

Xi Jinping purges top generals

China's military is undergoing one of the most far-reaching shake-ups of the Xi Jinping era, as a growing number of generals disappear from public view or are formally removed from their posts

CENTRAL MILITARY COMMISSION (CMC)

CMC is Communist Party group which controls 2m-strong **People's Liberation Army (PLA)**

Of seven men appointed to CMC in 2022, only two have survived: Xi himself and **Zhang Shengmin**



Xi Jinping
Chairman

Vice Chairmen

Zhang Youxia
Long seen as Xi's closest military ally
Under probe, Jan 2026

He Weidong
Second-ranked Vice Chair
Removed and replaced by Shengmin, Oct 2025

Members



Li Shangfu
Minister of National Defence
Removed Oct 2023



Miao Hua
Director, political work department
Removed Jun 2025



Liu Zhenli
Chief of Joint Staff Department
Under probe Jan 2026



Zhang Shengmin
Secretary, Commission for Discipline
Promoted

■ At least 30 senior military figures – including five linked to **Rocket Force**, which oversees China's missile arsenal – have been removed between mid-2023 and end of 2024

■ While corruption allegations are cited publicly, most outside analysts see purge as part of Xi Jinping's effort to prevent rise of any rival power bases within PLA

■ Purge adds uncertainty over China's defence leadership as West monitors progress toward Xi's 2027 target for PLA readiness to take Taiwan