

China's leaders from Mao to Xi

China's Communist Party plans to repeal constitutional limits of just two five-year terms in office to allow President Xi Jinping, who is also party leader and commander-in-chief, to stay in power indefinitely

Mao Zedong



1949-76: Chairman Mao founds People's Republic of China – hardline state controlled by Communist Party – following Soviet ideology and political system.

Great Leap Forward leads to famine and deaths of millions, ***Cultural Revolution*** cripples economy

Deng Xiaoping



1978-92: Deng adapts Marxism to accept reform. ***Open Door*** policy allows foreign businesses to operate in China – economy flourishes.

Legacy tarnished by ruthless suppression of pro-democracy protests in ***Tiananmen Square*** in 1989

Jiang Zemin



1993-2003: Jiang further breaks with communist orthodoxy by embracing business people, academics and public celebrities.

China joins ***World Trade Organization***

Xi Jinping

2012-18: During first term as president, Xi boosts military and domestic security, and pursues China's claims in South China Sea.

Xi launches anti-corruption campaign, embarks on new ***Silk Road*** trade route, and enshrines his name in party constitution

Hu Jintao



2002-2012: Economy quadruples in size, replacing Japan as world's second-largest after United States.

Hu's assertive foreign policy creates tension with Asian neighbours