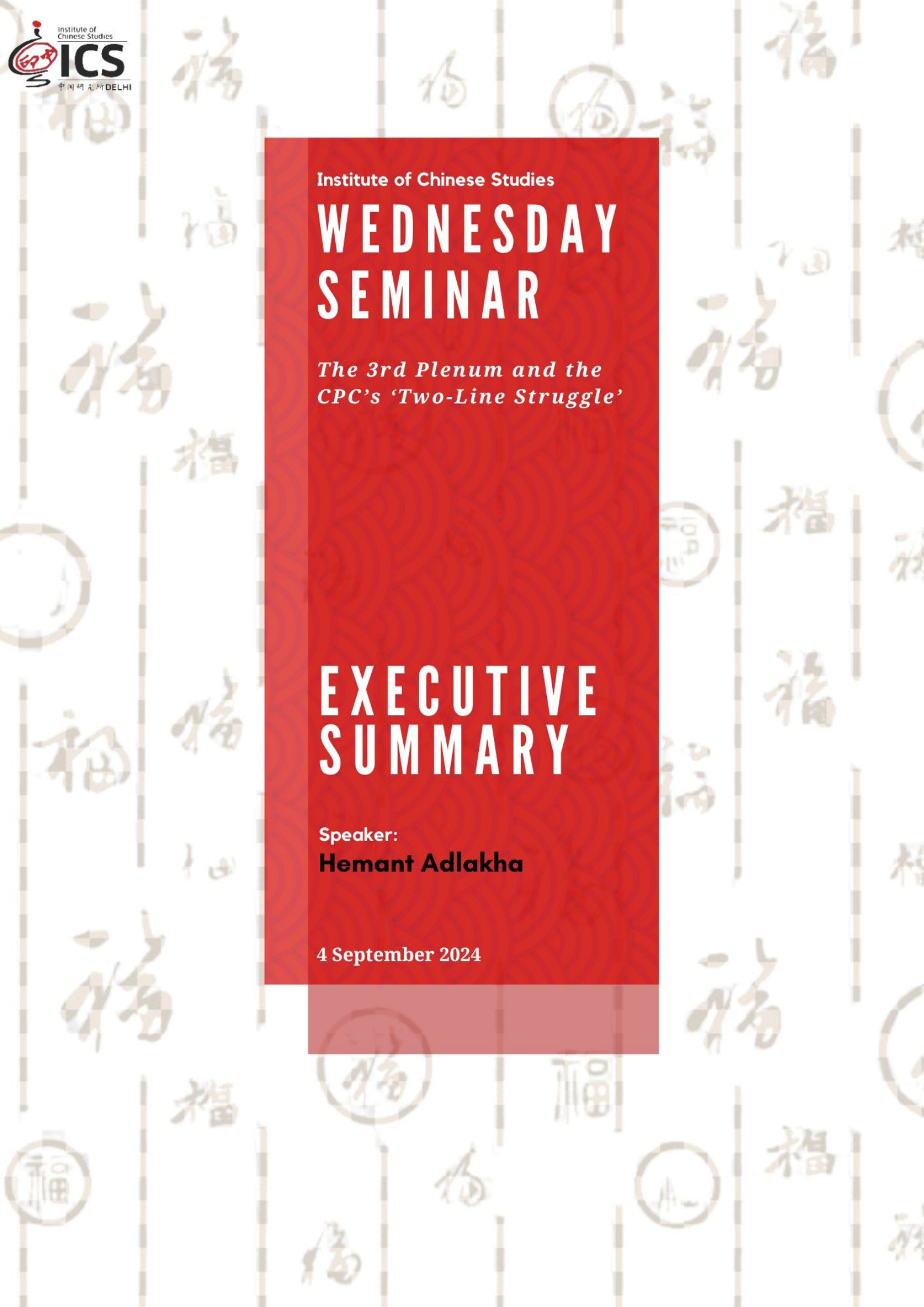




Institute of Chinese Studies

WEDNESDAY SEMINAR

*The 3rd Plenum and the
CPC's 'Two-Line Struggle'*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speaker:

Hemant Adlakha

4 September 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speaker: **Dr Hemant Adlakha**, Associate Professor, Centre for Chinese and South East Asian Studies, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and, Vice-Chairperson & Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Chair: **Prof. Alka Acharya**, Chairperson and Professor, Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and, Honorary Director, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Venue: Zoom Webinar

- The seminar critically examined the ideological and political tensions within the Communist Party of China (CPC), particularly through the lens of the “two-line struggle” resurfacing under Xi Jinping. Dr. Hemant Adlakha traced the historical roots of these conflicts and analysed their evolution in the contemporary context.
- Dr. Adlakha explored the dual narrative of Xi Jinping — as a domestic reformer and international authoritarian — which underscores the CPC’s complex internal dynamics. He linked these perceptions to the ideological debates surrounding the delayed Third Plenary Session and the removal of references to public ownership from official documents.
- The speaker highlighted that debates within the Party now revolve around key economic concerns, such as the role of the public sector, income inequality, and China’s slowing economic growth. These debates reflect not just policy disagreements but deep ideological rifts between reformist and conservative factions.
- The speaker discussed how socio-economic diversification within China, among significant segments of the population comprising the middle class, working class, and migrant labour, challenges the leadership’s ability to implement equitable policies. These divisions are critical to understanding policy tensions within the CPC.

- Referencing Deng Xiaoping’s phrase “let some people become rich first” “让一部分人先富起来” (*Ràng yí bùfēn rén xiān fù qǐlái*), Dr. Adlakha argued that this growth model is under increasing scrutiny, especially in the context of widening inequality and reduced economic momentum. The ideological battle over whether to prioritise wealth creation or redistribution is intensifying.
- In her concluding remarks, Prof. Alka Acharya questioned oversimplified Western portrayals of Chinese politics. She urged scholars to approach Xi’s reforms with greater nuance and examine whether they represent a true break from the past or a continuation under new rhetoric. Prof. Acharya emphasised the importance of understanding the CPC’s internal ideological contestations in both domestic and global contexts. These dynamics, she noted, are crucial for forecasting China’s political and economic directions.

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