



Research and Environment News from China

June 12 - June 2005

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Introduction

This month's press clippings illustrate China's growing activities in modernizing traditional Chinese medicine, with discoveries amounting related to wheat breeding and vaccines of bird flu outbreak. China, with strong commitment and the help from WHO, will continue to fight one of the most important disease, AIDS.

China is still facing serious environmental problems, according to SEPA's recent report this month, which is caused by China's rapid economic growth which has a major impact on environment and causes intensive environment problems. On the other hand, China to actively develop nuclear power, "green power" and the concept of "Green Olympics" will definitely help resolve the environmental problems.

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Activites coming up soon

July 8, 2005	
Bioenergy Future Group Summer Expert Workshop and Mini-Expo "Bioenergy and Land Stewardship in China"	
City: Hangzhou	
Contact: accstaff@accstrategy.org	
Website: http://www.accstrategy.org	
July 13-15, 2005	
International Exhibition on Municipal Solid Waste Treatment Technology and Equipments 2005	
Venue: Beijing International Convention Center	
Contact: Mr. Liu, Ms. Li	
Tel: 0086-10-68529180	Fax: 0086-10-68529178
Email: cause@public.bta.net.cn	
August 11-13, 2005	
The 8th China International Water Technical Equipment Exhibition and Seminar	



Venue: China National Agriculture Exhibition Center (Beijing)
Contact: Liu xing
Cell phone: 0086-13522963927 Tel: 0086-10-64462754
Fax: 0086-10-64462264
Email: nikxx@163.com
August 11-13, 2005
The 5th China International Biotechnology and Industrialization Exhibition and Conference
The 5th China International Assay, Biochemical and Laboratory Equipment Exhibition
Venue: Beijing Agriculture Exhibition Center
Contact: Tu Piaoyang
Cellphone : 13811496838 Tel :010-85430906
Email : bio-china@163.com www.biochina.net.cn
September 14-16, 2005
Water & Membrane China (Beijing) 2005
Venue: China World Trade Center, Beijing, China
Contact: Ms. Elaine PAN / Mr. Julius ZHU
Tel:86-10-64433465
Fax:86-10-64433465
E-mail: 2000@membranes.com.cn
September 25-29, 2005
7th World Congress on 3R (with Exhibition)
Venue: Beijing Friendship Hotel
Contact: Prof.Dr.Huizhou Liu
Tel: 86-10-62554264 Fax : 86-10-62561822
Email : hzliu@home.ipe.ac.cn
September 26-28, 2005
The 2nd Internatinal Conference and Exposition on the Modernization fo Traditional Chinese Medicine
Venue: Chengdu
Contact : http://www.icetcm.com/en/index.aspx
November 1-4, 2005
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND REGIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Venue: Hangzhou
Contact : Mr. Bing Zhu International Coordinator Secretariat of 2005CERSD
Tel: 0571-85106941 Fax: 0571-85172009
Email: 2005cersd@163.com http://www.2005cersd.org.cn
June 28-30, 2006
Wind Power Asia 2006- The 3rd Asian Wind Power Exhibition and Conference
Venue: China World Trade Centre
Tel: 86-10-68360959, 68360575
Fax: 86-10-68360949
Email: marcowang@unique-expo.com



Environment-related international tenders and investment opportunities:

english.cepi.com.cn/homepage/homepage.jsp

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Science & Technology

China reports progress in modernizing traditional Chinese medicine

(People's Daily, 2005-06-04)

China has progressed in its efforts to modernize traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) by the application of science and technology.

Information from a recent national exchange meeting on modernized TCM production bases held in Guiyang, capital of southwest China's Guizhou Province, said 448 standardized planting bases have been built in 18 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions where 933,333 hectares of medicinal herbs have been grown.

Up to now, the Ministry of Science and Technology has approved the establishment of 14 state-level modernized TCM production centers and eight standardized bases for growing medicinal herbs.

A great number of TCM enterprises have learned to solve technological problems in the process of TCM modernization via forging technical unions with scientific research organizations and universities of higher learning, which has led to an improvement in the innovative capabilities of the TCM enterprises.

Statistics from the State Intellectual Property Office of China showed there were 4,520 applications for patents in 2004. In the same year, the State Food and Drug Administration approved 203 kinds of new TCM products for sale.

Chinese scientists have successfully developed new TCM varieties for treating diseases such as AIDS, cancer and cardiovascular or cerebrovascular diseases.

