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Premier Wen outlines anti-corruption work

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Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao is calling for strengthening the corruption fight and promoting a clean government in an article to be published on Thursday.

In the article outlining the anti-corruption work for the year, Wen, also member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, stresses that efforts should be placed on upholding integrity, supervision of power and clean and honest governance.

In the article in the *Seeking Truth*, a journal of the Party's theoretical study, he concludes the country's anti-corruption work over the past five years.

Wen said the country has intensified correction of unhealthy social practices and exerted great efforts to resolve problems that harm the interests of the public, greatly promoted governance according to law and seriously dealt with irregularities and commercial bribery so as to root out corruption.

Wen called for serious penalties toward corruption, especially those involving government officials.

"Collusion between officials and business, trade between power and money, power and sex, and cases seriously infringing upon public interest should receive heavy punishment," he said.

Commercial bribery cases involving civil servants and leaders of state enterprises, public and financial institutions accepting and sending bribes by abusing power would be seriously handled in line with the law.

Effective measures will be adopted to strike commercial bribery activities on the Chinese mainland organized by overseas economic organizations, Wen added.

He ordered leaders of various departments to "strictly comply with self-discipline rules and uphold integrity".

Special government campaigns would be launched this year to deal with overseas sightseeing tours funded by public money and construction of luxurious buildings.

He highlighted the importance of a scientific and democratic decision-making process. "Policies regarding the immediate interest of the masses should be made by soliciting public opinions or holding hearings so as to enhance public participation and receive public supervision."

Governance transparency should be further improved to safeguard the public rights to knowledge, participation, expression and supervision, he said.

The Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee passed a five-year plan for the Party's prevention and punishment of corruption in a meeting this week.

The members of the bureau attending the meeting urged Party organs at various levels to take the plan, which aims at establishing a system to punish and prevent corruption from 2008 to 2012, as a guideline for their anti-corruption work in the next five years.

The anti-corruption plan emphasized the prevention of corruption along with punitive measures, which would combine punishment with education, supervision of officials and improving China's judicial system.

China has strengthened its anti-corruption fight under the framework of the UN Convention Against Corruption in recent years. The country had also stepped up its international cooperation to recover money taken abroad by runaway government officials involved with major economic crimes.

Earlier this month, former Shanghai Communist Party Chief Chen Liangyu was sentenced to 18 years in jail for bribery and abuse of power, which demonstrated the resolution of the CPC Central Committee to build a clean party, promote clean governance and fight corruption.

"Whoever it is, no matter how high their positions are, anyone who violates party rules or national law will be severely punished," the Central Committee once said in a statement.

Last year China established the National Bureau of Corruption Prevention, which was created to intensify corruption fighting and conduct additional international exchanges in the field.

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(Xinhua News Agency May 1, 2008)

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