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REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS



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On March 5, the 5th Session of the 11th NPC opens at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Party and State leaders including Hu Jintao, Wen Jiabao, Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, He Guoqiang and Zhou Yongkang attended the opening ceremony. *Ju Peng*



Presided by NPC Standing Committee Chairman Wu Bangguo, the 5th Session of the 11th NPC opens on March 5 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. *Li Xueren*



Deputies attending the 5th Session of the 11th NPC listen to the work report of the government delivered by Premier Wen Jiabao on March 5. They also deliberated the annual reports of planning and budget. *Liao Pan*



The 5th Session of the 11th NPC opens on March 5 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. *Ma Zengke*



Left: On March 8, Vice Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee Wang Zhaoguo gives explanations of the draft amendment to China's Criminal Procedure Law at the 2nd Plenary of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC. *Zhang Duo*



Right: The 5th Session of the 11th NPC holds the 2nd plenary meeting on March 8 in Beijing. Li Jianguo, Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of the NPC Standing Committee, gives explanations on the draft decisions to the selection of 12th NPC deputies on the mainland, Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions. *Sheng Jiapeng*



On March 7, NPC deputy Guo Jian (second from left) of the NPC Inner Mongolian delegation makes a speech at a panel discussion on the government work report. *Ma Zengke*



Top legislator Wu Bangguo delivers a work report on the NPC Standing Committee at the 3rd plenary meeting of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC on March 9. *Sheng Jiapeng*



On March 9, deputies attending the 5th Session of the 11th NPC listen to the work report of NPC Standing Committee delivered by top legislator Wu Bangguo. *Yang Zongyou*



Wang Shengjun, president of the Supreme People's Court, delivers a work report of the court at the 4th plenary meeting of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC on March 11. *Li Xueren*



Procurator-General Cao Jianming makes a work report on the Supreme People's Procuratorate at the 4th plenary meeting of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC on March 11. *Li Xueren*

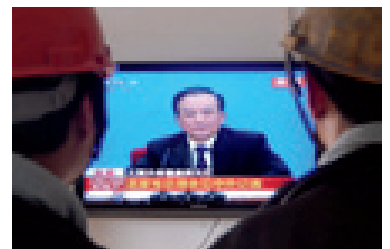
On March 11, deputies listen to the work reports on the Supreme People's Court and Supreme People's Procuratorate at the 4th plenary meeting of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC. *Yang Zongyou*



On March 14, NPC deputies acclaim the conclusion of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. *Chen Jianli*



NPC deputies take a group photo with the working staff outside the Great Hall of the People on March 14, when the 5th Session of the 11th NPC comes to an end. *Lu Bo'an*



After fulfilling all the agendas set for the 5th Session of the 11th NPC, the annual meeting of the top legislature closes at the Great Hall of the People on the morning of March 14. *Chen Jianli*

Miners of the Tongting Colliery in Huaibei, Anhui Province gather at a crush room, watching a live broadcast of the press conference in which Premier Wen Jiabao meets the press on March 14. *Chen Lei*



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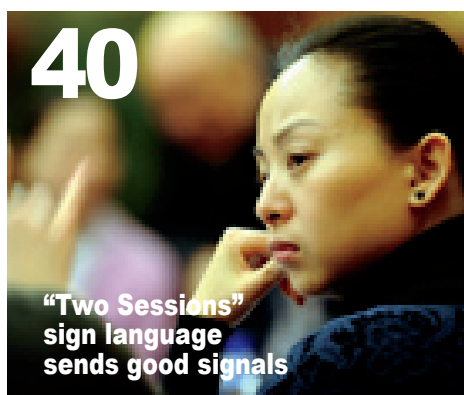
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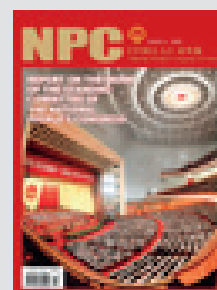


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**COVER: The 5th Session of the 11th NPC
convenes from March 5 to 14, 2012 in Beijing.**
Ma Zengke



NPC

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Report on the Work of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (excerpts)

**Delivered at the Fifth Session of the
Eleventh NPC on March 9, 2012**

Wu Bangguo, Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee



The Great Hall of the People in Beijing CFP

Major tasks for 2012

This year is of special importance to our national development because the Party will hold its Eighteenth National Congress, which will be of great and far-reaching significance. To ensure the success of the Eighteenth Congress, it is crucially important for us to firmly follow the general work principle of making progress while maintaining stability, do all our work for the year well, and consolidate and build on the sound momentum we achieved from the launch of the 12th Five-Year Plan. Against this background, the general requirements for the work of the NPC Standing Committee are as follows: To fully implement the guiding principles of the Seventeenth National Party Congress, the third through sixth plenary sessions of the Seventeenth Party Central Committee, and the Central Economic Work Conference; take Deng Xiaoping Theory and the important thought of Three Represents as our guide; thoroughly apply the Scientific Outlook on Development; firmly take the socialist path of political development with Chinese characteristics; adhere to the organic integration of the Party's leadership, the people's position as masters of the country, and the rule of law; strengthen and improve legislative work; improve the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics; strengthen and improve oversight; give impetus to implementing the major decisions and arrangements of the central leadership; strive to accomplish all the targets set for the Eleventh NPC; and make new contributions to promoting steady and robust economic development and maintaining social harmony and stability. We will build on past achievements, work tirelessly to fulfill our mission, and do all our work for this year to a higher standard.

Taking new steps to improve the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics

In accordance with the general requirement of improving the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics, legislative work this year will focus on the central tasks of the Party and the country; conform to the actual needs of economic and social development; ensure good coordination of legislative tasks; and make better use of the role of laws to regulate, guide, guarantee, and facilitate. First, we will advance legislation in the social arena. We will continue to deliberate the drafts of the Law on Mental Health, the Law on Entry and Exit Administration, the Law on Insurance for Military Personnel, and the draft amendment to the Civil Procedure Law, and amend the Law Guaranteeing the Rights and Interests of Senior Citizens and the Labor Contract Law with a view to improving and



On March 9, the 3rd plenary meeting of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC convenes at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Chinese top legislator Wu Bangguo made a work report on the NPC Standing Committee.

Sheng Jiapeng

making innovations in social administration. Second, we will improve legislation in the economic field. We will continue to deliberate the draft amendment to the Budget Law and the draft of the Law on Asset Evaluation, and amend laws such as the Land Administration Law, the Law on Disseminating Agricultural Technology, the Environmental Protection Law, the Law on Securities Investment Funds, and the Trademark Law with a view to forging institutions and mechanisms conducive to scientific development. Third, we will strengthen the system of cultural laws. We will formulate a law on public libraries and promote development of cultural undertakings, improve the system of Internet-related laws and promote a healthy cyberspace culture, and safeguard public interests and national information security. We will continue to urge relevant parties to formulate accompanying regulations, strengthen the filing and examination of normative documents, and urge and guide the Supreme People's Court and Supreme People's Procuratorate to complete their concentrated review of existing judicial interpretations this year.

I would like to emphasize that raising the quality of legislation is an eternal theme in our work to strengthen and improve legislation and an inherent requirement for improving the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics. Following a review of our successful experiences and practices in recent years, we need to focus on the following points in our work:

First, we need to effectively strengthen coordination of legislative work, thoroughly verify the necessity and feasibility of legislative items, draw up our legislative agenda and annual

plan scientifically, and vigorously urge relevant parties to solve major issues addressed in legislation so as to make our laws better suit the actual needs of economic and social development and satisfy the fervent aspirations of the people.

Second, we need to better integrate revising and improving laws with strengthening oversight work, and thoroughly analyze the issue of laws currently in effect being unsuitable and imperfect in the course of inspecting enforcement of laws and conducting investigations and studies on special topics in order to provide an important basis for revising and improving laws so that revision work is more targeted and legal provisions are more practicable.

Third, we will actively develop institutions, standards, and procedures for making legislation more scientific and democratic, further improve the methods for seeking public comments on draft laws, attach greater importance to conducting investigations and studies to understand actual conditions and the primary level, listen directly to the opinions of the general public, and correctly reflect and consider the interests of different sides. We will make people's participation in legislation a process of pooling wisdom and building consensus among the general public.

Seeing new results in giving impetus to implementing the central leadership's major decisions and arrangements

To ensure sound economic and social development this year, the Party Central Committee has made it clear that we need to have basic continuity in macroeconomic policy, maintain steady and robust economic development, keep overall price levels basically stable, ensure social stability, and continue to seize and make good use of the important period of strategic opportunities for China's development to make progress in transforming the pattern of economic development, make new breakthroughs in deepening reform and opening up, and achieve new results in improving the people's wellbeing. The Standing Committee will further strengthen and improve its oversight work and give impetus to implementing the central leadership's major decisions and arrangements.

First, we will listen to and deliberate the reports of the State Council on adjusting national income distribution, reform and development of State-owned enterprises, performance of the mechanism for ensuring basic funding for county-level governments, development of irrigation and water conservancy, land administration, and exploitation, use, and preservation of mineral resources. We will also inspect enforcement of the Agriculture Law, and urge relevant parties to make progress in transforming the pattern of economic development and carrying out restructuring.

Second, we will listen to and deliberate the State Council's reports on ensuring safe drinking water and providing social aid, inspect enforcement of the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons, and urge relevant parties to intensify efforts to ensure and improve the people's wellbeing.

Third, we will listen to and deliberate the State Council's



report on deepening the reform of the cultural system and promoting the great development and flourishing of socialist culture, inspect enforcement of the Law on the Protection of Cultural Relics, and give impetus to implementing the guiding principles of the Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventeenth Party Central Committee.

Fourth, we will listen to and deliberate reports on the implementation of China's annual plan and budgets and on the central government's final accounts and auditing work, examine and approve the 2011 final accounts of the central government, give impetus to implementing the central leadership's macro-control policies, and promote steady and robust economic development.

Fifth, we will listen to and deliberate the State Council's reports on administration of the entry, exit, residence, and employment of foreigners; enforcement of the Prison Law and prison work; and enforcement of the Anti-Drug Law and anti-drug work, and give impetus to innovation in social administration.

Sixth, we will listen to and deliberate the Supreme People's Court's report on intellectual property rights adjudication and the Supreme People's Procuratorate's report on the handling of civil and administrative cases, and give impetus

to a just and clean judicial system. We will make inquiries on such topics as reform and development of State-owned enterprises, development of irrigation and water conservancy, and ensuring safe drinking water, and conduct topic-specific investigations and studies on issues related to accelerating the transformation of the pattern of economic development, strengthening environmental protection, and promoting urban community development, in order to make our oversight of these areas more effective.

To perform our oversight work well this year, we will focus on the following areas:

First, we will strengthen overall planning and coordination for oversight tasks and organize and arrange the work carefully to make sure goals are met, there are sufficient personnel to do the tasks, and deadlines are met.

Second, we will strengthen investigations and studies, better solicit opinions from a wide range of sources, especially ordinary people, analyze issues from an overall and long-term perspective, and provide practical and pertinent comments and suggestions on that basis.

Third, we will strengthen communication with the State Council, the Supreme People's Court, and the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and exchange views with them in various



Ethnic minority deputies wave farewell on March 14, when the 5th Session of the 11th NPC came to a end at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. *Li Xueshi*

forms in a timely fashion in order to improve the quality of report drafting and deliberation. We will also urge relevant parties to carefully study and act on suggestions made in the course of the Standing Committee's deliberations.

Making new progress in deputy services, external exchanges and self-improvement

Making full use of the role of deputies is an important aspect of upholding and improving the system of people's congresses. We will continue to strengthen services for deputies, conscientiously handle the bills and suggestions deputies submitted to this session of the NPC, and strive to make the handling process one of improving the Standing Committee's work and prodding relevant parties to improve their work and solve problems. We will continue to invite deputies to participate in activities of the Standing Committee and special committees, make arrangements for activities for them when the NPC is not in session, and help them maintain close ties with their constituencies and the people so that they can better participate in the administration of State affairs.

We will make full use of the NPC's characteristics and advantages in developing foreign contacts in keeping with our country's basic policies and general arrangements for its diplomatic work, continue to improve the mechanism for regular exchanges with foreign congresses and parliaments,

expand friendly contacts with them, and actively participate in the activities of international and regional parliamentary organizations to help the international community better understand China's basic national conditions, development path, and foreign and domestic policies and create a favorable international environment for our country's economic and social development.

We will continue to strengthen self-improvement of the Standing Committee, keep a firm grasp of the correct political orientation of the work of the NPC, resolutely implement the central leadership's major decisions and arrangements, stress politics, keep the larger picture in mind, and maintain discipline. We will forge close ties with the people, carry out thorough investigations and studies, hold lectures on special topics, strengthen our sense of responsibility and mission in performing our duties in accordance with the law, and do all our work more enthusiastically. We will carry out a series of activities to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the current Constitution and conscientiously review our positive experiences and practices in upholding and improving the system of people's congresses and successfully carrying out the work of the NPC under the new circumstances. We will continue to strengthen contacts with local people's congresses and work with them in developing socialist democracy and the socialist democratic legal system, and we will further improve the competency of employees of NPC bodies. (Xinhua) ■



The picture shows the container wharf in Qingdao, Shandong Province. On December 7, 2011, The Information Office of the State Council issued a white paper on its foreign trade, claiming China has become the No. 1 exporter and No.2 importer for the past two years. CFP



The 4th plenary meeting of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC convenes on March 11 in Beijing. *Liu Jiansheng*

The strength of responsibility

—An overview of reports deliberated in the Fifth Session of the Eleventh NPC

On the morning of March 5, deputies to the National People's Congress (NPC) from across China, representing the 56 ethnic groups of the nation, arrived at the Tiananmen Square and walked towards the Great Hall of the People with joy and confidence to attend the 5th Session of the 11th NPC.