So far, a least seven kinds of TCM products are being put into clinical research or in the United States with permits granted for clinical research by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) of the United States, said Wu Zhongze, Vice Minister of Science and Technology.

TCM-related businesses now contribute more to China's gross economy along with TCM modernization.

In 2003, China's TCM industrial sector had 81 billion yuan (about 9.76 billion US dollars) in total output value and accomplished 75.1 billion yuan (about 9.05 billion US dollars) in sales revenue.

Chinese, European scientists find anti-SARS medicine

(China Daily, 2005-06-20)

Scientists conducting research in eastern China have found that a medicine used to treat schizophrenia is effective in treating patients with the deadly SARS disease.



Chinese and European scientists in eastern Hangzhou city found that cinanserin, used to treat mental illness since the 1970s, can inhibit the coronavirus that causes Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Xinhua news state agency said Sunday.

The drug was identified as the only ready-to-use medicine among 15 possible anti-SARS remedies recommended by scientists participating in the Sino-European Project on SARS Diagnostics and Antivirals (SEPSDA), Xinhua said.

"The finding means that cinanserin could be directly prescribed to prevent the SARS disease or treat SARS patients if the fatal epidemic mounts a comeback," Peter Kristensen, an academic from Denmark's University of Aarhus, was quoted saying.

The 14 other possible remedies have to go through lengthy animal tests before being used to treat human patients, said Kristensen, a participant of the three-year SEPSDA program.

The program is funded by the European Union and involves eight Chinese and European institutions. Launched in 2004, it aims to find 50 chemical compounds to treat SARS.

Scientists working for the program also confirmed on Sunday the finding of two homologous SARS coronaviruses in animals from the Netherlands and Hong Kong respectively.

Both the newly found viruses and the formerly detected SARS virus were variations of an ancient virus, which had been in animals for ages but remained unidentified, said Rolf Hilgenfeld, a professor from Germany's University of Luebeck.

The German scholar said other latent coronaviruses could pose dangers to human beings as the SARS virus did.

"People should closely monitor such viruses and their variations to effectively prevent them from endangering humans," said Hilgenfeld.

SARS triggered a global health crisis after emerging in China's southern Guangdong province in November 2002, causing nearly 800 deaths worldwide including 349 in China.

Study shows advantages of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles

(People's Daily, 2005-06-24)

Switching to vehicles powered by hydrogen fuel cells instead of fossil fuels will provide significant health and environment benefits, save life and money, according to a new study released on Thursday.

Mark Jacobson, an associate professor at Stanford University, said that converting all onroad vehicles in the United States to hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles (HFCVs) may improve air quality, health and climate significantly. Jacobson and colleagues' paper is published in the June 24 issue of journal Science.

Most benefits would result from eliminating current vehicle exhaust. Wind and natural gas HFCVs offer the greatest potential health benefits and could save 3,700 to 6,400 lives in the United States annually. And among all HFCV types, the wind HFCVs, which means the hydrogen is produced through wind electrolysis, should benefit climate most, the researchers found.

Earlier studies have modeled the effects of hydrogen leakage or reduced emission on global tropospheric and stratospheric chemistry, but no research has examined the effect on urban pollution or health of establishing a hydrogen economy. Furthermore, no study has examined the likely effects of this switch on aerosol particles, which have a large impact on climate and are the deadliest components of air pollution.

But in this new research, the Stanford group used a computing model to examine the possible effects on ambient gas, particle concentrations, and estimated health and climate costs if replacing all US fossil-fuel onroad vehicles with HFCVs.

They compared the benefits of producing hydrogen by steam reforming of natural gas, wind-electrolysis and coal gasification, and found most of HFCVs' benefits arose from eliminating current vehicle exhaust.



An all-HFCV fleet would hardly affect tropospheric water vapor concentrations, the researchers said. Conversion to coal HFCVs may improve health but would damage climate more than fossil/electric hybrids.

Fuel cell vehicles using hydrogen produced by wind and natural gas offer the greatest potential health benefits, and could save 3, 700 to 6,400 lives annually in the United States by reducing air pollution.

And ultimately, hydrogen produced from wind would cost between 1.12 and 3.20 dollars per gallon in the United States. This sum is lower than gasoline price, although the estimates do not include the infrastructure costs of converting to hydrogen, according to the study.

"Although the three HFCV cases all reduced health costs, wind and natural gas HFCVs reduced such costs the most and reduced ozone by up to 20 ppbv. Wind HFCVs reduced climate costs the most, making it the most beneficial environmental technology," the researchers concluded.

