

Chinese PM calls for political reform

BBC ONLINE

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao has once again said China needs to carry out political reforms.

He said the economic achievements of the last 30 years could be lost without "institutional" changes.

The premier did not spell out exactly what reforms are necessary - and said they would have to be introduced gradually.

But his comments appear to put him out of step with more conservative colleagues.

Wen made his comments at an annual press conference held at the end of China's annual parliamentary session in Beijing.

When asked about political reform, he could have easily ducked the question.

But he said: "Without political restructuring, economic restructuring will not succeed and the achievements we have made in economic restructuring may be lost."

That seems to put him at odds with another senior leader, Wu Bangguo, who only last week ruled out the possibility of major political changes.



In a speech to the parliament, Wu said the economic achievements of the last few decades would, on the contrary, be lost if the system was changed too much.

There is though perhaps not as much distance between the two men as would first appear.

Chinese leaders often talk about making their political system more "democratic" and introducing reforms.

Most of the time they mean they want to improve the efficiency of the current system and make it more responsive to people's demands.

Wen added that change would have to come step by step - and under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, which has ruled China for more than 60 years.

He also said that there were no parallels between China and the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, countries that are currently going through political upheavals.

But Wen-who has made similar comments before-did seem to go further than he needed to go.

YEMEN UNREST 40 injured in fresh clashes

AFP, Sanaa

Almost 40 protesters were injured when police opened fire yesterday to disperse demonstrations in Yemen, a strategic US ally in the fight against Al-Qaeda, officials said.

The violence came after eight people were killed in weekend clashes with security forces, sparking condemnation and calls for restraint from the United Nations and Western powers.

Twenty people demanding the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, in power for 32 years, were injured when they tried to assault the government headquarters in Jawf, northeast of the capital Sanaa, an official said.

Security forces and pro-regime loyalists guarding the building opened fire. Two loyalists were injured by stones hurled by the protesters.

In Marib province, east of Sanaa, 17 protesters were injured in similar circumstances when security forces opened fire to prevent them storming the local government headquarters.

Some 40 people have been killed in political violence since unrest erupted in the deeply tribal country at the end of January, as pro-democracy revolts shook the Arab world.

In a speech to tens of thousands of people at Sanaa's stadium on Thursday, Saleh promised to protect protesters from violence and offered to hold a referendum on a new constitution which would devolve power to parliament.



PHOTO: AFP

Yemenis protest against the regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh after 32 years in power, in Sanaa yesterday, a day after witnesses said dozens of people were injured when police and loyalists of the ruling General People's Congress party attacked protesters occupying Sanaa's University Square with live gunfire and tear gas.

Hundreds pour in for Gaza 'unity' rally

AFP, Gaza City

A crowd of at least 1,500 Palestinian activists streamed into central Gaza City to rally for national unity yesterday, a day ahead of schedule.

The activists marched to the Square of the Unknown Soldier, and chanted "The people want to end the division," in reference to the bitter split between Gaza's Hamas rulers and the Fatah-dominated Palestinian Authority in the West Bank.

Many brought tents and mattresses, while others were setting up water stations, with the intention of remaining in the square overnight until the official start of the demonstration on Tuesday.

"We are starting our sit-in now," organiser Ahmad Arar told AFP.

Some activists said the decision to start the mass protests a day early was taken for fear the Hamas-run security forces would close off the square or block roads in a bid to prevent the planned rallies.

The March 15 demonstrations are scheduled to take place simultaneously in Ramallah and Gaza City in a campaign put together on Facebook by a loose coalition of young activists, who say they have no political affiliation.

Similar protests are also planned outside Palestinian delegations overseas, in a move inspired by the recent wave of uprisings in the Arab world, which brought down the regimes of Egypt and Tunisia.

Earlier yesterday, Hamas prime minister Ismail Haniya had ordered the interior ministry to let the rallies go ahead without interruption, his office said in a statement.

The premier, it said, "supports all the efforts by the young people and the factions which aims to end the division and protecting the... national unity of our people."