The session lasted for nine and a half days, during which almost 3,000 NPC deputies, shouldering the great trust by people and with a high degree of responsibility and a sense of historical mission as masters of the nation, conscientiously fulfilled the duties entrusted by the Constitution and laws and actively deliberated the work reports by the NPC Standing Committee, the government and the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate.

Everywhere in the Hall was filled with warm atmosphere and deputies eagerly expressed their feelings.

Sticking to the right direction and performing duties according to law

Deliberating the work report of the NPC Standing Committee is an important agenda of the annual session of the top legislature.

During the session, deputies conscientiously deliberated the report by Wu Bangguo, Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee.

The quality of legislation enhanced continuously

After the legislative target of the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics has been met on time, it is especially important and pressing to amend and improve current laws.

Members of Anhui Delegation unanimously complemented the highest organ of State power for its focus on enhancing legislative quality and scientific and democratic legislative style. Deputy Zhang Baoshun said that the NPC Standing Committee strives to improve the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics and works hard to make legislation more scientific and democratic, amend and improve important laws, and bring scientific harmony in the legal system, so that the legislative quality is enhanced and legislative mechanism improved, fostering a new environment for legislative work.

“In my view, the legislative process of the NPC Standing Committee has always been related closely to people’s concern,” said Deputy Qian Niansun. “For example, amending the Individual Income Tax Law concerns with the personal interests of every citizen, and amending the Law on the Prevention and Control of Occupational Diseases has won public opinion as it deals with the disease hazards caused by improper use of labor forces by entities.”

Qian was also impressed by the Standing Committee’s soliciting public opinions by disclosing the legislation and revision process of every law and inviting deputies to participate in the deliberation. “This process is not only conducive to increasing the legal awareness of the public, but helpful to introducing the law,” noted Qian.

According to Deputy Du Deyin, the legislative focus has been shifted from the administrative legislation to the laws protecting citizen’s fundamental rights and safeguarding social fairness and justice, which requires to readjust the work process led by government departments.

Du proposed to carry out investigation on project initiation, and suggested that the government submit the report of initiation and the people’s congress carry out the investigation and research to guide the entire process of law drafting and deliberation. At present, law drafting is to some extent disconnected with deliberation. Under the leadership of Party committees, the people’s congress and the government have jointly carried out post-legislation assessment and pre-legislation design, breaking the segmentation situation and promoting reforms to enhance legislative quality and effectiveness.

Deputy Li Zhaoling recommended to strengthen the legis-



NPC deputy Zhou Xiaoguang (left) briefs Zhao Linzhong (right), another deputy, her proposal on private fund-raising to be delivered to the annual session of the top legislature. Zhou said she has felt the responsibility and trust from the people toward a NPC deputy. *Ju Huanzong*

lative work in people’s well-being and relevant emerging sectors, so as to improve the preferential legislative protection for vulnerable groups and solve the key and difficult problems concerned by people through legislation.

Deputy Li Fucheng noted, while China’s legislative work is becoming enriched year by year, we need to pay attention that advanced legislative ideas and foreign experiences have to be in consistence with China’s historical stage of social development. Throughout the legislative process, the balance of all aspects of society has to be taken into account and the stability of law enforcement strengthened.

Oversight to ensure people’s well-being

Members of Hunan Delegation agreed that the NPC and its Standing Committee, keeping the overall work of the Party and government firmly in mind, have fulfilled duties according to law and scored new achievements in promoting sound and rapid development of economy and ensuring and protecting people’s well-being. This has guaranteed to get the Twelfth Five-Year Plan off to a good start.

Deputy Zhou Qiang said, the report stresses that we stick firmly to the political development path of socialism with Chinese characteristics and give further play to the characteristics and advantages of the system of people’s congresses. Zhou emphasized that Hunan provincial government understand the essence of the report and work hard to advance the construction of rule of law in Hunan.

Deputy Li Jiang gave full credit to the oversight work of the NPC Standing Committee and recognized that “the oversight work of the NPC follows accurately and closely to the important issues of economic and social development, paying close attention to people’s well-being.” Li further suggested that the NPC and its Standing Committee strengthen the oversight on the use of financial surplus revenues.

According to Deputy Xie Yong, the government has invested a large amount of money into science, education, culture and people’s well-being, what about the effect? Xie stressed



March in Beijing makes people feel relaxed and delighted, and people are full of vitality and ready to deepen reform in such a spring time.

that the government has to pay special attention to the effect of the money used for people's well-being, and, at the same time, give full play to the internal oversight forces, such as the people's congresses, to grasp the major channel for oversight and the right to speak, therefore effectively guiding public opinions.

According to Xiang Pinghua, a permanent oversight mechanism must be established for those closely related to people's well-being, including prices of houses, goods and medicines. Deputy Wu Zhengyou also agreed that the NPC and its Standing Committee should focus on the hot and difficult issues of general concern and the key issues of Party and government work, and continue to conduct special inquiries on educational and medical reforms.

Focusing on the overall situation and responding to social concerns

Deputy Guo Shengkun from Guangxi Delegation highly appreciated the work report of the NPC Standing Committee and believed that it meets the requirements of the Outlook on Scientific Development and building a harmonious society, providing a guidance to the work of local people's congresses.

"Over the past year, the NPC Standing Committee did a lot of effective work in legislation, oversight, foreign relations and self-improvement, and made efforts to give full play to the role of deputies. I'm very satisfied with and in favor of the report," said Deputy Pan Xuehong, who was glad that the amendment to the Criminal Procedure Law had absorbed opinions and suggestions by deputies.

According to Deputy Zhou Jian, "people's congresses are getting more and more focused on the overall situation and give full play to deputies in managing and participating in State affairs. In particular, people's opinions were considered before amending the Individual Income Tax Law."

Deputy Chen Qiuhua suggested the NPC continue to strengthen oversight, urging and ensuring the financial education expenditure accounting for 4 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and enhancing the equalization of education.

Deputy Luo Dianlong was glad that the NPC Standing Committee attaches great importance to promoting judicial justice and social stability. He called on all the deputies to accept oversight by people's congresses more consciously to ensure strict and just law enforcement.

Keeping up with the times

"As Chairman Wu said in his report, we will constantly promote improvement and development of the system of

people's congresses and actively yet prudently carry out the innovation of the work of people's congresses," indicated Deputy Bai Suning from Jiangsu, who believed that the system of people's congresses should keep up with the times so as to better realize the leadership by the Party in State affairs and achieve scientific and democratic governing according to law.

According to Bai, "for example, we have to make the legislation more scientific and democratic. After the establishment of the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics, there is still a long way to go for legislative work. We need to broaden the ways and channels for citizens to participate in legislative processes, widen and deepen legislative research and investigation, make legislative decision-making more scientific and democratic, and prevent and avoid departmental interest tendencies in legislation process, so as to promote social fairness and justice with good laws."

Deputy Chen Jiabao, Chairman of the Standing Committee of Nanjing People's Congress, recognized that the inspections on law enforcement and special inquiries by the NPC Standing Committee follow closely to people's well-being and respond to people's concerns, reflecting the essence of the system of people's congresses. Particularly the special inquiry is the first of its kind, like a single spark starting a prairie fire, and it has played a guiding and innovative role in strengthening the effect of oversight by people's congresses.

A new wave of reforms

March in Beijing makes people feel relaxed and delighted, and people are full of vitality and ready to deepen reform in such a spring time.

"Reform and opening up are the right choice we made for China's destiny and future. We must respect the people's creativity; boldly explore new ways; continue to promote all reforms, including the reform of China's economic and political systems, with greater resolve and courage; and solve complex issues in development in line with the requirements of the Scientific Outlook on Development", said Premier Wen Jiabao when delivering a report on the government at the 5th Session of the 11th National People's Congress. Wen called for deepening reform and the deputies responded freshly and lively.

A solid foundation for real economy

How to develop Chinese economy when domestic and international market competitions are becoming increasingly severe? This year's government report suggests to vigorously develop real economy, which becomes one of the hot topics for Fujian Delegation.

In recent years, there has been a tendency of "shifting from real to virtual" in industrial economy.

Deputy Ouyang Yuanhe believed that real economy is the engine of national economy, and the target of making progress while maintaining stability will only be met when the real economy is in normal and consistent development. He also suggested the government improve relevant policies and

measures to further liberalize market access and help the real economy grow through fully using fiscal and monetary regulatory measures.

Private small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), for their sensitive nose for the market, are often regarded as the direction of development of real economy. Some deputies thought that the SMEs are over-burdened with high costs of interest rate, tax rate and rent payment, leading to a hollow real economy.

“During its transition from planned economy to market economy, China has made a significant achievement to make the most basic cells of economic and social activities have vitality and survive,” said Chen Zhili, Vice Chairwoman of the NPC Standing Committee, stressing to create an easy atmosphere for the development of SMEs, especially small and macro enterprises.

Government spending increased in people's wellbeing

“In the past, people said the most beautiful buildings were temples, but now it is different: The most beautiful ones are school buildings,” said Deputy Qiao Zhengxiao, Party Secretary of Qinghai University. Qiao was happy that the government has attached growing importance to education and increased educational investment to gradually improve the schooling conditions and facilities, bringing enthusiasm to the frontline educators. He recalled that the annual research funding for the university 10 years ago was less than 1.6 million yuan while now the figure is almost 100 million.

Deputy Luo Huining, Governor of Qinghai, attributed the achievements of reform and modernization to the Party and government's orientation to serve the people.

Deputy Zhang Shoucheng, Director of Qinghai Development and Reform Commission, said the government declares to promote the development and reform of medical and healthcare services this year, move faster to improve the medical insurance system covering the whole population, consolidate and expand the coverage of basic medical insurance, and enhance our capability to provide and manage basic medical services, pointing out the direction for deepening the reform of medical and health system.

According to Zhang, with the strong support from relevant government departments, Qinghai has completed the fundamental task of finishing the medical reform in three years, enhancing the vitality of medical institutions, so that people have enjoyed the benefits of reform and development.

Agriculture, rural areas and farmers are the most important work

“According to the new poverty line of 2,300 yuan, there are more than 13 million people in poverty in Gansu Province, accounting for 80 percent of the total rural population. And what's more, these people are living in mountainous areas that are often hit by natural disasters, such as winds, storms, droughts and hails. We are facing with a severe situation in poverty alleviation,” said Deputy Wang Sanyun, Party Secretary of CPC Gansu Committee, calling on to stick to

Private small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), for their sensitive nose for the market, are often regarded as the direction of development of real economy.

improving people's well-being and spare no effort to increase people's income so as to make more breakthroughs in promoting people's living standard.

Deputy Li Jianhua, Vice Governor of Gansu Province, said the central government spending on agriculture, rural areas and farmers this year has increased from last year's one trillion yuan to more than 1.2 trillion yuan, strengthened subsidy policy for agricultural products and increased subsidies for agricultural development, and adopted area development policy in poverty alleviation. After several years of hard work, Gansu has increased the average rural income to 3,909 yuan, with an annual increase of 13.8 percent, which could not be imagined before. It is possible to see a 15 percent increase in rural income this year.

Reforming the government

Deputy Zhu Xiaodan, Governor of Guangdong Province, said when deliberating the government work report that Guangdong's development benefits from reforms and we must firmly stick to reforms. “I believe the most important reform is the governmental reform, which is, as Premier Wen has pointed out, further transforming government functions, balancing the relationships between government and the market and between government and the society,” indicated Zhu, while at the same time disclosing the disadvantages of administrative approval system, “the excessive process of approval, together with the absence of restrictions and oversight on the power of approval, will definitely lead to corruptions, as some people conclude that some corruptions come from approving.” Zhu declared in front of members of Guangdong Delegation and the press that government departments and enterprises should form a joint force to advance and oversee the reform.

Deputy Wang Yang, Party Secretary of CPC Guangdong Committee, went on to say that since reform and opening up were introduced 30 years ago, market economy has fully developed in Guangdong and the common development of economic entities under diverse forms of ownership, representing different interests and orientations, has been achieved. Wang suggested that reform start from the ruling Party and the government. According to Wang, as long as the Party committees and governments at all levels represent the fundamental interests of the majority of people, the reform will take the most important steps forward.

In short, reform constitutes a way of thinking and wisdom to promote development and ensure stability. The



Chart: The key indices of China's economic development in 2012 CFP

deliberation on the government work report and recommendations on specific problems have illustrated the spirit and wisdom of reform. China will be faced with a new wave of reforms.

Safeguarding the legal dignity

People care most about the fair exercise of judicial power, for it decides the realization of social justice. On March 12, all the delegations deliberated the work reports by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate. Deputies expressed their views by pointing out problems and proposing suggestions.