Chinese and British scientists try to give a push to hydrogen economy

(People's Daily, 2005-06-07)

"Two-thirds of the water here is hydrogen," said Professor Z. Xiao Guo, as he took a bottle of pure water on the desk, to explain why hydrogen was one of the most promising alternatives of the energy sources in the future.

Guo, from Department of Materials, Queen Mary, University of London, is working on the storage of hydrogen, "the most abundant element on the earth". The storage of hydrogen is only one of the problems that scientists are trying to solve before the use of hydrogen as energy can be commercialized.

A delegation of Royal Society led by Sir David Wallace was in China last week exchanging with their Chinese colleagues their latest development of research on hydrogen fuel. They have visited top Chinese research institutes on hydrogen in Dalian, Shenyang and Beijing.

China is one of the leading countries in the world in the research and development of hydrogen fuel. "That is why we are here," said Professor Peter Hall, a member of the delegation, at Tsinghua University for a symposium.

"It is too early to say which country holds the best technology in this area," said Sir Wallace. They believe China can take a lead in the world.

There are still a lot of uncertainties for hydrogen as a fuel. Scientists are not sure whether there will be changes or what changes will be if there is too much hydrogen in the air. What's more, it uses much energy to take hydrogen. Producing hydrogen in a most cost efficient way is still a problem.

Despite all of this, the use of hydrogen has attracted much attention out of the concern for the environment which in turn affects climate. Global climate change has been identified as one of the top priorities when UK takes the presidency of G8.

The British scientists also expressed their hope that academic institute like Royal Society and Chinese Academy of Sciences can contribute to help ministers to achieve their goal for controlling the climate change.

China published its first law for renewable energy in February this year. As the law will be effective January 1, 2006, it is expected that detailed regulations on implementation of the law will be worked out within this year.

Less than one month later, UK issued its revised renewable energy planning. The Department of Trade and Industry of UK predicts 500 billion USD for clean energy market a year.

The EU will launch a training program this September to tell half a million people in 20 year that hydrogen is clean and safe.



In China, hydrogen fuel is also a hot topic. Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics, pioneer of fuel cell research which the British scientists visited during their China trip, started to build a base in Jiangsu province for the industrialization of hydrogen fuel cells with an investment of 2 billion yuan.

Dr. Wallace recalled a meeting in Shenzhen between Chinese Minister of Science & Technology Xu Guanhua and his British counterpart Lord Sainsbury in 2001, where Xu emphasized the importance of Sino-UK cooperation on clean energy.

Their travel to China this time is an example of such links. It is one of the activities sponsored by UK around China under the support of the Chinese government for a one year program called UK-China Partners in Science.

In addition, they believe the clean energy, including the hydrogen, will narrow the gap between the developed nations and the developing countries. "It uses renewable and abundant resources. And developed countries need huge investment on changes of their fixed infrastructure to use it. But developing nations needn't do that because they have less fixed infrastructure," said Dr. Wallace.

China leads the world in organ cloning research

(People's Daily, 2005-06-07)

Some of the experts attending the Seminar on Sino-French Cell and Tissue Engineering Therapeutics and Forensic Medicine 2005 believe that China is in the world' leading position in the area of cultured tissues.

Cell engineering is a burgeoning cross-sectional discipline, which applies basic principles and technologies of life science and engineering to build human tissues and organs with artificial methods. The resulting tissues and organs, commonly referred to as "human body spare parts plant" or "cloned organs", are used to replace or treat damaged ones.

Ouyang Jingping, professor at the Medical School of Wuhan University, said the studies have begun only recently but are advancing rapidly. China has achieved rapid progress in the area and is in a leading position in many aspects. In 1992 China was the first to grow a "human ear" on the body of a nude mouse and leads the world in treating ocular surface diseases with cornea stem cells. China succeeded in carrying out the first study on human-rabbit embryo fusion. Chinese and French scientists collaborated to apply mechanical force to ligament to make the ligament more resistant to strains. The research is a perfect integration of biomechanics and medical science.

China tops the world in nano-papers

(People's Daily, 2005-06-10)

News from the 2005 China International Conference on Nanoscience and Technology (China Nano 2005) held on June 9 says that by December 2004 China has had more than 800 companies engaged in trade in nano-technology and about a hundred nano-technology research institutes. More than ten projects such as for making Li cells, solar cells, textiles and environment-friendly interior paints have been commercialized.