Haniya ordered the ministry to ensure the security forces "created an atmosphere which would let these public events succeed."

Since the outbreak of massive protests in Egypt, Hamas security forces have clamped down on numerous demonstrations. Last week, they detained 11 "unity" protesters and interrogated those believed to be behind the Facebook campaign.

North Sudan violating basic rights says UN envoy

AFP, Khartoum

The UN rights expert on Sudan accused the authorities yesterday of violating basic human freedoms, and called on them to charge or release all political detainees.

"In northern Sudan, fundamental rights and freedoms including the freedoms of expression, assembly and association continue to be violated by law enforcement authorities, in particular the National Security Service (NSS)," said Mohamed Chande Othman after an eight-day visit.

He said he was denied a request to meet the country's security chief to raise concerns about those violations, and about the detention without charge of opposition leaders, students and others.

"I call upon the government to release all those detained, including political detainees, or charge them with a recognisable offence and prosecute them in accordance with the law," Chande said.

36 Indian Maoists killed in encounter

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The police in central Indian state of Chhattisgarh yesterday claimed to have gunned down 30 Maoists in an encounter after an ambush by the extremists left three policemen dead and nine others injured.

Additional Director General (Naxal operations) Ram Niwas said a police team of 145 jawans was engaged in a search operation in the Chintalnaar area of Dantewada district when the Naxal struck.

"In the ambush by the Naxals, three of our men were killed and nine were injured," said Niwas adding that the police believe "to have killed 30 Naxals" in retaliatory action.

"The firing has stopped. We are now looking for bodies," he added.

In a separate incident, security forces gunned down six Maoists in an encounter at Darmaha village in East Champaran district of Bihar.

During the over 12-hour encounter with the Maoists that ended early yesterday, the security forces killed the six Maoists and arrested eight others, including three women ultras, Bihar Director General of Police (DGP) Neelmani said.

The bodies of all the six Maoists have been recovered, he said.

The security forces have also recovered 14 weapons comprising five SLRs, eight police rifles and one .315 rifle, besides a large haul of explosives and ammunition from the spot, the DGP said.

WAR CRIMES TRIAL Kosovo rebels plead not guilty

AFP, Pristina

Two former KLA guerrilla leaders accused of war crimes for allegedly torturing civilians in prison camps set up in Albania pleaded not guilty at the start of their trial before a Kosovo court yesterday.

The trial of Sabit Geci and Riza Alija, former commanders of the ethnic Albanian guerrilla Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), is the first to tackle the allegations that the rebels set up illegal camps in neighbouring Albania.

Geci and Alija, arrested last year, are also mentioned in the report by the Council of Europe's envoy Dick Marty linking Kosovo prime minister Hashim Thaci and other senior KLA commanders to organ trafficking and organised crime.

At the start of their trial both suspects pleaded not guilty before the mixed panel of international and local judges presided over by Briton Jonathan Welford-Carroll. The international judges are part of the EU's rule-of-law mission to Kosovo known as

EULEX.

"I am not guilty. I reject this indictment entirely," Geci told the court.

Geci, 52, and Alija, 50, are facing seven charges of war crimes, including "inhumane treatment, torture and murder of civilians" in two camps in neighbouring Albania.

According to the prosecution, the camps were "logistics, training and supply" sites, but the accused used them to detain civilians in "filthy and unhealthy conditions".

The prisoners "were beaten regularly and were hit with batons and nightsticks (truncheons), kicked, mistreated and verbally abused," according to the indictment.

Local media reported that some 20 protected witnesses would testify at around 40 hearings planned to be held by the end of June.

Marty's report alleges that the KLA set up illegal prison camps in northern Albania where Serbs and Kosovo Albanians and Roma suspected of collaborating with them were held.

UK never told Pakistan to avoid torture Says Musharraf

AFP, London

Former Pakistani president Pervez Musharraf has claimed that Britain never clearly demanded that British citizens not be tortured by his country's security services, in comments released yesterday.

As Britain prepares to open an inquiry into claims that its agents were complicit in the torture of terror suspects, Pakistan's former military ruler said London's stance may have been a "tacit approval of whatever we were doing."

