

## **Xi Jinping reappointed as China's president with no term limits**

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**Beijing:** Xi Jinping was reappointed on Saturday as China's president with no limit on the number of terms he can serve.

The National People's Congress, China's rubber-stamp legislature, also appointed close Xi ally Wang Qishan to the formerly ceremonial post of vice president.

Xi, 64, is considered the most powerful Chinese leader since Mao Zedong and last Sunday was given the right to continue in office indefinitely after the legislature scrapped term limits for the president and vice president.

Chinese officials defended the move saying it would bring the presidency in-line with Xi's other two main positions of head of the ruling Communist Party and commander of the armed forces.

Critics say the move overturning a push to institutionalise China's ruling practices dating from 1982 will likely lead to increased political repression and possible infighting among party factions seeking to promote their own candidates within the closed system.

Xi took office as president in 2013 and hasn't said how many additional five-year terms he intends to serve. State media has said the removal of term limits will not alter conditions for retirement or create a president in perpetuity, but has offered no details.

Xi is expected to expand his yearlong campaign against corruption within the party to include all state employees through the creation of a new National Supervisory Commission, while continuing to pursue a muscular foreign policy and policies to upgrade the slowing economy.

Economic growth and social stability have allowed Xi to amend the constitution and carry out other moves that once seemed highly contentious, said Kerry Brown, professor of Chinese Studies and director of the Lau China Institute at King's College, London.

"Really no one is going to shout and moan too much" because growth and stability are considered so important, Brown said on Friday in a talk to foreign media in Beijing.

- AP