Fairness is the soul of justice

Delegations of Hubei, Heilongjiang and Beijing focused on how to achieve judicial fairness and maintaining legal authority.

Deputy Lu Zhongmei with a law background believed that the judiciary should pay attention to leading the social order and improving judicial capacity and quality when dealing with specific cases, so as to respond to people's call for fairness and justices.

Deputy Wang Aiqun held the same view with Lu, suggesting that the judiciary not only stay in its own work when dealing with cases, but also consider the social impacts the cases would have, and disclose timely the real situation of relevant cases with a sense of social responsibility. He also proposed to strengthen the enforcement of courts since it represents the legal dignity.

Deputy Zheng Gongcheng called on for "firm determination to prevent crimes and punish corruptions". He also indicated that judicial fairness should become the lifelong faith of prosecutors and judges and serve as core indicator to evaluate occupational accomplishment of judicial officers. Zhang believed that judicial fairness wins public confidence at last, even though the prevailing party and the losing party both are not satisfied.

Deputy Ji Baocheng, former President of Renmin University of China, said it is obvious that the prosecution and judiciary have made outstanding contribution to the building of a harmonious society, however, people are paying special attention to judicial fairness. Among the core values of judicial work, including loyalty, service, fairness and integrity, fairness is the most important one.

Grassroots building matters

Grassroots work constitutes the foundation for the prosecution and judicial work. Deputy Wang Qiong from Liaoning Delegation suggested that the quality of prosecutors and judges in grassroots level should be improved and the Organic Laws of the People's Courts and the People's Procuratorates be amended as soon as possible to provide legal guarantee for grassroots building.

Deputy Yang Min proposed that there should be adequate personnel engaged in judicial work and their salaries be raised continuously to attract more talented people into judicial organs. Special attention should be paid to their conduct and competence.

Deputy Wang Jumei, Vice Chairperson of Henan People's Congress, put forward the following four suggestions: first, the courts and procuratorates should focus on the difficult issues people are concerned about and work hard to solve the most direct and realistic problems for them; second, they should further optimize judicial functions and powers and improve such working mechanism as error correction according to law to ensure judicial integrity and fairness; third, they should pay high attention to the difficulties in complaints and enforcement and explore to establish a long-term mechanism to continuously solve judicial problems; fourth, they should pay more attention to grassroots work and enhance the confidence of grassroots officers.

Strengthen judicial reforms and innovations

Deputies from Chongqing Delegation agreed that courts



NPC deputies from the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region attend a panel discussion to deliberate the government work report on March 5. *Lu Bo'an*

Legal mediation should be classified and civil cases should be resolved through more mediation.

and procuratorates should adhere to the principle of justice for the people and strengthen judicial reforms and innovations to set up the fair, just and transparent judicial idea, benefiting the people with the fruits of judicial reforms.

As Deputy Chen Wanzhi suggested, investigations on misjudged cases should be given importance to. On implementing the policy of combining punishment with leniency, punishment on the job-related crimes should be more severe. Legal mediation should be classified and civil cases should be resolved through more mediation.

Deputy Lu Shankun recommended to revise relevant regulations on court proceedings fees, effectively resolving the contradiction between more cases and inadequate staff and further improving the quality and efficiency of case handling.

Comply with the demand for social transformation

Deputies from Ningxia Delegation agreed that the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate have conscientiously fulfilled their duties and responsibilities entrusted by the Constitution and laws while adapting to the new requirements brought by the formation of the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics and taken the initiative to carry out their work. They have

deepened the work of resolving social conflicts, innovating social management and achieving judicial fairness and cracked down on various criminal activities according to law, scoring progresses in all the work and making significant contributions to the country's economic development, social stability and people's well-being especially the legal construction.

In the current situation where social transformation is speeding up, various conflicts are intertwined, and the requirements for maintaining social stability and resolving social conflicts are getting much higher, the NPC deputies are expecting more from the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate. Deputy Zhang Yi suggested that they should actively invent new measures to resolve the difficulties in law enforcement and resolutely safeguard the seriousness and authority of the law.

Deputy Wang Zhengwei recognized Zhang's suggestion and further proposed that the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate should go deep into the grassroots people and make efforts to resolve the problem of complaints and misjudged cases.

Make every effort to resolve the enforcement difficulties

Deputies from Yunnan Delegation stressed on law enforcement difficulties when deliberating the work reports by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate. Last year, the rate of enforced subjects of courts at all levels reached 76.3 percent, accounting for 2.4 percent compared with the same period of the previous year. Deputy Meng Sutie believed it is not easy to make such an achievement, yet he pointed out that there has been new growing number of cases that are not enforced. Therefore, he suggested that in full consideration of the person subjected to enforcement the court should further invent new methods of enforcement and explore such practicable measures as extension and suspension of execution, so as to reflect the legal justice and authority and protect the rights and interests of the parties concerned according to law.

"Either a verdict is a specific embodiment of the spirit of law or just a piece of waste paper depends on law enforcement." As Deputy He Jianwen pointed out, if a judgment can be executed, the authority of law will be safeguarded and the judicial credibility enhanced. Otherwise, it will be a trampling on the rule of law and lose trust by people. He suggested the court urge the parties concerned to take initiative to fulfill their obligations in judicial practices. (NPC) ■

Prospect of economic development: Government Work Report

By Chen Renze, Feng Hua, Bao Dan, Ding Ting and Yu Meng

**Adjusting the GDP growth rate to achieve
stable increase**

Keyword: 7.5 percent

**The principal matter is no longer about speed,
but quality and efficiency**

Premier Wen Jiabao proposed in the government work report that China sets its 2012 GDP growth target at 7.5 percent.

Yao Jingyuan, researcher of Counselor Office of the State Council, said that the growth target is made on a basis of

multiple international and domestic factors, which is in line with China's reality, and indicates the guideline of "steady progress".

Yao said that the world economy has not walked out of the shadow of the financial crisis, which results in lack of growth momentum with continuing pressure of decrease. Within the country, there are still problems of unbalanced and unsustainable economic development. A slow-down of the economy coexists with pressures of price hiking. Some companies are undergoing a difficult time of business. And the country is yet to fulfill its goal of energy saving and carbon emission reduction.

"In this situation, adjusting the economic growth rate ac-



According to the government work report, China sets its GDP growth target at 7.5 percent in 2012. Li Wen

cordingly will help stabilize prices and balance the economy,” Yao said.

However, slowing down does not mean the task of economic development gets any easier. By lowering the growth target, the government has signaled that China’s economy is no longer about speed, but quality and efficiency. The country will pay more attention to the change of development mode and restructuring, he said.

Yao is optimistic about China’s economic prospect. He said that China’s fiscal policy-stimulated economy is returning to a norm growth mode, with growing power from market forces.

In addition, China has successive bumper harvests and the CPI is relatively stable. The financial revenue, enterprises’ profits and foreign exchange reserves are continuously growing, together with maturing macroeconomic control methods.

“All these are significant foundations to deal with the crisis, which also leaves space for micro adjustment in the macroeconomic control,” Yao noted.

Keyword: expanding domestic demand

Expanding domestic demand, particularly consumption

The government work report pointed out that expanding domestic demand, especially consumption demand, is the essential foundation for a long-term and stable development of Chinese economy. It is also the key task of the government this year.

“The Asian financial crisis and the later world financial crisis offered a lesson for us. For a developing giant like China, the national economy has to be based more on its domestic demand. Only by doing so, can we become more competitive and better prepared for crisis,” said Yao.

For a long time, China’s economy has been boosted mainly by investment, while consumption takes only a small part. In the future, the main task will be to expand consumption and stabilize investment, so as to transform potential demand into real economic growth, Yao said.

He said it is not only necessary, but also possible, to boost economic growth through expanding domestic consumption.

“The country is still strategically going through a time of opportunities. The industrialization and urbanization are well on the way; opportunities are abound; people’s consumption power is growing rapidly; and there is great potential for further growth of domestic demand,” he said.

Yao noted that raising people’s incomes is the most important thing for domestic demand expansion. The growth



Workers with the Caofeidian Heavy Industry Equipment Co. Ltd., China Huadian Corporation burnish raw materials in Tangshan, Hebei Province on March 29. An industrial chain consisting of harbor logistics, steel and electricity, chemical industry, equipment and high-tech has taken shape at the Caofeidian Industrial Zone in Tangshan. Lu Haipeng

of consumption can only be based on reforms that largely raise the income of poorer people via multiple channels and increase the proportion of middle income group. In order to ensure a strong momentum of consumption growth, the government will also need to stabilize prices, improve the consumption environment and nurture new hot spot for consumers, he said.

Yao said it is also necessary to keep certain level of investment, as it is still an important force to keep stable economic growth. However, how the investment should be allocated and how to ensure the return of the investment need further optimization.

Keyword: real economy

Raising competitiveness of real economy, avoiding “virtual” economy

The government work report highlighted the development of real economy. Yao said this is a warning against some improper attempts in economic development.

“Real economy is the foundation of national economy. Only by consolidating the foundation, can the economy realize a stable and relative rapid development,” Yao said.

In recent years, there has been a tendency for some industries to turn to speculative businesses such as real estate and private loaning. It not only affected the healthy operation of the national economy and widened the wealth gap, but also increased financial and social risks.

Yao said some real-economy industries are facing heavy tax burdens and are difficult to get bank loans. He suggested that the government has to open up the market and use financial and currency measures to help the real economy expand.



Controlling prices and ensuring supply

Keyword: 4 percent

Ensuring supply is the key, keeping grain output above 550 billion kilograms

Chen Xiwen, deputy director of the office of the CPC Central Committee's Leading Group on Rural Work, said the supply and pricing of agricultural products are essential for all product prices in national economy. The urban dwellers' Engel coefficient was 36.3 percent last year, and rural residents 40.4 percent. As a result, the government work report said preventing food prices from rising too fast would be a key part of the work to stabilize consumer prices. Heads of the provinces and cities will be responsible for ensuring people have reasonably priced rice and vegetables to buy.

The government will further raise the minimum prices to purchase grains from farmers this year, with wheat and rice respectively up 7.4 yuan and 16 yuan per 50 kilograms. The government will also provide more subsidies for grain production, so as to reduce the cost for farmers. The government is planning to invest 1,228.7 billion yuan in agriculture this year, 186.8 billion more than last year.

Keyword: agricultural technology

Ensuring productivity

The government work report vowed to promote agricultural technology and innovation.

The country has limited supply of farmland and water

resources. It will no longer be sustainable to increase the agricultural output through applying more pesticide and fertilizer, Chen said. The government issued a notice this year to promote technological innovation in agriculture. A series of policies have been issued to encourage reform and enhance the enthusiasm of people in charge of promoting technology. Chen said the first thing the government needs to do is to raise the salaries of these people whose income levels have long been too low. Second, the agricultural technology promoting agencies need to be built in all villages and towns across the country this year.

The government has removed agricultural taxes and has been providing subsidies to agricultural production. Healthcare system has also been established to cover most rural residents. Infrastructure construction, especially irrigation projects, has been further strengthened. We are confident about better harvest and steady growth of farmers' income, Chen said.

Keyword: market circulation

Farm, market and dinner table

The government work report said the government will help increase production and supply, enhance market exchanges and lower cost, and intensify reforms in distribution channels.

Chen said fresh vegetables, meat, milk and eggs are closely related to people's lives. The medium and large cities need to keep reasonable areas of farmland to grow vegetables to make sure certain level of self supply capability, so as to prepare for emergency.



Farmers gather in the paddy rice at the Farm 856 in Heilongjiang Province on September 24, 2011. The province boasts to be the biggest producer of commodity grains in China. Wang Jianwei



Residents from the Hairun Zunpin Community in Fuzhou, Fujian Province purchase vegetables at a mobile store on September 26, 2011. Prices of the vegetables sold at the stores are 10-20 percent cheaper than those at marketplaces. *Zhang Bin*

The government needs to continue its support to wholesale markets, retail markets and community stores that offer reasonably priced farm products to urban residents. New policies need to be explored to ensure that fresh vegetables can be smoothly delivered to people's homes, raising the efficiency and lowering cost, and benefiting both the producers and consumers.

Restructuring the economy and raising quality

Keyword: industrial upgrade

Fostering and controlling at the same time, and boosting strategic new industries

In his government work report, Premier Wen said the key to solving imbalanced and unsustainable development problems lies in the change of development mode.

"There has to be fostering as well as controlling when adjusting the structure, which can bring better quality and efficiency, and make the development well-balanced and sustainable," said Wang Yiming, vice president of the Academy of Macroeconomic Research under the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC).

Wang said the core of China's economic problems lies in the long-due restructuring and change of development mode. As the economy begins to slow down, the hidden problems are starting to showing up, including increasing productivity surplus and growing operation difficulty for manufacturers. "Currently, we'll have to take chance of the shrinking demand and growing cost to force ourselves change our way of development and reconfigure our system. Of course, we'll do these things on the premise of ensuring a stable growth," Wang said.

Wang said the manufacturers are facing pressures from both supply and demand. For a considerable period of time, the demands from overseas market are likely to keep shrinking. On the supply side, China's population is getting older, and the cost of labor has been rapidly growing up. In this situation, the manufacturers have to try moving up along the

value chain to get a better standing.

