



China Reform Monitor: No. 1267

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January 2:

CPC "core" leader Xi Jinping has departed from the narrative that China's anti-corruption was not a power struggle and acknowledged factional rivalry within the Communist Party. In newly-published speeches published in the official *Qiu Shi* magazine, Xi accused some former officials of "political conspiracies," the *South China Morning Post* reports. Xi named ex-officials including Zhou Yongkang, Bo Xilai, Guo Boxiong, Xu Caihou and Ling Jihua. "[They] were not only greedy financially and corrupt in their lifestyles, but were also politically ambitious, often agreeing in public but opposing in secret, and forming cliques for personal interests and engaging in conspiracy activities," Xi told the sixth plenum of the party's Central Committee. "Only since last year have senior bureaucrats and official media started saying that the 'Gang of Five' were trying to seize power," *The Hong Kong Economic Journal* reports.

January 3:

A U.S. drone strike in Sarmada, Syria has killed an al-Qaeda commander, who is also leader of the Turkistan Islamic Party, a branch of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM). "The recent drone strike will without question help take joint work between Beijing and Washington in anti-terrorism to the next level as well as promote global coordination over the issue. Today's China is both a competitor and a partner of the U.S. - this is an undeniable reality. If the two sides can create more room for collaboration through fighting against ETIM, it will benefit both in the long run," the official *Global Times* reports.

January 5:

The probe into two Xinjiang officials for "disciplinary violation" is in fact a punishment over the deadly attack in the region last month. During the incident on December 28, four attackers drove a vehicle into a Communist Party building and set off explosives that killed a person and injured three others. The region's disciplinary watchdog has placed Zhang Jinbiao and He Jun, both local Communist Party, under corruption probes. However, there is speculation that the two officials are actually being held responsible for the attack, *Ming Pao* reports.

January 6:

The Kyrgyz parliament has launched a probe to determine how Kyrgyz national passports are being forged by Uighurs seeking to flee China for Turkey. Kyrgyzstan has not introduced biometric e-passports yet, making its passports easy to forge. Uighurs make their way to Kyrgyzstan through the mountains between Kyrgyzstan and Xinjiang, then once in Kyrgyzstan, they fly to Turkey using forged Kyrgyz passports, BBC reports. In May 2016, about 100 ethnic Uighurs from China's Xinjiang were caught with fake Kyrgyz passports at Turkey's Ataturk airport in Istanbul, *AKIpress* reports. The probe follows a recent incident involving a Kyrgyz passport, which mistakenly identified its holder, a Kyrgyz man, as the gunman who killed 39 at an Istanbul night club attack on January 1. "We have not received answers to the questions who had been the source of the forged passports and whether were produced in Kyrgyzstan or in a different country," said MP Jeenchoroyev, adding that there was "a lot of secret information."

January 7:

Confronting an aging population and a shrinking work force, last year China ended the one-child policy, and is now preparing to remove IUDs on a massive scale. "Our country provides support in terms of law, finance and service systems to ensure citizens' access to the free removal of IUDs," said an official of the National Health and Family Planning Commission's department of women and children, on a broadcast on Chinese official TV. She said that 18 million women are now eligible to have their IUDs removed for free over the next three years so they could bear a second child. From 1980 to 2014, 324 million Chinese women were fitted with IUDs and 107 million underwent tubal ligations. "Half of all Chinese women eligible to have a second child were 40 or older," said Yi Fuxian at the University of Wisconsin-Madison: "Most people have already lost the ability to give birth. The willingness to have children is already very low, so the Chinese government's offer of free surgeries will have little effect on the birthrate." According to 2015 data, Chinese women had 1.05 children on average, well below the population replacement rate of more than 2.1, the *New York Times* reports.

[Editor's Note: In the early 1980s, China began forcing women to be fitted with IUDs after they had one child, and sterilized after they had two. Those who refused risked that their children would be denied access to public schools and health insurance. Civil servants and state employees who refused lost their jobs. While IUDs elsewhere can often be removed with the tug of their strings, Chinese IUDs require surgery because the devices were designed with shortened strings or no strings at all.]