

For first time, Chinese leader speaks of Communist Party 'legitimacy'

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Beijing: A top Chinese leader has spoken for the first time on the legitimacy of the Communist Party of China (CPC), a move that experts interpret as an important breakthrough in party discourse.

Wang Qishan, head of the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), said that the ruling party's mission is to fulfill its promise to the people and the way to realize it lies in strict discipline.

Wang made the remarks at a conference attended by more than 60 overseas politicians and scholars, including former South African president Thabo Mbeki and former Australian prime minister Kevin Rudd in the Great Hall of the People on Wednesday, reported Xinhua.

The meeting, called the 2015 dialogue between the Party and the world, kicked off on Tuesday in Beijing with the theme of Party discipline.

"The legitimacy of the ruling party is derived from history and is the choice of the people," Wang was quoted as saying.

Wang added that whether the government performed good deeds or not is determined by the people's attitudes - whether they are happy with, satisfied with and are willing to approve the moves.

The ruling party on behalf of the people serves the people and it should establish correct core values and insist on its actions, he said.

Analysts said that it is for the first time that a top Chinese leader has expounded on the legitimacy of the ruling party and called it an important breakthrough in party discourse.

"Legitimacy in this context is a political concept, referring to the validity of the source of the power. The basis of legitimacy is people's approval. Wang's statement affirmed the legitimacy of the Party while stressing its obligations and promises to the people," Wang Zhanyang, a professor with the Central Institute of Socialism, told the Global Times.

According to Wang Zhanyang, Chinese top leaders had previously avoided using the word as it was not an issue - legitimacy of the Party should not be questioned or denied.

Wang Qishan's reference is a breakthrough in China's political discourse and aims to maintain the continuity of the Party, said Wang Zhanyang, but quickly added that whether this term will be written in official statements remains unknown.

He added that former Chinese top leaders had already expressed similar ideas in different statements.

According to an article from WeChat account xxdaguo, managed by the People's Daily, Wang Qishan's statement at an international conference shows the confidence of the Party. "It also reflects the Party's rational recognition of its lasting political stability, its vigilance about its survival as well as its downfall," it said.

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