

《王国庆：中国应任命更多全职新闻发言人》

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China should appoint more full-time spokespersons and promote the professionalization of the sector, as the current system has impaired the country's news release and information transparency efforts, a senior political adviser said.

Wang Guoqing, vice-chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Committee of the CPPCC, made the remark amid an increasing demand from the public for timely news releases.

Premier Li Keqiang made a pledge on Wednesday, in his first Government Work Report delivered to the country's top legislative session, to "improve the spokesperson system and make government operations more open" in a bid to "address the social concerns".

According to Wang, who is also a former deputy minister of the State Council Information Office, the country's top information body, the current spokespersons are mostly not professionals, and most of them only take the post as a part-time job alongside their other major duties.

"Being a spokesman is not an important part of their career, and they can choose to perform the role or not," Wang said, adding that some prefer not to speak much, either because they lack the ability or fear they will make a mistake that will ruin their career.

In addition, some spokespersons are not key members of their workplace, so they lack access to crucial information and the decision-making process, which hampers their ability to deliver sufficient messages to the public and media in a timely way, according to Wang.

Observers also said that unlike their Western counterparts, most of whom have been trained in journalism, the majority of Chinese spokespersons started their careers as officials.

They usually deliver government policies in a stiff way and tend to defend government actions instead of thinking from a media perspective.

China should add more full-time spokespersons: senior official

"Meanwhile, the Chinese culture of worshipping the philosophy of the 'unsung hero' and 'speak less and work more' has made active voices rare here," Wang added.

The veteran information official proposed making the spokesperson post a new type of professional technical talent, to be incorporated into the current 29 categories of technical professions authorized by the country's human resources authorities.