"The pressures can transform into driving force. It may be difficult now, but it can also be a time of breakthrough," Wang said. The government work report said emerging strategic industries will be encouraged to develop properly, but blind expansion of solar power and wind power will be limited. These policies suggest that the government is both fostering and controlling certain industries, which will be a positive boost for industrial upgrading. Wang said the new industries have to develop their own core technology, and a number of leading enterprises and supporting systems need to be built up.

Keyword: energy saving and emission reduction

Optimizing energy pricing system, changing the restriction of energy resources into driving force of restructuring and industrial upgrading

The government work report said the government will push forward energy saving and emission reduction, while strengthening environmental protection.

"It's another important time for China's energy saving and emission reduction," Wang said. The country has been taking the most serious ever determination to cut emission and



Workers within the Xin Ao Group examine the illumination intensity at a microcystis greenhouse in Langfang, Hebei Province on March 12. *Yang Shiyao*



enhancing energy using efficiency in recent years, and has made significant progress. The energy consumption per unit of GDP and the elasticity coefficient of energy consumption have been falling considerably. However, the general energy consumption has reached record high, which means we are under even greater pressure of energy saving work.

“The most urgent task now is to transfer the restriction of energy resources into driving forces to upgrade our development mode,” Wang said. The government work report said optimizing pricing system is essential for energy saving and emission reduction. For a long time, the prices of energy resources can not reflect the real changes of supply and demand, the scarcity of resources and the cost of environment impact. At a time of continuing pressure of inflation and business difficulty, the government has to reform the pricing system and make it fit with the market mechanism.

Keyword: regional coordination

Transferring industries orderly, making equal public service a prime target

The government work report said the authorities will promote balanced development in various regions. The specialty of each region will be fostered, and equal public service will

be provided to ensure balanced and coordinated regional development.

Wang said the regional development pattern in recent years has seen great changes. In the past, the eastern areas developed faster than the western regions, now the western areas appear to be developing faster. However, the development in central and western areas is largely dependent on heavy government investment based on high consumption of energy and resources. This kind of high-speed development will leave huge holes for environment recovery work in the future.

Wang said the government needs to properly guide the transfer of industries in a reasonable and orderly fashion, making sure various balanced development and healthy co-ordination. He stressed that balanced regional development must make achieving equal public services the main target, not blind pursuit of GDP growth. The economic growth needs to be healthy and sustainable.

Taking measures to promoting employment

Keyword: priority to the employment

GDP growth slows down, while the employment target is still set high

More than 12.21 million new jobs were created in 2011, reaching the highest number since the government has such statistics, which means that our active employment policy carried out in last year has taken great effects,” said Mo Rong, deputy director of the labor science research institute under the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

He believed that the project of expanding employment plays an active role in promoting the smooth and healthy development of economy and people’s livelihood.

Premier Wen said in the government work report that the main target of the economic and social development this year is that the GDP will grow by 7.5 percent, more than 9 million new jobs will be created in towns and cities and the urban registered unemployment rate will be kept within 4.6 percent.

“The GDP growth has slowed down, but the employment target isn’t set lower. It encourages people to keep confident with current economic situation, and also proves that the Party and government pay high attention to the employment problem as a big issue relating to our nation’s development and well being,” he said.

The report also put forward that all-level governments must continue giving priority to the employment problem and carrying out more positive employment policy. The employment priority strategy is important for encouraging employment and benefiting people’s living.

“This policy is the objective requirement for us to expand the domestic demands and change the development style, which is consistent with the policy of sustainable development and economic transition,” Mo added.



Keyword: **employment pressure**

Employment will be partially affected if the GDP target is reduced by 0.5 percent

Mo Rong analyzed that we may face three problems while pursuing the employment target in 2012:

First is the uncertain economic situation's influence on employment. According to related statistics, every 1 percent change of GDP may affect 1 million people's employment, so without any other interference, GDP's downgrade will certainly affect some people's employment this year.

Second is the drop of expected export volume this year which decreases by 10 percent than last year. Nearly 200,000 people's jobs may be affected on every 1 percent change of the export volume. In addition, the enterprises directly related with export business always concentrate on the labor-intensive industry, so it may bring burden for people's employment in rural area.

Thirdly, the development of small and micro enterprises will slow down. Influenced both by the economic situation and expected export volume, those enterprises' development will be possibly affected, putting pressure for their employment policy.

Keyword: **policy support**

Favorable policy to create more jobs

"Pressure is there, but we have many ways to deal with it," Mo said.

For reaching the employment target this year, China should continue maintaining the policy direction of the macro economy, keeping sound momentum of economic development and driving the growth of employed people.

China will give priority to supporting new service industries, innovative high-tech enterprises, and small and micro businesses that employ large numbers of people so as to create more jobs. Furthermore, industrial policy should tilt to the labor-intensive enterprises as well.

On the other hand, we should attach importance to the employment of people with financial difficulties. The Ministry of Labor and Social Security plans to increase 200,000 jobs for those people this year after increasing 1 million jobs last year, which will take positive effect in promoting employment and people's livelihood.

"Report pointed out that besides increasing jobs, China should establish a unified and standardized labor market to protect employees' right," Mo noted.

He continued that it needs to constantly improving current policies related with the Labor Law and enhance the labor supervising system.

"In addition, we should push forward the real-name employment registration and social security system, which gives more guarantees to employees," he said.



Further pushing forward reform in key areas

Keyword: **structural tax cuts**

The project to replace business tax with a value-added tax (VAT) has greatest potential for tax deduction

The government work report proposes that efforts should be made to push forward reform to achieve new breakthroughs in key areas and in critical sectors, which refers to continue carrying out a proactive fiscal policy and deepening the reform of the fiscal and taxation system.

"This is a significant deployment made after comprehensively analyzing the economic situation at home and abroad," said Gao Peiyong, head of the Finance and Trade Economics Institute under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

He mentioned that what is worth expecting the most in the reform of fiscal and tax system is to keep on perfecting the structural tax deduction policy and increasing investments for improving people's livelihood.

"Last year's national fiscal revenue suggested that it's necessary and we have the ability to carry out the tax cut policy," Gao said.

Gao noted that as long as the finance can afford, the main object of the structural tax cuts should be locked to a VAT, VAT to replace the turnover tax has greatest space for implementing the tax cuts.

Under current existing taxation system, more than 70 percent tax is coming from the circulation tax, such as VAT, tax on consumption and business tax. Due to the high proportion of the circulation tax, China's taxation system presents the fea-



Job seekers flock into a large-scale job fair held in Shenyang, Liaoning Province on February 11. Pan Yulong

tures that enterprises pay the tax through the price channel.

Replacing business tax with VAT has effects in the tax cuts which can avoid repetitive taxation and reduce the tax burden.

"In addition, this VAT reform introduces two lower VAT rates, 11 percent and 6 percent, which means the average VAT tax burden has been reduced. We should promote the pilot program in Shanghai across the country," Gao said.

He added that it can be predicted that as the expansion of the VAT pilot program, all the other circulation taxes together with the VAT will face an important reform aiming to reduce tax burden and further improve the circulation tax system.

The saved space will be left for increasing direct taxes, so as to pave way for the taxation reform which aims at optimizing the taxation system, according to Gao.

KeyWord: **system of tax distribution**

Promoting the reform of county administrated by province fiscal system

The government work report pointed out that government will advance reform of the fiscal and taxation systems, better balance the distribution of fiscal resources between the central and local governments and between all levels of local governments, and better arouse the initiative of both the central and local governments.

"In order to improve the system of tax distribution, administrative power and financial authority must be unified and the adjustment of the two functions must be coordinated," Gao Peiyong said.

In the reform of county administrated by province fiscal

system, well constructed frame of the tax distribution system can help transfer payment to be optimized according to the system logic and normal transfer payment become more objective and scientific. While specific transfer payment should be controlled and reasonably merged.

Furthermore, transfer payment should arrive in time, enabling local government to coordinate it with other budgets.

"At the same time, we should improve the system of local tax, to entitle provincial level government with tax administration power. And then based on the match requirements of the financial authority and administrative power, we can better balance the distribution of fiscal resources between all levels of governments," he said.

During the course, we should improve the fiscal management system under the provincial level and the basic financial guarantee mechanism on the county level.

Keyword: **income distribution**

Placing a mechanism for regular salary increases and narrowing the income gap with tax adjustment

The report said government will deepen reform of the income distribution system. The government will ensure that income distribution is governed by proper standards, effectively protect lawful income, and resolutely ban illegal income. We will quickly reverse the trend of a widening income gap.

"To better divide the cake of social wealth and narrow the income gap are urgent problems which need immediate solution," Gao Peiyong said.

It requires that a proper balance should be struck between efficiency and equity in both primary distribution and redistribution, with particular emphasis on equity in redistribution.

He mentioned that we should strive to raise the proportion of individual income in national income, and raise the proportion of remuneration in the primary distribution.

In the area of primary distribution, we should improve the salary system and put in place a mechanism for regular salary increases. Besides steadily raising the minimum wage, we should create conditions to promote equal opportunities.

In addition, we should strictly standardize supervision of pay and bonuses for senior management in State-owned enterprises and financial institutions.

"The difficulty for government to push forward the income distribution reform lies in the reconstruction of the redistribution system," Gao said.

In the redistribution area, government can adjust the oversize gap between the rich and the poor by reforming the fiscal and taxation system. For example, to adjust the income distribution means that we should get more money from the rich and transfer it to the poor via the government. Therefore, the taxation reform should be directed to reduce the indirect tax the public bears but increase the direct tax to the rich, such as property tax and income tax. ■

New milestone in the development of rule of law

By Su Xianlong



NPC deputies are ready to vote on the draft amendment to the Criminal Procedure Law on March 14, when the 5th Session of the 11th NPC concluded at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. *Zhang Duo*

A procedural law related with human freedom, rights and life, was again in the spotlight, and adopted by the 5th Session of the 11th National People's Congress. Chen Guangzhong, honorary president of the Criminal Procedure Law Society pointed out, this is a new milestone in the development of the Criminal Procedure Law.

Scholars have such a judgment, because this amendment is not only another major change in the Chinese criminal jus-



tice and litigation systems on the basis of a major reform in 1996, but also a summary to deepening the reform of judicial system and working mechanism in recent years, adapting to the urgent need of punishing the crimes and strengthening the protection of the rights of citizens.

As the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Law is related to the configuration of public power and the protection of private rights, the “revision” accounted for much concern. The

In recent years, the NPC Standing Committee is ceaselessly and increasingly strengthening the promotion of the legislative democratization, and the open legislation has become normal.

famous German legal scholar and law philosopher Gustav Radbruch’s generalization about this is appropriate: “procedural law is as the mast top, the slightest movement in the hull will make a strong swinging.” Precisely because of importance of procedural justice in recent years, almost no one law changes so “upside down” and almost no modification of any other law so affecting the people.

The “revision” fully reflects the charm of a democratic legislature. Since the NPC Standing Committee announced the Criminal Procedure Law in the draft amendment by the end of August last year, 80953 points of view from all parties were received in a month. This “revision” responded positively to an urgent appeal for the reform of the criminal justice system in the social transition period and the period of contradiction. In recent years, the NPC Standing Committee is ceaselessly and increasingly strengthening the promotion of the legislative democratization, and the open legislation has become normal. This “revision” of democratization turns people from bystanders of the legislative activities into participants, giving widely popular basis to this procedural law amendment of vital interests to the public.

This “revision” fully demonstrates the essence of scientific legislation. In recent years, some representatives of the NPC and other interested parties are offering opinions and suggestions about amending the criminal procedure law. The central government deepening the reform of the judicial system and working mechanism requires on the further improving of the litigation system. The Law Committee of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress began the study and draft of the amendment of the Criminal Procedure Law since early 2009. A huge number of legal experts, legal practitioners all over the country have participated in the drafting and discussion of the draft. This rigorous scientific attitude of legislation, conducive to the formation of the positive interaction between the experts and legislative work agencies, helped the legislative body to receive more comprehensive, higher quality recommendations.

This “revision” fully reflecting the national characteristics, keeping pace with the times without going beyond the objective reality of this stage, truly reflecting China’s current level of the rule of law, so that the constitutional principle of “respecting and safeguarding human rights” could be specific, is a lively practice of democratic and scientific legislation, and organic conjunction and crystallization of the people’s demands and the will of the State. ■

10 highlights in the revised Criminal Procedure Law

By Song Wei, Zhao Enuo, Ding Ding, Liu Weitao and Zhang Yang

On March 8, the draft amendment to China's Criminal Procedure Law was submitted to the national legislative session for review after second reading in the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC). On the morning of March 14, the NPC adopted the revision to the Criminal Procedure Law with 2,639 votes among nearly 3,000 deputies attending the 5th session of the 11th NPC.

The revision is to better embody the constitutional principle of respecting and protecting human rights. It specifically focuses on seven main aspects including evidence, compulsory measures, defense, investigation, trial procedure, execution and special procedures.



On March 14, the 5th Session of the 11th NPC approves the amendment to the Criminal Procedure Law, which was publicized after President Hu Jintao signed the No. 55 Order of the President. The amended Criminal Procedure Law will come into effect on January 1, 2013. CFP

Highlight the protection of fundamental human rights

The revision absorbed the suggestions from various social trades put forward in the early stage, among the adjustments and amendments; it is worth noting to add "the principle of protecting human rights" into the law.