According to academician Bai Chunli, director of the National Center for Nanoscience and Nanotechnology, China is one of the first in the world to launch research on nanotechnology. It has had a research team of more than 3,000 people and achieved a series of innovative research results. China has become an important force in the world's nano-tech research. From January to October 2004 China topped the world in terms of SCI nano-tech papers.

China has put a total of 830 million yuan into the R&D of nanoscience and nanotechnology. The central government has started a major program on nano-materials and Microelectromechanical System (MEMS).

Experts suggest that to develop nanotechnology in the future China should first step up constructing public technological platform for nanotechnology; conform research resources, promote the crossing and merging of different disciplines and the consolidation of goals of different disciplines as well as technological integration and innovation. China should also regularize commercialization of nanotechnology through enacting nano-product



standards and certifying nanotechnology so as to improve the international competitiveness of Chinese nano-tech companies.

China makes breakthrough in wheat breeding

(People's Daily, 2005-06-16)

China has made another breakthrough in wheat breeding. A new high-quality strain - "Xiaoyan 81", the breeding of which was masterminded by Academician Li Zhenxheng, former vice president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, has a per mu (equals 1/15 hectare) yield of 565 kilograms with the highest yield reaching 617 kilograms.

The strain has a good quality, a volumetric weight of 800 grams per liter and protein content of about 17 percent, sometimes as high as 18.8 percent. Its wet gluten content is around 40 percent, sometimes as high as 46 percent, making it a high-quality wheat.

For the moment the "Xiaoyan 81" is being regionally tested for wheat strain comparison in three provinces, namely, Hebei, Shandong and Shaanxi and is under observation test in Henan for strain introduction. Last year, the "Xiaoyan 81" stood out in the mid-south Hebei regional test for wheat strain comparison. It yielded more in all respects with the average yield per mu reaching 565 kilograms, sometimes as high as 617 kilograms. It topped all the ten participating strains.

Chinese Premier calls for more technical innovation in high-tech industries

(People's Daily, 2005-06-19)

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao Friday called on the country's high-tech industries to make greater efforts on technical innovation during.

On Friday afternoon, Wen first visited several companies in Zhongguancun High-tech Park, the so-called "Silicon Valley of China". The nearly 14,000 high-tech companies there scored a combined sales revenue of 369.2 billion yuan (44.6 billion US dollars) in 2004, and had a 20-percent growth in the first half of this year.

"The acquisition of IBM's PC division has created favorable conditions for your leapfrog development, but you still need to make greater efforts in turning all the conditions to your advantages and expand your market shares," said Wen, when he visited China's largest computer producer Lenovo. The company puts 2.5 billion yuan (302 million US dollars) into technical innovation a year and has owned more than 2,000 patents of independent intellectual property.

The premier also visited the Yizhuang Economic and Technological Development Zone in southern Beijing where nearly 100 international companies like Nokia, Coca-Cola, GE and Benz built their factories.

During his inspection, he stressed the vital importance of technical innovation and said that more independent intellectual property will ensure Chinese companies' competitiveness in the world.

The high-tech parks should play an active role in boosting the country's technical innovation, and should become the engine to push the readjustment of the economic structure in their regions. They should become a platform for Chinese high-tech companies that aim at international markets, he said.

Wen stressed that the high-tech parks should always emphasize high-tech industries, help transform traditional labor-intensive industries, and make efficient use of all resources.



Environment

Zhu Guangyao meets with Swiss Ambassador Mr. Dante Martinelli

(Vol. 3 Monday, 27 June 2005, CCICED UPDATE)

SEPA Vice Minister Mr. Zhu Guangyao met with the Swiss Ambassador to China, Mr. Dante Martinelli on June 14. During the meeting, the Swiss Ambassador informed the host of its government's decision to fund a new task force for CCICED Phase III. Mr. Zhu and Mr. Dante Martinelli agreeably reviewed the successful cooperation between the two countries on CCICED's Task Force on WTO and Environment and exchanged views on such issues as the Swiss government's further support for CCICED and other bilateral cooperation between the two sides.

Four-fifths of Yellow River polluted

(People's Daily, 2005-05-25)

Nearly four-fifths of Yellow River are polluted, China News Service reported Tuesday sources with the Yellow River Conservancy Committee as saying.

According to a water quality monitoring initiated in 1975, water quality of tributary better than the 3rd category, which is qualified for drinking water, breeding aquatics, fishery and swimming, accounted for 60 percent of the total length of the Yellow River in 1980s. By the end of 1990s, the percentage lowered to 40 percent.

