

Chen Min'er 陈敏尔

Born 1960

Current Positions

- Chongqing Party Secretary (2017–present)
- Full member of the Central Committee of the CCP (2012–present)



Personal and Professional Background

Chen Min'er was born on September 29, 1960, in Zhuji City, Zhejiang Province. Chen joined the CCP in 1982. He received a three-year college education in Chinese language and literature at Shaoxing Normal College in Shaoxing City, Zhejiang Province (1978–81). He later attended a course for instructors of political theory at the Zhejiang Provincial Party School in Hangzhou (1982–83); participated in a one-year, full-time training program for young and middle-age cadres at the Central Party School (CPS) (1995–96) in Beijing; and received a master's degree in law from the CPS (via part-time studies, 1996–98).

Chen worked as a propaganda clerk, first at Shaoxing Normal College soon after graduating (1981–82) and then in the propaganda department of the Shaoxing Municipal Party Committee (1984–87). He served as head of the propaganda department and, concurrently, as a member of the Standing Committee of the Shaoxing County Party Committee (1987–89). He was then promoted to deputy head of the propaganda department of the Shaoxing Municipal Party Committee (1989–90). He next served as deputy party secretary of Shaoxing County (1990–94) and, concurrently, as head of Shaoxing County (1991–94). After that, he served as party secretary and head of Shaoxing County (1994–95), and then as party secretary of Shaoxing County and, concurrently, as a member of the Standing Committee of the Shaoxing Municipal Party Committee (1996–97). Subsequently, he was a vice-mayor and member of the Standing Committee of Ningbo City, Zhejiang Province (1997–98); executive vice-mayor of Ningbo City (1998–99); and then deputy party secretary of Ningbo City (1999). Following that, he served as president and party secretary of the newspaper *Zhejiang Daily* (1999–2001). Next, he was director of the propaganda department of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee (2001–07) and, concurrently, a member of the Standing Committee of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee (2002–07). He then became vice-governor of Zhejiang Province (2007–12).

In January 2012, Chen was transferred to Guizhou, where he served as deputy party secretary (2012–15) and, concurrently, governor (2013–15). He was then promoted to party secretary of Guizhou (2015–17). He was first elected to the Central Committee as an alternate member at the 17th Party Congress in 2007.

Family and Patron-Client Ties

Chen is one of Xi Jinping's most trusted protégés. During the five years when Xi was party boss of Zhejiang Province (2002–07), Chen served as director of the propaganda department and as a standing committee member of the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee. During these years, Chen was widely believed to have substantially assisted Xi in preparing weekly columns for the provincial party newspaper, *Zhejiang Daily*. In 2015, Xi took the noteworthy step of promoting Chen to provincial party secretary of Guizhou, making Chen one of only three provincial party secretaries born in the 1960s (the other two, Party Secretary of Guangdong Hu Chunhua and then-Party Secretary of Chongqing Sun Zhengcai, were both Politburo members).¹ Also with Xi's strong support, Chen was appointed party secretary of Chongqing in 2017, replacing Sun Zhengcai, who fell under investigation for corruption and

other transgressions. These two appointments have positioned Chen well for further political advancement.

The identity of Chen Min'er's wife is unknown. The couple has a daughter, who was previously married to the son of Si Xinliang, the former head of both the propaganda department and the organization department in the Zhejiang Provincial Party Committee. Si Xinliang was purged on corruption charges in 2015.

Political Prospects and Policy Preferences

If the 19th Politburo Standing Committee includes a member who has not previously served on the Politburo, it will most likely be Chen Min'er. Chen could assume the position of either executive secretary of the Secretariat, thus becoming the person in charge of propaganda, or executive vice-premier in the State Council.

In his capacity as a provincial leader over the past two decades, Chen has expended great effort to advance certain policy initiatives. As a leader in Zhejiang, Chen Min'er was seen as strongly supportive of private sector development. In Guizhou, Chen was known for his dedication to poverty alleviation, his commitment to environmental protection, and his promotion of "big data," e-commerce, and innovation.²

Compiled by Cheng Li and the staff of the John L. Thornton China Center at Brookings

Notes:

¹ Cheng Li, *Chinese Politics in the Xi Jinping Era: Reassessing Collective Leadership* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution Press, 2016), p. 343.

² Jiang Xun and Yuan Weijing, "Political Rising Star Chen Min'er is a confidant of Xi Jinping" [政坛新星陈敏尔是习近平亲信], Mirror Network, August 17, 2017, http://news.mingjingnews.com/2017/08/blog-post_502.html.