Protecting human rights is a very important legal concept of the Constitution; the modification to the Criminal Procedure Law embodies this important concept, and well manages the relation between crime punishment and human rights protection. The revised law puts "the principle of protecting human rights" to the general provision, stresses the importance of safeguarding fundamental human rights in the criminal litigation procedure, and applies this principle to a number of regulations.

These regulations will prevent and curb the occurrence of forced confession, protect innocent people from criminal liability, and guarantee the jurisdiction right of people.

Strict restriction to the use of "no notification" clause

Objectively, compulsory measures will limit the personal freedom of people, notifying the family members is to protect the legitimate rights of the criminal suspects, embodies the important content of human right protection in the criminal proceedings. The revised law removed the circumstance that not to inform suspects' relatives if such notification may hinder an investigation, added the provision to inform suspects' relatives when a monitoring dwelling place is appointed. It strictly narrows the circumstances of not informing relatives, and stipulates that suspects' relatives should be immediately notified when the hindrance no longer exists. The revision is a concrete manifestation of protecting human right, is a significant progress in the criminal law legislation, and balances the contradiction between "family notification" and "investi-



gation requirement”.

For the suspects suspected of threatening national security, or committing terrorism, when the evidences are still not clear, the investigation needs to be kept secret; the notification may actually hinder the investigation. Therefore, the revision stipulates such circumstance of not to inform relatives of suspects.

The revised law provides that, unless the notification is not possible, the family or the relatives of the detained suspects shall be notified.

Early intervention of defense lawyers

The revised Criminal Procedure Law allows the suspect to appoint a defender from the investigation stage. While the current law provides that, the suspect can only get legal assistance from appointed lawyer. “Provide legal assistance” is quite different from “Defender”. The provision for the suspect to appoint a defender from the investigation stage indeed push forward the time from the procuratorate stage, as specified in current law, to the investigation stage. It strengthens the rights of the accused and the suspect, enhances the antagonism of the prosecutor and the defender, and provides a legal basis for the lawyers to play a role in the legal proceedings.

The revision limits 3 cases that the lawyer should be approved to meet the suspect: in circumstances where crimes involve threats to national security or terrorism or serious corruption. It explicitly cites the condition where the lawyer should apply approval, and enhances the operability in the legal practice. The revision helps the Public Security and procuratorial organs to adjust the focus of investigation, convert from “confession to evidence” into “evidence to confession”, thus improves the detection proficiency.

Lawyers no longer have “Three Difficulties”

The revised law absorbed the achievement in the revised “Lawyers Law”, the inconsistencies between the Lawyers Law and the current Criminal Procedure Law in the implementation process has been reconciled, which better protects the professional rights of lawyers and reflects the legal spirit of human rights protection.

In legal practice, as there’s no relevant provision, the lawyers are often rejected to meet the suspect because the investigative organ regards the case as “involving State secret”.

The revised law stipulate: “Where a defense attorney holds a practicing license, law firm certificate and letter of attorney or an official legal aid letter and requests to meet with a detained criminal suspect or defendant, the detention facility should arrange such a meeting promptly and no later than within 48 hours. The meeting between the defense attorney and the suspect or the defendant is not to be monitored.” These regulations are helpful to solve the problems that lawyers usually encounter in criminal proceedings: the difficulty to meet the suspect, the difficulty to access field materials of the case, the difficulty to collect and subpoena evidences.

The summary procedure applies to “More cases”

The revision to summary procedure focuses on three main aspects.

Firstly, the application scope of summary procedure has been expanded, from “cases of public prosecution where the defendants may be lawfully sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not more than three years, criminal detention, public surveillance or punished with fines exclusively” to “cases that fall within the jurisdiction of a basic-level people’s court, and the following conditions are met: 1. The facts of a case are clear and sufficient evidence exists; 2. The defendant confesses to the crimes he committed and does not object to the criminal facts charged; 3. The defendant agrees to the use of a summary procedure.” This change will be of positive significance to fully exploit the judicial resources and improve the efficiency of the proceedings.

Secondly, the defendant is entitled to choose whether the summary procedure is to be used. It gives more respect to the choices of the parties, is good for the progress of the court proceedings.

Thirdly, “The people’s prosecutor’s office should assign members to attend court in public prosecution cases where summary trial procedure is applied.” It raises new requirement for the work of the procuratorial organs.

Carefully manage the criminal reconciliation

In the past, criminal reconciliation only applies to case of private prosecution; there is no reconcile procedure for public prosecution cases. The revised law includes “cases of a crime caused by a civil dispute and suspected of property violation or infringing upon personal rights and the democratic rights, and for which imprisonment of less than three years may be passed” to the reconciliation procedure of specific public prosecution cases. The application scope is limited to a small range, but it is important to set the procedure with caution. The incorporation of the provision into the revised law will also be helpful to enhance the implementation of the judgment, and guarantee the rights of victims.

In practice, some of the defendants do not want to perform, or try to evade the collateral civil execution by concealing the property or through other means, which makes the interest of the victims hard to realize. For criminal reconciliation, the victim and the offender voluntarily reach a settlement; the offender takes the initiative to compensate the victim, it thus overcomes the difficulty of implementation in the legal practice. In addition, the criminal reconciliation can ensure the victim to obtain the compensation in time, at the same time; it will save litigation costs and lawyer fees for the parties.

Special protection to witness

The current Criminal Procedure Law lacks effective witness protection system, resulting in low testify rate on court,



A court hearing at the Hefei Intermediate People's Court in Anhui Province on March 20. CFP

which has serious impact on the investigation of criminal cases. If the mass majority “keep silent” to avoid high risk, the evidence mechanism will be influenced, thus endanger the course of justice and social order. The revised law improves the system of witness’ testimony at court and clarifies the range of testimony and measures of witness protection.

The revised law provides, “in cases involving crimes endangering State security, crimes of terrorism, organized crimes with characters of the underworld and drug-related crimes, etc., the personal safety of a witness or victim or their close relatives is at risk because of his testimony in a trial, the people’s court, people’s prosecutor’s office and public security authority should take any or several protection measures.” At the same time, the forensic examiner is also taken into the protection range, the revised law adds, “Where the people’s court, the people’s prosecutor’s office, or the public security authority takes protection measures according to law, relevant entities and individuals should provide cooperation.” The aforementioned provisions provide special witness protection from the legal level, will dispel the various concerns of the witness, improve the appearance rate of witness, and effectively solve the difficulty of witness appearing on court.

Illegal evidences will be excluded

When Criminal Procedure Law was revised in 1996, article 43 clearly stated: “It shall be strictly forbidden to extort confessions by torture and to collect evidence by threat, enticement, deceit or other unlawful means.” However, it doesn’t explicitly expel the legal effect of the illegal evidences, and is insufficient to prevent some judicial officers from acquiring evidence by illegal means either under the pressure of detection or for the sake of interests, as a result, some cases are mishandled, which stirs up strong social reaction, and seri-

ously damages the judicial credibility.

The “confession orientated” concept should be changed to prevent forced confession, illegal evidences should be excluded. The revised law provides, confessions and witness testimonies obtained through torture and extortion and other illegal means should be excluded. There exists “Confession Orientation”, “Confession First” and “Confession only” cases in current Criminal Procedure Law. If a conviction relies just on confession, it is not possible to strictly prohibit torture or extortion to obtain a confession. The Revised Law requires the relation between evidence and confession to be properly handled, and the provision that no person can be forced to testify against himself/herself might change the tendency of totally relying on confession while neglecting physical evidences.

Clarified scope of the court hearing in the second instance

The current Criminal Procedure Law doesn’t explicitly specify whether to hold a court hearing in second instance. To deal with the phenomenon that many cases do not hold court hearing in judicial practice, the revised law clearly defines the circumstances of court hearing in second instance, listed cases defendant objects to the facts found and cases appealed by a people’s prosecutor’s office, for which the court of second instance should form a judicial panel to hold a court hearing. On the other hand, the second instance court may send the case back to the first instance court due to the facts are unclear. When the case is sent to the second instance court again after retrial, it might be sent back for another retrial owing to the same reason. It may cause the detention period to be extended, and violate the rights of the parties, let alone make the case undecided after wasting a long time. The revision stipulates, the people’s court of second instance should only send back the case once, if the parties are not satisfied, the second instance court may not remand the case to the original people’s court for further trial.

Though the current Criminal Procedure Law demands the court of second instance may not increase the penalty of the defendant for the case appealed, in practice, there are disguised form of “appeal infliction”. The revised law adds provision as where a court of second instance remands a case to the original people’s court for a new trial, the original people’s court also may not increase the punishment of the defendant, except where new criminal facts are found and the people’s prosecutor’s office initiates supplementary prosecution. It will protect the defendant to exercise the right of appeal.

“Juvenile Delinquency” proceeding

The revised law adds separate proceeding for juvenile criminal cases, specifies the policy and principle and designs special programs in various nodes of proceedings. At the same time, it establishes conditional non-prosecution system and crime record sealing system to juveniles, which fully em-



bodies the lenient aspect of the “strict-and-lenient combined policy”. The law also provides that for juvenile commits light crime, where the records of a crime are sealed, they may not be disclosed unless they are required by a judicial authority or by a relevant organization that is conducting an inquiry in accordance with the regulations of the State.

The juvenile delinquency usually involves less subjective malice, the youth has not yet formed an antisocial personality, they can easily return to society after rebuilding their

characters. It requires the society to provide a relaxed environment and a room for sustainable development. The word of “criminal” will often be the shadow in their heart during the transformation process of the juvenile offenders, which makes it hard for them to realize the dream to back to school and back to work. The system to seal the record of juvenile defendant will play an active role to prevent them from committing crimes again. ■

Revisions of the Criminal Procedure Law

1979, the formulation of Criminal Procedure Law

When the “cultural revolution” (1966-76) came to an end, people hoped to regain the normal social order, and the focus of government shifted to the construction of socialist modernization. The first thing was to establish a law system to follow. Therefore, a number of laws were introduced.

To fight crimes and prevent the arbitrary arrest, detention, violations of people’s personal and democratic rights, the NPC started to draft the Criminal Procedure Law, and consequently, the Criminal Procedure Law and 6 other laws were approved by the Second Session of the Fifth NPC held on July 1, 1979.

In the initial draft of the Criminal Procedure Law, the main tasks were to “expose the crime, prove the crime and punish the crime”, and later were changed to “ensure accurate and timely ascertainment of facts of the crime, correctly apply the law to punish the criminals”. Besides, an important principle “to protect innocent people from criminal liability” was added.

Though the concept of “human right” was not known to many people, it was clearly reflected in the legislative process of the law: The handling of case “must be based on facts and law”; and the defendant may defend by himself, but he may also appoint a lawyer. Emphasis should be put on evidence and field research, not oral confession; evidences should be verified before they were used in trial...

1996, the first revision of Criminal Procedure Law

With the rapid development in politics, economy and culture, the increasing complexity of criminal crime and the change of legal environment, as well as the accumulated experiences and lessons learned in practice, required the modification of the Criminal Procedure Law.

On March 17, 1997, the Fourth Session of the Eighth NPC adopted the amendment to the Criminal Procedure Law and completed the “first revision” of this law.

The revision in 1996 boldly absorbed the advanced experiences and practices in China and abroad. It advanced towards human rights protection and improved justice: the compulsory measures were improved, the tramp collecting system was canceled; the procuratorial organs were no longer exempted from prosecution; the execution of death penalty was reformed; provisions were added to enhance the independence of judiciary organs to exercise the duty; “model of confrontation” was introduced, the first trial was reformed, the confrontation between the prosecution and the defense was strengthened, impartial arbitration principle for the judge was established...

The amendment in 1996 introduced important supplement to various aspects of the law including criminal compulsory measures, investigation means, defense rights of defendant, case filing, jurisdiction and court hearing. For example, it emphasized on the punishment of crimes but also paid attention to human right protection, and tried to balance their relationship. It aimed to keep the foothold on China’s national conditions and absorbed foreign practices.

2012, the second revision of Criminal Procedure Law

The society is in rapid transformation, the practices continue to develop, and the legislation keeps its progress.

In August 2011, the draft amendment to the Criminal Procedure Law was submitted to the 22nd Meeting of the Eleventh NPC Standing Committee for the first review. Later, the full text of the draft was published on NPC website to solicit public opinions. By the end of September, more than 80,000 pieces of opinions and suggestions were received. At the same time, the NPC Law Committee and NPC Legislative Affairs Commission organized discussions and investigations to collect opinions. These opinions and suggestions were integrated into the second draft of the amendment. In December 2011, the draft was submitted again to the 24th Meeting of the NPC Standing Committee for reconsideration.

On March 14, 2012, the Fifth Session of the Eleventh NPC adopted the latest revision to China’s Criminal Procedure Law. The highlight of this revision is to incorporate “respecting and protecting human rights” into the Criminal Procedure Law, and embodies the constitutional principle of respecting and protecting human rights in seven main aspects including evidence, compulsory measures, defense, investigation, trial procedure, execution and special procedures. The second revision of the Criminal Procedure Law marks an important milestone in the development history of China’s human rights.

Focusing on people's well-being and listening to people's voices

—A review on the legislations and revisions since the Fourth Session of the Eleventh NPC

By Mao Lei

Focusing on ensuring and improving people's well-being, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) formulated and revised a number of laws in accordance with social hot topics and people's rights and interests over the past year.