This March, a government report said as much as 72.3 percent of the water in the Yellow River has dropped below the 3rd category.

It is estimated that the economic loss caused by pollution of Yellow River annually totaled about 11.5 billion to 15.6 billion yuan (about 1.39 billion to 1.89 billion US dollars). Since 1993, the Yellow River has witnessed more than 40 pollution incidents.

Experts indicated that the rapid increase of the sewage, the unqualified discharge of waste water and the misuse of fertilizer all worsened the situation of the water body. In addition, such factors as the degeneration of the water, the decrease of precipitation and dilution of the water body also led to the degradation of the water quality.

The 5,464-kilometer Yellow River runs through nine provinces and autonomous regions and enters the Bohai Sea in north China, forming a valley of 752,000 square kilometers and watering 12 percent of China's 1.3 billion population and 15 percent of farmland.

However, excessive development has resulted in serious shortage of water resources. The water resources development and utilization rate along the Yellow River valley is as high as 70 percent, much higher than the internationally recognized warning level of 40 percent.

Firms to be fined for flouting rules

(China Daily, 2005-06-02)

SHANGHAI: Companies which build using banned materials face fines under new regulations issued by the local government to promote a greener environment in the city.

Existing buildings are being urged to adopt energy-saving measures and designs must meet relevant standards before they are issued construction permits, said Shanghai municipal government spokeswoman Jiao Yang.

Construction company

"Both the construction company and the government's quality supervision department have the responsibility to check the accomplishment of the energy efficiency facilities," said Jiao.

The Municipal Construction Commission will announce a list of energy-saving construction materials, facilities and relevant techniques, and encourage firms to adopt them.



The investor will share in the profits gained from energy-efficient reconstruction, the regulation claims.

The energy consumed by residential and public buildings takes 20 per cent of the city's total energy consumption and is growing by 1 per cent a year.

"On average, every square metre of residential buildings is using up three times as much energy as that in developed countries," said Jiao.

Power load

Last summer, Shanghai witnessed a peak power load of 15 million kilowatts, a third of which was used up by air-conditioners.

There has been speculation that at least 1 million kilowatts could be saved by improving the construction of walls, ceilings, windows and doors and air-conditioning systems.

"By improving heat insulation, lighting and ventilation systems, less energy will be needed," said Liu, an architect.

Jiao said the use of the new materials, facilities or techniques will increase building costs by 100 yuan (US\$12) to 150 yuan (US\$18) for every square metre of floor space.

But the extra cost will definitely be made up in about five to eight years, according to the spokeswoman.

China still facing serious environmental problems: report

(People's Daily, 2005-06-03)

The environmental quality in China "basically remained the same" in 2004 as compared with the previous year, says a report published Thursday by the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA). With worsening soil erosion, urban pollution, acid rain and other environmental headaches, the situation is still "serious."

The quality of urban air, surface water, offshore sea water and the ecological environment in 2004 either remained "similar" or "unchanged" or had "no remarkable improvement", according to SEPA's annual report.

"The environmental problems that plagued the country in 2003 remain unchanged and call for even greater efforts," said a senior correspondent who has long been covering this beat.

According to the report, the seven major rivers and 25 out of the 27 major lakes in China were polluted, some seriously. The Haihe River in north China is the most polluted river in the country, followed by the Liaohe River, Huaihe River, Yellow River, Yangtze River and Pearl River.

The quality of groundwater in 52 out of 187 cities is worsening. 35 percent of offshore sea water was only up to or inferior to the Grade IV sea water quality standard.

More Chinese cities suffered from acid rain as the frequency of acid rain increased in 2004. Acid rain occurred in 298 Chinese cities, covering 56.5 percent of the total 527 cities monitored, 2.1 percentage points higher than that of 2003.

The number of cities with serious acid rain (lower than pH 5.6) reached 218, accounting for 41.4 percent of the total monitored cities, up four percentage points over 2003, the report says.

Statistics of 500 Chinese cities show that only 32.33 percent of domestic sewage and 57.76 percent of domestic garbage was treated in these cities on average in 2004.

"The facilities for waste treatment in Chinese cities are quite inadequate. They are unable to support sustainable development in cities," says the report.

Only 60.44 percent of hazardous waste, especially waste from hospitals, was treated in Chinese cities in 2004. In 155 of these cities, there were no public facilities at all for the treatment of such waste.



Areas suffering from soil erosion in China stood at 3.56 million square kilometers in 2004, accounting for 37.1 percent of the country's total land areas.

