fixed.

* NPC: National People's Congress ** Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference *** Central Commission for Discipline Inspection

Who might be next



WANG YANG, 62

Vice-Premier; aligned with Premier Li through his ties with the Communist Youth League; significant foreign policy figure; tipped to be next executive vice-premier



LI ZHANSHU, 67

President Xi's chief of staff; a loyalist of Mr Xi, with their friendship going back to 1980s; could take over anti-corruption portfolio



ZHAO LEJI, 60

Director of the Organisation Department; member of the Shaanxi clique, referring to those who come from President Xi's province, that Mr Xi appears to rely on; could head the National People's Congress



HAN ZHENG, 63

Shanghai party secretary; worked with Mr Xi in 2007 when the latter was Shanghai party boss and he was the mayor; among those in the Shanghai faction who have professed loyalty to Mr Xi



WANG HUNING, 61

Director of CCP think-tank the Policy Research Office; adviser to three presidents including Mr Xi; if appointed, would be because of need for theoretical guidance for reforms



HU CHUNHUA, 54

Party chief of Guangdong province; only sixth-generation member of Politburo and potential successor to top leaders; linked with former president Hu but has professed loyalty to Mr Xi



CHEN MIN'ER, 57

Newly promoted party chief of Chongqing city; a protege of President Xi; not a Politburo member but could be catapulted to PSC as successor-in-training