



XINHUA



Staff members from the supervisory commission and the CPC disciplinary inspection commission of Fuding City, southeast China's Fujian Province, hand over the file of a corruption case to a staff member of Fuding People's Procuratorate on July 25, 2018

# A Sweeping Victory

China's anti-corruption drive declared success  
By Wang Hairong

**S**ixty-year-old Zhang Huiguang used to live a glamorous life until it was shattered by her own greediness. The Beijing No.1 Intermediate Court recently sentenced her to 15 years in prison and a fine of 3.5 million yuan (\$522,220) for embezzlement and bribery.

The verdict was made public online in November 2018, and showed that she was convicted of embezzling 950,000 yuan (\$141,000) and accepting more than 8 million yuan (\$1.2 million) in bribes.

A creative park that lies in the alleys of the bustling Chegongzhuang neighborhood of west Beijing attests to her professional accomplishments during her tenure as the

head of the Beijing Municipal Office of the State-Owned Cultural Assets Supervision and Administration from 2012 to 2015.

As part of her high-end lifestyle, she frequented a beauty salon and reportedly spent approximately \$1,500 per month there, which was paid for by a certain company. With her help, this company was granted contracts to film tourism promotional programs between 2009 and 2012, when she served as the top leader of the Beijing Tourism Bureau, now part of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism.

Her lavish lifestyle ended abruptly in 2015 when she was placed under investigation by the Communist Party of China (CPC)

Beijing Commission for Discipline Inspection on charges of corruption.

Zhang is one of numerous corrupt officials punished by China's anti-graft campaign, which was recently declared a big success by President Xi Jinping, also General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee.

"We have secured a sweeping victory in the fight against corruption since the 18th CPC National Congress," he said on January 21 at the opening ceremony of a study session at the Party School of the CPC Central Committee.

## Firm resolve

Earlier in the month, Xi called for consolidating and developing further the sweeping victory in the fight against corruption while addressing the third plenary session of the 19th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) of the CPC.

"But the fight has not been thoroughly won," he said, noting that the anti-graft drive is a tough and prolonged battle, with more efforts in strictly governing the Party necessary.

China has vigorously ramped up its anti-corruption drive since 2012 when the 18th National Congress of the CPC was held. In December of that year, the CPC introduced the eight-point rules on austerity, urging officials to go to the grassroots to learn about real situations, reduce their pomp during visits and meetings, simplify documents, limit





Staff members of the CPC disciplinary inspection commission of Haian City in Jiangsu Province learn about the situation in a village on December 19, 2018, to uncover possible corruption related to poverty alleviation

**News.** It reported that since October 2017, when the 19th CPC National Congress convened, to the end of 2018, 77 cadres were investigated by the State Supervisory Committee and the CCDI, with 15 suspected criminals transferred to judicial bodies.

## Institutional reform

In addition to the anti-corruption initiatives, China has also made institutional reform to weed out corruption.

Supervisory commissions have been set up at all administrative levels to ensure that everyone exercising public power comes under supervision, including those who are not CPC members or civil servants but exercise public power. The commissions mainly handle cases of corruption, dereliction of duty and other duty-related crimes.

These commissions at provincial, prefectural and county levels were set up by February 2018. Last March, the NPC adopted amendments to the Constitution and passed the Supervision Law, establishing the national supervisory system. The National Supervisory Commission was inaugurated on March 23, 2018, becoming one of the highest-level state organs under the NPC, alongside the State Council, the Central Military Commission, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate.

As a result, the number of people under supervision increased by more than 10 million nationwide, said Liu Xiaomei, a research fellow with the Institute of International Law at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

In 2018, discipline inspection and supervisory commissions at various levels accepted 638,000 cases and punished 621,000 Party members, up 20.9 and 17.8 percent, respectively; both figures were a record high over the past 40 years, she said.

Moreover, the legal system has been strengthened to combat corruption. Liu said that last year, in addition to amending the Constitution and enacting the Supervision Law, several national laws and Party rules were promulgated or revised, including the Law of International Criminal Judicial Assistance, the Criminal Procedure Law, the CPC Regulations of Disciplinary Punishment, and the Rules on Supervision

and Enforcement of Party Discipline for Party Discipline Inspection Organs.

## Wide net

When Wang Junwen returned to China on January 15, he was not escorted by family members or friends, but by police officers.

Wang, suspected of duty-related crimes, surrendered himself to police and promised to return illicit gains to the country.

In recent years, China has launched operations codenamed Fox Hunt and Sky Net to track down corrupt officials and economic crimes suspects who have fled the country.

Ren Jianming, a professor with Beihang University in Beijing, said, "This sends a message that any corrupt person will be caught no matter where he hides, and illegal gains will be recovered no matter how they have been transferred abroad."

Information released by the CCDI showed that Wang once held posts such as a leader in the Hainan provincial economic cooperation department, the general manager of Hainan Textile Industry General Corp., and chairman of Huahai Co. He fled the country in September 2003. In the same year, the Hainan Provincial Procuratorate filed his case for investigation and in 2014 issued an arrest warrant.

Last August, the CCDI issued an announcement, urging fugitives suspected of duty-related crimes to turn themselves in before the deadline of December 31, 2018, in exchange for mitigation of punishment. Those who have effectively repaid victims' economic losses may get lighter punishment, while those committing relatively minor crimes may be exonerated.

According to the CCDI, during the allotted period, 165 fugitives surrendered, with the oldest being 79 years old and with the longest record of staying abroad for 23 years.

Meanwhile, the Sky Net operations have been carried out over four consecutive years. Official statistics show that during that period, more than 5,000 fugitives have been extradited from over 120 countries and regions, including 56 people on Interpol's Red Notice Wanted List. More than 10 billion yuan (\$1.49 billion) of illicit gains has also been retrieved. ■

overseas visits, reduce news coverage of themselves and exercise thriftiness.

The eight-point rules should be meticulously implemented and the "four undesirable work styles," namely, formalism, bureaucracy, hedonism and extravagance should be persistently corrected, said Premier Li Keqiang on March 5, while delivering the Report on the Work of the Government to the annual session of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislature.

He vowed that further efforts will be made to foster desirable Party work styles and build a clean and honest government so that officials don't dare to, are unable to and have no desire to commit corrupt acts.

Li urged governments at all levels to resolutely oppose formalism and bureaucracy, specifically, by reducing the number of meetings and cutting red tape so that cadres can devote their energies to solving practical problems. He set the goal for the State Council and organizations under it to slash the number of meetings and documents by at least one third in 2019.

In recent years, many high-ranking "tigers" and much more lower-ranking "flies" have been punished for corruption and other malpractices. Between 2012 and 2017, a total of 440 Party members and cadres at or above the ministerial level were investigated and the spread of corruption was effectively curbed, according to the Beijing-based *China Discipline Inspection and Supervision*