

**Panel:** Leadership Transition in China (Grand Ballroom)

**Date/Time:** April 26, 2012 / 17:30-18:45

**Organizing Institution:** The Asan Institute for Policy Studies

**Talking Points for:** Kim Heungkyu  
Sungshin Women's University

In October of 2012, the 5th generation of Chinese leadership will emerge in the 18th Chinese Communist Party Congress unless unexpected situations occur. It is expected that seven of nine current members in the Central Committee's Politburo Standing Committee will retire from the committee. Only current PRC Vice President Xi Jinping(習近平) and Executive Vice-Premier Li Keqiang(李克強) are likely to stay in the committee. Xi is likely to be General Secretary of the CCP; Li Premier of the State Council. The current General Secretary of the CCP Hu Jintao may keep Chairmanship of the Central Military Commission for a few years as done by Jiang Zemin in 2002, while managing his control over the PLA.

However, due to the incident of Bo Xilai, it becomes more difficult at the present moment to predict exact new members than previously anticipated. To understand the formation of the new leadership, we must take into account a subtle combination of unwritten but customized norms, institutionalized rules, and negotiation and compromise in the efforts of balancing among factions. It may take time until the very moment before the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress holds. If consensus were not reached, the opening of the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress could be postponed.

The emerging generation of Chinese leadership is likely to face more daunting challenges in the areas of producing harmony and unity within the court politics of the CCP and social, economic, and political stabilities than leaders of previous generations. The new leaders of the 5<sup>th</sup> generation are likely to be more diverse in terms of their sociological and professional backgrounds, hard to draw unity and consensus. Given the current contexts after the Bo Xilai incident, the authority and influence of Xi Jinping are likely to be much weaker than his predecessors. He would certainly be beleaguered by Youth League faction (the so-called *Tuan Pai*). The law of 9-7-5-3-1 may work.

The loose coalition between princelings and Shanghai faction are torn apart in the middle of Bo Xilai incident, which also proves that the unity of princelings was not sturdy. As a result, the balance of the *Tuan Pai* and the loose coalition of princelings and Shanghai faction will certainly be changed in favor of the former at every level of power bases in the CCP. However, the final outcome is not likely to end up dictatorship of Hu Jintao, who leading the *Tuan Pai*. Instead, new balance of power within the *Tuan Pai* will emerge in check and balancing activities of the other remaining factions. In comparative perspectives, no leader can possess charisma and influence of former leaders in the 5<sup>th</sup> generation of leadership. The leaders must be much more vulnerable to social and nationalistic pressure. The constraints of the 5<sup>th</sup> generation of leadership must have tremendous implication to China's future foreign policy orientations.

\* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.

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