According to an official with the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee, the establishment of the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics represents a new starting point for China's legislative efforts. In 2011, the NPC Standing Committee fully understood the new challenges and requirements for the legislation posed by the changed situation and new tasks, continued to make legislation more scientific and democratic and enhanced the quality of legislation. Specifically, the Standing Committee has reviewed 24 draft laws, interpretations of laws and relevant legal issues, adopted 14 drafts and decided to submit 4 drafts for the deliberation by this Session.



Traffic police conduct a drink driving test at a toll gate of the Hangzhou-Ruili Expressway in Jiangxi Province. The revised Criminal Code and Road Traffic Safety Law came into effect on May 1, 2011. *Hu Guolin*

Focusing on people's well-being and voices

The amended Individual Income Tax Law came into force, and the draft amendments of Criminal Procedure Law and Civil Procedure Law were open for public opinions. Upon the formulation of the socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics in 2011, China has entered into a new stage of amending and improving laws. Experts believe that China has paid more attention to people's well-being and their opinions when drafting and revising laws, and call for more tolerance on game of interests during the research and modification stage, so that legislative bodies could hear different voices and promote fairness and justice.

In April 2011, the draft amendment of Road Traffic Safety Law was submitted to and adopted by the NPC Standing Committee, which stipulates that whoever drives a motor vehicle when he is drunk shall be revoked his motor vehicle driving license, and be subject to criminal liability according to law; and he shall not re-apply for a motor vehicle driving license within five years.

In June, the NPC Standing Committee deliberated and adopted the Administrative Compulsion Law, which, after 12 years of preparation, regulates in detail the administrative compulsory measures on the restriction of the personal freedom of citizens so as to avoid abuse of power.

In August, the draft amendment of Criminal Procedure Law was open for public opinions, representing the second overhaul in 15 years and attracting wide attention because of adding the item of respecting and protecting human rights and not forcing anyone to commit self-incrimination.

In October, the draft amendment of Civil Procedure Law was submitted to the NPC Standing Committee, in an attempt to improve the system where a party shall have the responsibility to provide evidence, establish the litigation system for small amount of money, strengthen to punish deadbeats, and prevent an enforcement notice from divulging secret information. In the same month, the NPC Standing Committee deliberated for the first time the draft bill on mental health. The draft law stipulates on re-examination, evaluation, supervision and assessment of mental disorder focusing on delivering, diagnosing and treating psychiatric patients. It regulates the voluntary hospitalization for those with a mental disorder, and those who hospitalize patients without a mental disorder will be held criminally responsible.

In December, the draft amendment of Budget Law was submitted to the NPC Standing Committee for deliberation. The amendment actively responds to the social concerns by adding that "all the revenues and expenditures of governments at all levels shall be included in the budget" and that "general transfer payments should be the major component of transfer payments", promoting a scientific, comprehensive and practicable budget and producing many new breakthroughs on the basis of the current law. In the same month, the NPC Standing Committee deliberated and voted to adopt the decision on amending the Law on the Prevention and Control of Occupational Diseases. The amended law identifies the duties and responsibilities of government



The NPC Standing Committee revises the Individual Income Tax Law on June 30, 2011, raising the threshold of individual income tax to 3,500 yuan per month. After its implementation of the law on September 1, 2011, about 60 million people are exempted individual income tax, which leads to a decline of 160 billion yuan of revenue levied on personal income tax. CFP

departments with regard to the prevention and control of occupational diseases, emphasizes the employer's responsibilities and strengthens to protect the rights and interests of employees.

Li Lin, Director of the Institute of Law of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, believed that China's legislation and revision of laws in current stage should be focused on "people's well-being while giving consideration to efficiency" and excessive focus on efficiency will influence the express of different opinions by social groups on draft bills. If some opinions are not reflected during the course of legislation and revision, potential conflicts will sooner or later come out during the law enforcement stage. At the same time, there should be a mechanism for the clean-up of laws and regulations.

The amendment to the Individual Income Tax Law ushers in the participation of the people

"In comprehensive consideration of views from all sectors, especially the social feedbacks, the NPC Standing Committee decided after full deliberation to raise the monthly tax exemption threshold from 3,000 yuan to 3,500 yuan, which represents another example of making legislation more scientific and democratic", according to a responsible person with the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee.

In April 2011, the draft amendment of Individual Income Tax Law was submitted for the first time to the NPC

Based on the pooled analysis, the legislative body reflected these opinions exactly.

Standing Committee for deliberation, proposing to raise the monthly tax exemption threshold from 2,000 yuan to 3,000 yuan. Amending the Individual Income Tax Law is a major measure to rationally readjust the distribution relations and touches upon the rights of people, therefore it is highly concerned by all sectors. On April 25, the General Office released the full text of the amendment for public opinion after the first deliberation. In the following one-month period, 237,684 pieces of opinions were collected. Meanwhile, written opinions were provided by relevant departments of central and local governments and some enterprises, institutions of higher education and research institutes. Discussion meetings were held to collect opinions directly from experts and representatives of the public. Based on the pooled analysis, the legislative body reflected these opinions exactly.

Overall, the majority of the public was in favor of amending the Individual Income Tax Law and proposed some opinions and suggestions, believing that it represents the central government's efforts to ensure and improve people's well-being. Some people expected that the second deliberation will further raise the monthly tax exemption threshold. On June 27, the draft amendment of the law was submitted to the NPC Standing Committee for second deliberation, keeping the 3,000 yuan as the monthly tax exemption threshold and changing the first grade of tax rate from 5 percent to 3 percent, so as to further reduce the tax burden for middle- and low-income tax payers.

During the group discussions of the NPC Standing Committee on the second deliberation of the amendment, there were generally three kinds of opinions: first, some members believed that the amendment combined the public opinions with China's tax status and national conditions and agreed to vote for the scheme where monthly tax exemption threshold is 3,000 yuan; second, some members disagreed that the monthly tax exemption threshold of 3,000 yuan had reflected the public opinion; another party proposed to conduct further research before voting in the next meeting.

The NPC Standing Committee has carried out a full study on all the opinions and an in-depth investigation on the public's strong voice to further raise the monthly tax exemption threshold and conscientiously modified the relevant stipulations in the draft amendment. On June 30, the draft amendment submitted for voting raised the monthly tax exemption threshold to 3,500 yuan.

Wu Bangguo, Chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, said in the closing meeting that the Standing Committee, in consideration of opinions from all sectors, actively communicated and coordinated with the State Council in a serious and responsible manner and further modified the draft

amendment after full deliberation and repeated studies.

Because of the reflection of opinions from all sectors, the decision on amending the Individual Income Tax Law was adopted smoothly: 134 votes in favor of the decision, 6 votes against and 11 votes in abstention. As a result, the monthly tax exemption threshold was raised from 2,000 yuan to 3,500 yuan, reducing about 60 million tax payers in China. The national finance will decrease 144 billion yuan after raising the monthly tax exemption threshold and readjusting the wage income tax rate bracket.

Over the past year, the NPC Standing Committee scored new achievements in making legislation more scientific and democratic, fully respecting the dominant position of the deputies to the people's congresses during the legislative processes, soliciting and studying the opinions and suggestions by the NPC deputies who have proposed motions when drafting bills, and inviting deputies to local people's congresses to the discussion meetings. During the process of drafting and amending laws, the Standing Committee has improved the methods of investigation and research, striving for an objective, exact and comprehensive understanding of the condition, and paid much attention to extension of the legislative work, checking on the quality of the legislation from the project source and evaluating the current laws and regulations to provide foundation for amending relevant laws.

Promoting a scientific harmony for the legal system

When summarizing the legislative features of the NPC and its Standing Committee, the official with the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee provides the following points:

Focusing on amending and improving the current laws. Last year, the NPC Standing Committee deliberated and voted to adopt 9 laws, among which 8 pieces were to amend and improve the current laws, accounting for 88.9 percent of total bills deliberated. This has fully demonstrated that more arduous efforts have to be made to amend and improve laws after the legal system was established.

Ensuring and improving legislation on people's well-being. During the legislative processes, the NPC Standing Committee has paid more attention to protecting the legitimate rights of the majority of people and ensuring and improving people's well-being through specific institutional designs.

Adapting to the requirements of economic and social development and focusing on playing the leading role by law in reform, development and stability.

Adapting to the requirement for ensuring the effective implementation of law and enhancing the scientific harmony in the legal system. During the process of formulating and amending laws, the Standing Committee paid more attention to the practicability and strived to be more target-oriented. It has maintained the national legal unity by timely revising relevant laws to guarantee the linking between laws. ■



CPC General Secretary Hu Jintao talks with NPC deputies and CPPCC members of ethnic minorities on March 10. Other top leaders, Wu Bangguo, Wen Jiabao, Jia Qinglin, Li Changchun, Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, He Guoqiang and Zhou Yongkang attended the tea party held for ethnic minority delegates attending the “Two Sessions” at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. *Ju Peng*

A leap forward of China’s democratic system

—A wider representation of the deputies to the Twelfth NPC

By Meng Na, Ye Qian and Liu Baosen

The draft decision on the number and election of the Deputies to the 12th National People’s Congress (NPC) was adopted by the 5th Session of the 11th NPC.

According to the Constitution and relevant laws, the term of office of the 11th NPC expires in March 2013, and prior to the expiration the election of the deputies to 12th NPC must be completed. Under the important principle of electing deputies to people’s congresses according to the same population proportion in urban and rural areas, equality has to be achieved between different people, regions and ethnic groups. Meanwhile, the proportion of grassroots deputies, especially front-line workers, farmers and professional and technical persons, will be increased in the NPC deputies, and more deputies of migrant workers will be elected and the number of deputies of Party and government officials will be reduced.

The election will be another great practice of people being masters of their own, playing a significant role to develop socialist democracy and politics and giving full play to the superiority of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

“Same proportion in urban and rural areas” is applied for the first time

As Li Jianguo, Vice Chairman and Secretary-General of the NPC Standing Committee, has pointed out when explaining the draft decision to the plenary session, the most significant feature of the election of the deputies to the 12th NPC is the application of the principle of same proportion in urban and rural areas.

The draft decision stipulates that the number of the deputies to the 12th NPC does not exceed 3,000, in which

2,000 are allocated according to population. The provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government calculate their respective numbers of deputies according to their populations, roughly one deputy representing 670,000 people in urban and rural areas. The principle of equal number of population represented by each deputy, whether urban or rural, will be implemented in the election.

From 1953, when the first Electoral Law was promulgated, to 1995, the number of people represented by each rural deputy is eight times the number of people represented by each urban deputy. The 1995 Electoral Law changed the ratio to 4:1.

With the acceleration of urbanization in China, the social structure has undergone profound changes. In 2009, the urban population accounted for 46.6 percent of the total population. Therefore, the Third Session of the 11th NPC amended the Electoral Law and declared to apply the important principle of equal number of population represented by each deputy, whether urban or rural.

From 8:1 to 4:1 and to 1:1, the principle of “equal right with the same vote” has been realized in the election in the organs of the State power.

Han Dayuan, President of Law School of Renmin University of China, believed that an important embodiment for people becoming masters of their own is the realization of equal right to vote. The amendment represents a great leap forward to the principle of equality in the election and political rights of rural population and promote the full implementation of the principle of equality stipulated in the Constitution.

More deputies from grassroots

According to Li Jianguo, deputies to people’s congresses represent widely and constitute the inner requirement of the system of people’s congresses, reflecting the socialist democracy.

The draft decision stipulates, “Among the deputies to the 12th NPC, the number of grassroots deputies, especially front-line workers, farmers and professional and technical persons, is more than that in the previous NPC, more deputies of migrant workers and fewer deputies of Party and government officials are elected than those in the proceeding NPC. Re-elected deputies account for certain percentage of the total.”

Besides, the draft decision regulates that



NPC deputies vote on the draft decision of the number and selection of the deputies to the 12th NPC on March 14, when the 5th Session of 11th NPC concluded in Beijing. CFP



The increase of grassroots deputies will make them closer to the people and many practical problems will be reflected to the national level for better settlement.

more women deputies are elected than the previous NPC.

The highest organ of State power is a collection of public opinions and a stage for expressing interests of all parties. It needs both leaders with rich political experiences, experts and scholars, and grassroots deputies who can provide grassroots facts.

According to Han, the increase of the proportion of grassroots deputies is conducive to improving the current deputy structure and fully reflecting grassroots realities and demands in the formulation processes of laws and policies. It conforms to future development trend of the system of people's congresses.

Han also believed that the wide representation of the NPC deputies has laid a solid foundation for coordinating the interests of all parties and seeking social consensus and will introduce a more democratic and scientific decision-making process.

Among the deputies to the 11th NPC, who were elected in January 2008, the number of government official deputies at provincial level was reduced substantially and the number of deputies for workers and grassroots farmers was increased significantly. Deputies for frontline workers doubled over the previous NPC and deputies for grassroots farmers increased by more than 70 percent.

In 2008, Hu Xiaoyan became the first NPC deputy for migrant workers. In her words, "the reason why I was able to be elected an NPC deputy is that the group of migrant workers who I represent is getting more and more attention."

