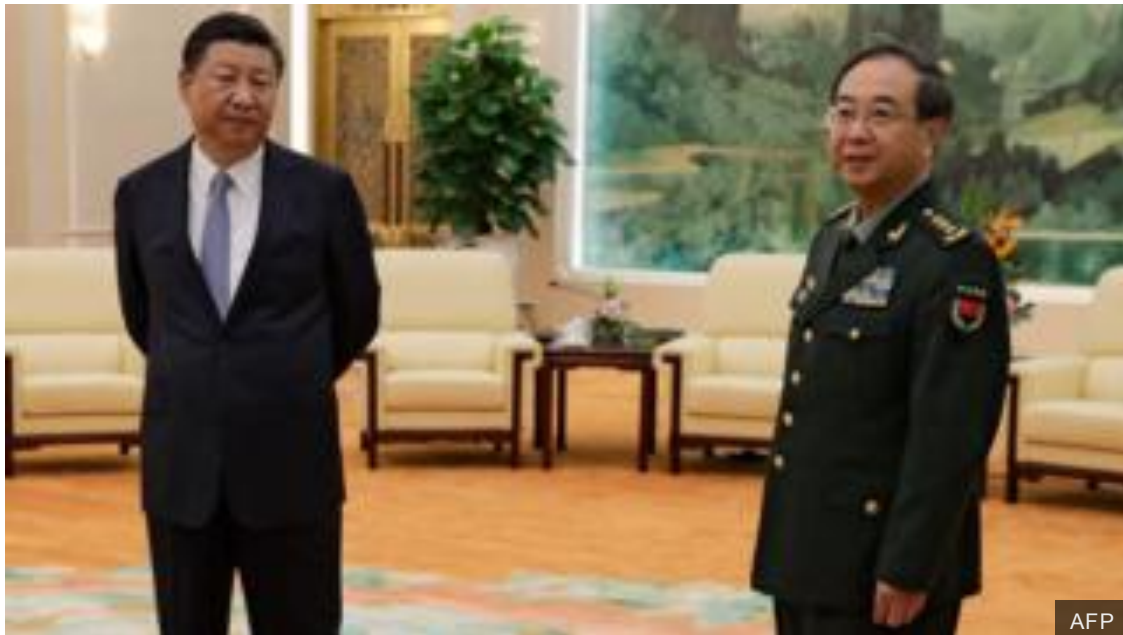


Fang Fenghui: China's ex-top general jailed for life

🕒 20 February 2019



A former high-ranking Chinese general has been sentenced to life in jail for corruption, state media reports.

Fang Fenghui, ex-chief of joint staff of the People's Liberation Army, was found guilty of bribery and having huge wealth that he had been unable to account for, according to Xinhua.

The 67-year-old accompanied President Xi Jinping in his first meeting with US President Donald Trump in 2017.

Many officials have been jailed in what Mr Xi says is an anti-corruption drive.

The efforts have had a particular focus on the country's military, which is the world's largest and is undergoing a modernisation campaign.

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Fang Fenghui lost his post with no explanation in 2017 and disappeared from public view. The government later confirmed he was under investigation for alleged corruption.

He was also a member of the powerful Central Military Commission, China's supreme military body, and was close to Zhang Yang, who also served on the commission and was found dead in 2017 while being investigated for corruption.

Fang was expelled from the Communist Party last year ahead of his trial at a military court.

All his assets have been confiscated, Xinhua adds, without mentioning how much money was involved.

It is unclear whether he was allowed to retain a lawyer, Reuters news agency reports.

More than one million officials have been punished in the anti-corruption drive started by Mr Xi when he took power in 2012, the government says.

They include Xu Caihou and Guo Boxiong, both former vice chairman of the Central Military Commission. Xu died of cancer in 2015 before he could face trial while Guo was sentenced to life in prison for bribery in 2016.

The anti-corruption campaign has been described by some as a massive internal purge of opponents, on a scale not seen since the days of Mao Zedong, in whose Cultural Revolution many top officials were purged.

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