In an interview with BBC TV, Musharraf strongly indicated that Pakistani intelligence agents used torture to extract information from terror suspects, although he did not say whether Britons were subjected to such methods.

He claimed he did not recall being told by the British that the ISI, the Pakistani spy agency, should not use torture on British subjects.

"Never. Never once, I don't remember it



all," he said.

"Maybe they wanted us to continue to do whatever we were doing; it was a tacit approval of whatever we were doing."

Musharraf, who was president of Pakistan from 1999 to 2008 but now lives in exile in London, said: "We are dealing with vicious people, and you have to get information."

"Now if you are extremely decent, we then don't get any information -- we need to allow leeway to the intelligence operatives, the people who interrogate."

The row in Britain centres on the case of former Guantanamo Bay detainee Binyam Mohamed, an Ethiopian-born British resident who claims he was tortured into admitting terror charges with the knowledge of British security services.

His comments were strongly denied by former British security chiefs, who have mounted a fightback against the claims that their agents colluded in torture.

32 congressmen

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resolve the issue through a mutual compromise to ensure Grameen Bank's independence.

"We are troubled by the removal of Dr Muhammad Yunus from his position at Grameen Bank," said the Congressmen in a letter to the prime minister on March 11.

The group led by Co-Chairs Joseph Crowley and Gary Ackerman said Bangladesh has made important strides in economic growth and by taking steps to address corruption, seeking greater cooperation with its neighbours, fighting poverty and improving the rule of law.

"Unfortunately, the situation with Dr Yunus is beginning to overshadow these concrete gains and introduce uncertainty regarding one of Bangladesh's most visible and beloved institutions," the letter said.

"Many of us have personally seen the effectiveness of Grameen programmes, and believe they and Dr Yunus have done a great deal to

improve lives by providing access to credit for those without collateral."

"We have raised these concerns directly with your government over the past few months, but the situation has not changed," the Congressmen said, urging the prime minister to resolve the matter through a mutual compromise.

The letter followed calls from the international community that anxiously keeps a close watch on the developments in Bangladesh.

Many see Yunus' removal from Grameen as politically motivated, and they have accused the authorities of trying to take control of the country's most prestigious institution.

Yunus has already made clear that he is willing to hand over leadership to the second generation in a congenial environment.

"There should be a smooth transition of management leadership from me to the next managing director in a congenial environment," he said last week.

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02.	Junior Assistant Manager (Accounts/Finance/Audit) Basic Pay: Tk. 18,000/- House Rent: 40% to 60% of Basic Pay (Area basis) Medical Allowance: Tk. 1500/- Conveyance Allowance: Tk. 2000/-	09 (Nine)	M.Com/MBA (Minimum required points 08 from S.S.C to Masters level; considering as 1 st Div./Class=03, 2 nd Div./ Class=02 & 3 rd Div./ Class=01). Knowledge in computerized accounting, application packages will be added advantage. Age-Maximum 30 years (32 years in case of freedom fighter's children) as on 31/03/2011 but relaxable for departmental candidates.

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General Manager (P&A)
PGCB, Dhaka.

Opposition leader Issoufou wins Niger vote

AFP, Niamey

Veteran opposition leader Mahamadou Issoufou was declared victor yesterday of presidential polls ending a year-long military junta in Niger, which remains deeply poor despite massive uranium stores.

In his fifth shot at the country's top job, the 59-year-old leader of the Social Democratic Party won 1.8 million, or 57.95 percent, of votes, said electoral commission head Gousmane Abdourahmane at a ceremony in Niamey.

Former prime minister Seni Oumarou, 60, took 42.05 percent of the votes cast in the runoff election on Saturday.

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দরপত্র বাতিল করণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সূত্র : দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-পিডি-২/ডি-৪/ডিপিডিসি/২০১১/৬৮১, তারিখ : ১৩/০২/২০১১ ইং।

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(মোঃ সফিউল ইসলাম খান)
প্রকল্প পরিচালক
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