As an NPC deputy, Hu has submitted almost 20 proposals and suggestions, involving the education of left-behind children, the entrance examination of migrant workers' children, and the arrears of wages of migrant workers.

Deputies for migrant workers were first elected in the 11th NPC and now there are three such deputies in Shanghai, Guangdong and Chongqing respectively. In recent years, the population of Chinese migrant workers has expanded steadily to about 250 million and become part and parcel of industrial workers.

Deputy Chang Chuande, Chairman of Board of Qingdao Port, holds the view that the increase of grassroots deputies will make them closer to the people and many practical problems will be reflected to the national level for better settlement.

Deputy Wang Yuancheng, who used to be a migrant worker and now is head of a training school for young migrant workers, suggested that training work should be strengthened and the capacity for performing duties by deputies enhanced. ■



NPC deputies from Gansu Province present corns to Premier Wen Jiabao after deliberating the work report of the government on March 6. *Zhou Rui*



Xu Chang, a 4-year-old child at Daihe Mining Kindergarten in Huaibei, Anhui Province, learns knowhow on the "Two Sessions" on March 5. *Shi Peng*



Hu Xiaoyan (right), a NPC deputy and migrant worker, takes note while attending a panel discussion on March 10. NPC deputies of Guangdong delegation deliberated the work report of NPC Standing Committee.

Wu Jun

“Two Sessions” trigger media war

As in previous years, prior to the opening of the Fifth Session of the 11th National People's Congress (NPC), a news war already started outside the venue.

Naturally, media reporters often seek opportunities to interview ministers in order to dig into some exclusive news from them. In addition to participating in the activities arranged by the NPC, including press conferences and meetings with the media, some experienced reporters come to the North Hall of the Great Hall of the People to “stop” ministers before the plenary session starts.

Since the North Hall is one of the major gateways to enter the Great Hall of the People, reporters can sometimes stop ministers here and occasionally get some news materials from them who are usually not easily interviewed. Therefore, in the past few years, the North Hall witnessed media wars each year.

With practical drills, the media are getting more and more experienced. About an hour before the meeting, many journalists and reporters arrived and prepared to occupy a good position. Many of them carried with small ladders and set up cameras and camcorders. The whole scene was very spectacular.

In fact, the reporters began to “stop” ministers to interview many years ago. At that time, reporters in the North Hall were allowed to do so, and all they had to do was to quickly find out the minister and interview them with speed and strength. It was not surprising for reporters to have their shoes trampled. But in recent years, as the number of

reporters covering the sessions increased largely, in order to ensure order and security of the venue, the News Group of the Session has established a dedicated news interview area in the North Hall, allowing only two representatives on behalf of all the reporters to invite ministers to the interview area to take a group interview.

While reporters began to wait there an hour before the opening of the ceremony, ministers arrived there half an hour before the opening. As members



Minister of Health Chen Zhu, who is also a member of CPPCC, meets the press on March 5, just before the opening of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Zhang Baoshan

of the CPPCC National Committee also entered into the meeting hall through the North Hall, it was not an easy thing for ministers to be found among so many people. When a minister was recognized, his or her name was yelled out and two reporters would be sent immediately to invite and lead him/her to the interview area.

Liu Tienan, Vice Minister of the National Development and Reform Commission and Director of National Energy Administration, was recognized by reporters shouting “Minister Liu”, two reporters accompanied him to the

microphone.

“Oil price” was among the greatest concerns of all media. “When will the oil prices be regulated by market?”

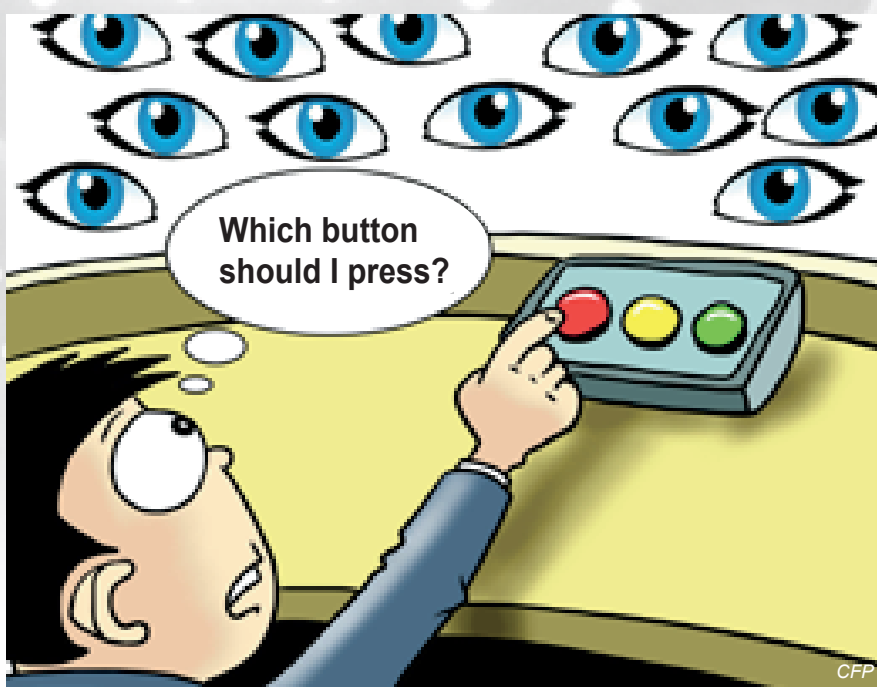
“The reform of China’s oil prices has never been stopped and is under way in accordance to market principles. We will speed up the regulation and reform in oil price mechanism. China’s energy security needs attention from the media. It always suffers from energy conversion efficiency, forms of energy conversion and orderly use of energy.” Reporters still asked, “People complained that oil price is still too high, especially compared with the international standard. It seems lagging behind.” Liu said. “As what I just said, the reform is in acceleration. Thank you.” He then quickly ran to the meeting room.

“People are concerned about this year’s credit situation; I would like to provide two figures to you.” Yang Kai-sheng, Member of the CPPCC and President of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, was also pulled by reporters to the microphone. He said that in January and February, the four major banks (Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, the Agricultural Bank of China, the Bank of China, and the Construction Bank of China) gave loans of over 20 billion yuan more than the same period last year. Take ICBC for example, in January and February, there was 15 billion yuan’s credit more than last year,” Yang said. “We will continue to support the effective demand of world economic development and deal with this year’s supply of credit seriously.”

Before the opening ceremony of the session, Chen Zhu, Minister of Health, Ma Jiantang, Minister of the National Bureau of Statistics, Guo Shuqing, Chairman of the China Securities Regulatory Commission, were all interviewed on health reform, commodity price, capital market and other issues on which the journalists’ attention was focused. After being interviewed, they quickly entered the meeting hall. (NPC) ■

Democracy in the voting machine

By Zhang Guo and Yuan Chunlin



On March 14, the draft amendment to Criminal Procedure Law was passed with 2,639 voting for, 160 against and 57 abstentions. While 2,856 of NPC deputies voted, 16 deputies didn't press the electronic voting button.

Among all the issues to be voted on, Deputy Luo Chongmin, head of the Education Department of Yunnan Province, cast altogether one negative vote, two abstentions and seven in favor. He voted against the budget report. He could see in the real time the respective numbers in favor of the

motion, opposition, abstention and failure to vote.

The electronic voting machines were first installed at the Great Hall of the People in the 1980s when the Sixth National People's Congress Standing Committee meetings were held. They now have become common in the sessions of NPC and CPPCC. NPC deputies can more easily exercise "the powers entrusted by people" by using the electronic voting machine.

According to Zheng Gongcheng, member of the NPC Standing Committee and professor of the Renmin University of China, electronic voting

machine is more consistent with the democratic process and shows more respect for the participant's right to choose compared with a show of hands. Therefore, the NPC has been using it to the present day.

During the session, Deputy Zhao Linzhong looked at the voting device. The three buttons on the voting machine have different colors: green means agreement, yellow abstention, and red opposition.

During the past 15 years, Zhao pressed green buttons for most times, and red ones for a few times. Yet he still remembers the first time when he sat in the Great Hall of the People as a deputy, he pressed the yellow button.

That was in the preparatory meeting before the opening of the session, and the agenda included a vote on the Presidium list of the Congress. He found that too many names were on the list with only one vote.

"I could not understand why the arrangement was made like this. If I disagreed with one of the candidates and agreed with the majority, then how could I press the button?" Zhao recalled.

Former deputy Wang Quanjie, professor of Yantai University, also remembered the three flashing buttons.

Before this year's sessions, Wang noticed while in many places the electronic voting machines are widely used in the local people's congress meetings, there are still some places using a show of hands and clapping, with the newly equipped electronic voting machines disassembled.

He hopes that the NPC can make some changes.

Since 2011, electronic voting machines have been installed in the standing committees of people's congress at provincial, city and county levels in Henan Province. Deputy Lu Zhangong, Party Secretary of the CPC Henan Committee and Chairman of Henan People's Congress Standing Committee, was responsible for the installation.

Lu said to his subordinates that voting machine was a small step forward in the work of the people's congress,

but a big step forward in promoting democracy.

“Democracy must fully reflect the will of deputies, and it does not matter how many votes you get. Fewer votes are also a wake-up call; therefore we should not hesitate in using voting machines for fear of losing votes,” Lu said.

Deputy Fan Yi, Vice Chairman of People’s Political Consultative Conference of Ningbo, said that in some places a show of hands is still being used in voting, and as a result, it is always “unanimously in favor”.

“In such an occasion, who dares to show a hand of opposition?” said Fan, believing that those who oppose will be under an extreme pressure with so many eyes fixing on them.

Wang Quanjie was a member of the People’s Political Consultative Conference of Yantai. Once, when the Conference voted on an issue of personnel, Wang, the only “alien”, raised his hand and showed his opposition when the host asked those against it to raise

hands. That was the only a “negative” vote in more than 40 years.

In 2003, Wang, a newly elected deputy to the 10th NPC, together with 33 other deputies, submitted a resolution to improve ways of election and voting. They were the first to propose that, since the NPC had used voting machines, local people’s congresses at all levels should abolish the way of voting by show of hands, acclamation and the practice of not crossing the ballot if in favor.

In 2005, the practice of not crossing the ballot if in favor was completely abolished in the Third Session of the 10th NPC. According to the new regulation, ballots that are not drawn are invalid.

Once the electronic voting system is switched on, the lights begin to flash. Fan still remembered his first voting experience in 2003: The light became dim if the button was pressed, but the other two lights were still flashing. Deputies were worried that others would know their positions with two

lights flashing and one dark.

Later, improvements were made in voting machine, that all the lights went dark with one press of any button.

When pressing the button, Zhao Linzhong sometimes thinks about the people reflecting problems to him, but he said, the thinking does not affect the choices of fingers. He “focuses on the overall situation” and exercise his duties as a deputy instead of an individual.

But he also recognized that most of the time he cast affirmative votes, yet it did not mean a 100-percent agreement. He might just feel that the government was 60 percent or 80 percent qualified. There is “no 100 percent” thing.

“I voted for you, but it doesn’t mean I’m 100 percent satisfied with you,” he said.

Every year, Fan cast some opposing votes and abstentions, and this year is no exception.

He was not worried about his vote being seen by others. He even expected someone would come communicate with him because of his negative vote. “I would tell him why I was against it.”

“They don’t understand that my negative votes have all the more reflected my loyalty,” Fan said.

Zhao Linzhong does not fear to be seen voting against something either. He even asked the reporter loudly, “it doesn’t matter to press the opposition button; otherwise there won’t be three buttons? They are not used for decoration.”

Therefore, Zhao presses the buttons in accordance to his own judgment. When pressing the green button, he gives green light to the State affair concerned; when pressing the red one, he shows a clear signal as an NPC deputy – like showing the red light to the a car driver. ■



NPC deputies press the button to vote on March 14, when the 5th Session of the 11th NPC concluded at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Sheng Jiapeng

Respect and fear: When power meets rights and interests



Zhang Ping (right), director of the National Development and Reform Commission, meets the press and picks up questions on economic trend and macro-economic control on March 5. Wang Peng

From Minister Zhang Ping of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) answering questions on “economic situation and macroeconomic regulation and control” on March 5, to five NPC deputies from health service attending the group interview on “how to make medical personnel play a dominant role” on March 14, during the short period of 10 days, the Press Center of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC arranged 50 press conferences, group interviews, network interviews and open group discussions for reporters and journalists from both home and abroad, covering almost all the hot topics of people’s concern, including housing, employment, income distri-

bution, medical reform and education fairness.

It can be said that the annual NPC session serves as a platform where people exercise their democratic rights and participate in politics in an orderly manner and channels people’s voices to government departments, responding to people’s opinions and cementing close ties between government and people. As a journalist who has covered the NPC sessions for four consecutive years, I find out that opinions and voices from different sectors and groups of people are reflected to responsible persons of government departments in forms of speeches, interviews, proposals and motions.

More importantly, an increasing

number of ministers apologize for having failed to meet people’s demands, highlighting a more effective oversight on the government by NPC deputies. It also symbolizes a more open attitude of government officials towards people and shows their respect and fear for people’s rights.

For example, in 2011 the commodity price increased 5.4 percent on the previous year, failing to meet the target of around 4 percent set at the beginning of the year. “As head of the department in charge of prices, I have to make self-criticism today,” apologized Zhang Ping to the nation on the press conference, promising to have confidence to control the consumer price index around 4 percent. Later, Zhou Shengxian, Minister of Environmental Protection, said when attending the meeting of Beijing Delegation as an observer, “I would like to take this opportunity to express a sense of guilt and review myself to all the deputies through Beijing Delegation”, declaring to “achieve the zero growth of nitrogen oxides”. Those in power apologize through the NPC session, demonstrating the importance of NPC deputies.

Meanwhile, during the NPC sessions, Party secretaries and governors of provinces who are also deputies to the NPC, are open to the press and have to respond to the hot topics of public concern, making mysterious things common and normal. This is the desensitization effect of the NPC session, bringing openness and transparency to China’s democratic and political activities.

For example, last year an official with the Kunming Development and Reform Commission was exposed indecent photos, and many journalists could not interview the parties concerned. During the NPC session, Li Jiheng, Governor of Yunnan Province, responded in this regard: the Party has always been strict with its members and a qualified official should be professionally capable as well as morally integrated, with the latter as the priority. This is undoubtedly the best way to select and appoint officials and dispel social mistrust.

On Shanghai Delegation’s open

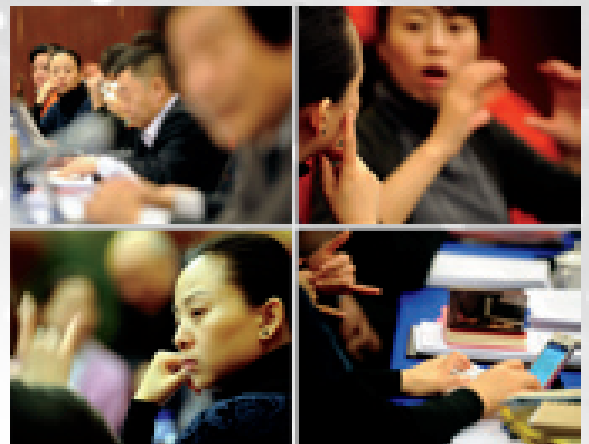
day to the press, some journalists asked Yu Zhengsheng, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Party Secretary of the CPC Shanghai Committee, how to supervise and smash “naked officials”, or those whose family members have all gone abroad, a most discussed problem by the public and deputies. Yu said, as a public official, he or she

must be “self-disciplined, make self-reflection and keep vigilant on corruption”. “If his wife and children have all gone abroad, it is not conducive for his exercise of rights and the public is not satisfied with this. The Party has released new restrictions in this regard.” As is known to the journalists covering Shanghai Delegation, Yu has responded for the second consecutive

year on the issue of “building a clean government”.

This proves that public official’s respect for deputy’s exercise of oversight have made them more and more sincere and responsible when they answer troublesome and sensitive questions, which illustrates their respect and fear for people’s rights and interests. (NPC) ■

“Two Sessions” sign language sends good signals



Tai Lihua, a deaf dancer and CPPCC member, listens to sign language when attending a group discussion on March 4. Yan Yan

This year was the first time that sign language interpretation was provided for the live broadcast of the annual sessions of China’s top legislature and political advisory body, a highly significant development for the government and broader society.

Manning the live broadcast of the “Two Sessions,” the major annual meetings of the National People’s Congress and the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, with a sign language interpreter is an effective way of ensuring citizens with disabilities are treated fairly in political affairs.

In China, it is stipulated by law that the disabled enjoy equal rights as other citizens in political, economic, cultural and social fields, as well as in family life. Citizens’ rights and dignity are legally protected.

Deploying sign language interpreta-

tion could effectively meet the demand of more than 20 million Chinese with hearing difficulties to watch the “Two Sessions” live and learn about State affairs.

Pairing sign language interpretation with the live broadcast of the “Two Sessions,” a major political event that usually draws wide attention, is also a signal of ever-increasing efforts by the Communist Party of China and the government to protect disabled rights. That can only encourage the entire society to respect and care for the disabled.

Moreover, the sign language provided in this high-profile case showcased China internationally as a country that places great value on the rights of the disabled, and takes vigorous measures to protect these interests.

China was among the first signatories of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and ratified the convention in 2008, earlier than many of its peers.

The convention provides that State parties shall take all appropriate measures, including by “recognizing and promoting the use of sign languages,” to ensure the disabled can exercise the freedom to “seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice.”

Therefore, this move at the “Two Sessions” shows that China is exerting itself to honor its obligations under the convention.

The move required both approval and cooperation from different government departments. It is innovation in government work with far-reaching significance. (Xinhua) ■

(Liu Huawen, an associate research fellow and assistant director of the Institute of International Law of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, contributed to this article.)



General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee and President Hu Jintao (middle) participates the panel discussion of Jiangsu delegation during the 5th Session of the 11th NPC on March 5. *Li Xueren*



NPC Standing Committee Chairman Wu Bangguo (second from left), who is also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, attends the panel discussion of Jilin delegation during the 5th Session of the 11th NPC on March 10. *Ma Zengke*



Premier Wen Jiabao (second from left), who is also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, participates the panel discussion of the Guangxi delegation during the 5th Session of the 11th NPC on March 9. *Liu Jiansheng*



Li Zhaoxing (right), spokesman of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC, answers questions raised by reporters who attended the first press conference during the annual "Two Sessions" on March 4.

Ma Zengke



Zhang Ping, minister of the National Development and Reform Commission, meets the press on March 5. He said he apologized that the price index in 2011 had increased 5.4 percent, surpassing the 4 percent target set the beginning of last year. Yang Bo



Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi meets the press and answers questions on China's foreign policies and relations on March 6. Sheng Jiapeng



Minister of Finance Xie Xuren greets reporters attending a press conference on March 6. Chief officials from the Ministry of Finance answered reporters' questions on current financial policies. Du Yang



Yin Weimin (middle), minister of the Human Resources and Social Security, together with vice minister Hu Xiaoli, answers reporters' queries on China's employment situation and social security development on March 7. CFP



Lang Sheng (right) and Li Shouwei, both are officials from the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee, take questions raised by reporters on the amendment to the Criminal Procedure Law on March 8. Wang Peng



Minister of Agriculture Han Changfu (right), together with Chief Economist of the Ministry of Agriculture Chen Mengshan, answers questions on China's endeavor to increase its grain production through scientific and technological innovations on March 9. Lu Xin



Governor of the People's Bank of China Zhou Xiaochuan (right), his vice-governors Hu Xiaolian, Liu Shiyu and Yi Gang, take questions on China's monetary policy and financial reform on March 12. Yang Bo



Entrepreneurs and NPC deputies Liu Mingzhong, Tan Xuguang, Yang Tianfu and Xiang Wenbo take reporters' questions on how to push forward the development of the real economy on March 12. Sheng Jiapeng



Premier Wen Jiabao meets the press at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on March 14. *Chen Jianli*



Minister of Commerce Chen Deming (middle) answers reporters' questions on China's foreign trade on March 7. He said a 10-percent increase is a reasonable target for China's foreign trade this year. *Li Xueshi*



NPC deputies from cultural sector Han Zaifen, Guo Jianhua, Liu Danli and Zheng Xiaoxing (from left to right) meet the press on March 10. Guo Jianhua, who has worked as a projectionist for 38 years in rural area, answers reporters' queries. *Lu Xin*



NPC deputies from the health sector Wang Zhengrong, Wei Lihui, Wang Jingcheng, Shen Jinjin and Ma Wenfang take questions on how to mobilize medical personnel to reform medical system on March 13. *CFP*



The Ningxia delegation opens its panel discussions to the press on March 6. *Wang Peng*



The Hong Kong delegation opens its plenary meeting to the press on March 6. *Jin Liwang*



The Tibetan delegation holds a plenary session at the Great Hall of the People on March 7, attracting a lot of reporters. *Sheng Jiapeng*



The Hunan delegation opens its panel discussions to the press on March 10. *Du Yang*



Shu Xiaomei, Sun Chengyi and Yu Yang (from left to right), who are NPC deputies from the medical sector in Guizhou Province, meet the press on March 8. *Li Xiaojian*



NPC deputies and CPPCC members of the physically disabled, who were attending the ongoing "Two Sessions" in Beijing, visit a special library built for the blind people on March 6. *Ding Xiaochun*



NPC deputy Chen Min (standing), who is also the vice-director of Guangdong Environmental Protection Department, said all the prefecture-level cities in Guangdong will check and publicize PM 2.5 gauge in 2014. Chen made the remarks when attending a panel discussion of the Guangdong delegation on March 5. *Ke Xiaojun*



Sichuan delegation holds a panel discussion on the government work report on March 5. NPC deputy Wu Zegang, who is also the governor of Aba prefecture in Sichuan Province, said he has a good command of Putonghua thanks to his diligence in daily study. *Liu Weibing*



NPC deputies from Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, who wear costumes of ethnic minorities, arrive in Beijing to attend the 5th Session of the 11th NPC on March 2. *Yang Bo*



Above: Shen Jilan (second from left), a senior NPC deputy from Shanxi Province, has a photo taken with young actresses attending a performance to celebrate the Women's Day on March 4. *Chen Jianli*



Right: NPC deputy Zhang Boli talks with another deputy Bao Jingling, who raised a proposal on the development of clean energy on March 4. Both Zhang and Bao are members of the Tianjin delegation, which was attending the 5th Session of the 11th NPC in Beijing. *Yue Yuewei*



Escorted by firefighters, NPC deputy Liu Lidan who is also an actress from the Hubei Opera and Dance Theatre steps into the Great Hall of the People on March 5, when the 5th Session of the 11th NPC kicked off. Liu broke her left foot's ligament during a performance a month ago. *Du Yang*



Left: Reporters surround Li Zhaoxing, who is the spokesman of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC, after a press conference on March 4 in Beijing. Li took questions on the conference agenda and NPC work. *Yang Bo*



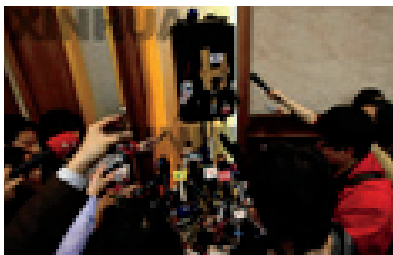
Reporters surround NPC deputy Zhang Chunxian, who is also the Party Secretary of Xinjiang, on March 7, when the Xinjiang delegation opened its panel discussion to the press. *CFP*



Left: A woman reporter interviews NPC deputy Li Liguao, who is also the minister of Civil Affairs, on March 11, when the 5th Session of the 11th NPC held the fourth plenary at the Great Hall of the People. *Du Yang*



A photographer takes a picture of a female reporter who is busy with writing a report at the Great Hall of the People. *CFP*



More than 150 reporters from home and abroad rush to interview the Guangdong delegation, which opened its plenary meeting to the press on March 5. *Jin Liwang*



Left: Tibetan reporters from Qinghai Province conduct interviews outside of the east gate of the Great Hall of the People.

Xie Sufang



Below: Reporters crowd into the Golden Hall of the Great Hall of the People to attend a press conference given by Premier Wen Jiabao on March 14. It was the last time that Wen met the press after the conclusion of the 11th NPC sessions. *Sheng Jiapeng*

Right: Simultaneous translation services are provided for NPC deputies of ethnic minorities at the opening ceremony of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC. *Wang Peng*



Announcers read the work report during the "Two Sessions". *Liao Pan*

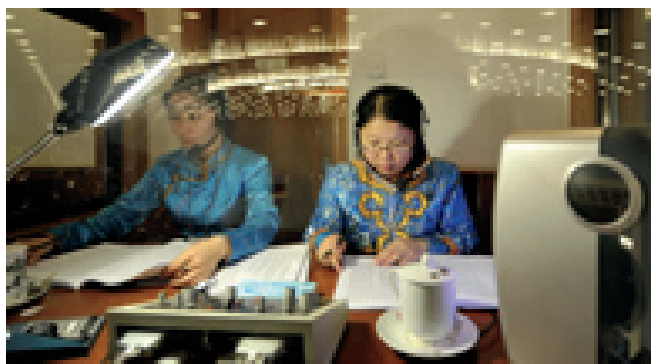


Above: Ritual girls working for hotels that accommodate the NPC deputies take photos on the Tiananmen Square. *Du Yang*

Right: Firefighters on duty
Lu Xin



Below: Security guards in charge of "Two Sessions" safety at the Great Hall of the People. *Yang Bo*



Right: Editors compile news bulletins of the on-going 5th Session of the 11th NPC on March 8. The news bulletins mainly cover deputies' suggestions, proposals and the meeting agenda. There are 124 news bulletin editors, who usually work into very late during the "Two Sessions".
Wang Jianhua



Staff members are busy with the compilation of proposals and suggestions put forward by the NPC deputies on March 9.
Wang Jianhua



Below: Military band play the national anthem which marked the conclusion of the 5th Session of the 11th NPC in Beijing. *Rao Airin*





Foreign diplomats sit in the "Two Sessions" at the Great Hall of the People. *Li Xueshi*



Foreign reporters cover the 5th Session of the 11th NPC in Beijing. More and More foreign reporters are interested in reporting the "Two Sessions", indicating China's top legislature is becoming more open and transparent.

NPC and CNSPHOTO



the beautiful

HAINAN SANYA

a romantic city