All Chinese provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities have soil erosion problems, the report says.

Officials ascribe much of the worsening environmental problem to rapid industrialization and economic growth.

"China is witnessing rapid economic growth, which has a major impact on the environment, intensifying environmental problems," said Wang Jirong, SEPA deputy director at the press conference organized by the Information Office of the State Council on Thursday.

"The environmental problems that developed countries gradually witness over more than a century have been witnessed by China in just the past two decades," Wang said.

The urbanization rate, 28 percent in 1993, rose to 41.7 percent in 2004, putting "great pressure" on resources and the environment.

Hoping to improve China's environmental protection, China has taken a series of measures in this regard.

SEPA published on May 10 nine major pollution case-studies and told local governments to take "real" and substantial steps to tackle the issues or face penalty.

This is the first time that SEPA has openly told local governments not to protect polluters. It has vowed to supervise the cases and intervene along with other law-enforcement departments when necessary.

The Chinese central government once again has pledged to take harsher measures to tackle environmental problems.

China to actively develop nuclear power

(People's Daily, 2005-06-07)

"The strategy of nuclear power industry in China has been altered to vigorous development from the previous moderate pace. The installed capacity of nuclear power on Chinese mainland is expected to reach 40 million kilowatts by 2020. With a total investment of 400 billion yuan, the overall power of ten power units under construction and nuclear power plants to be built top 9.3 million kilowatts and 24 million kilowatts respectively," said Kang Rixin, general manager of China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) on June 6.

The nuclear power industry started from the 1980s, and after more than 20 years' development, the installed capacity has reached 6.7 million kilowatts. The power generation of ten units under construction now is about 9.3 million kilowatts, 2.3 percent of the nation's total. Particularly, the nuclear power will take up 13 percent in Guangdong and Zhejiang provinces, close to the world level of 16 percent.

Kang further noted that Chinese government plans to enlarge the installed capacity of nuclear power to 40 million kilowatts by 2020, taking up four percent of the nation's total, which requires China to build 30 more million-kilowatt nuclear power units. Meanwhile, he put forward the principle of combining one's own capacity with foreign cooperation: first, making full use of the existing base in Qianshan Nuclear Power Station to expand two 600,000-kilowatt units; secondly, introducing the third-generation nuclear technology through international bidding and building two million-kilowatt nuclear power units in Sanmen in Zhejiang Province and Yangjiang in Guangdong Province respectively. Now the evaluation process on the above-mentioned projects is well underway.

Furthermore, the initial layout of CNP 1000, a China's self-designed million-kilowatt PWR (pressurized water reactor) nuclear power plant, has been completed and passed the appraisal by experts.

CNP 1000, with a designed lifetime of 60 years, can help bring the per-kilowatt investment down to 1,300 US dollars and the per-kilowatt hour electricity price to five US cents.



Plus, the initial design of a 1.5-million-kilowatt nuclear power station will be completed soon.

'Green Olympics' eyed for year 2008 Games

(China Daily, 2005-06-15)

Business leaders, industry insiders and government officials flocked to Beijing yesterday, brought together by two words: "Green Olympics."

More than 30 enterprises, half from abroad, met to discuss clean technology, renewable and recyclable materials and the huge market sparked by the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

Companies present included BASF, NatureWorks, Unitika, Mitsubishi Chemical and Mitsui Chemical.

Co-organized by the Science and Technology Committee for the 29th Olympic Games and the 2008 Project Office, the Exhibition on Green Materials & Green Olympics is the first of its kind in China.

"The exhibition is a platform for exchange between green materials researchers and merchants working on projects for the Games," said Fan Boyuan, deputy mayor of Beijing.

Bidding for the Games' major projects has been completed, and it is now time to purchase materials, facilities and technology, Fan said.

The main buildings, temporary facilities, sites and affiliated services are all required to use green materials, one of Beijing's commitments to the Games, he added.

"We are all very excited about the chosen theme of green materials... It is our hope that green materials and processes will be adopted as fully as possible at the coming Games," said Peter Clydesdale, commercial director of the Cargill Asia Pacific Holdings Pte Ltd.

Dirk Starke, a marketing and sales manager from Germany-based BASF, a chemical company, is working with its business partner in China, Tian'an Biologics, to promote biodegradable polymers.

Energy saving key to growth - document

(China Daily, 2005-06-15)

Recycling is the means by which China will develop a so-called circular economy, according to a document the State Council is to release to provincial and local governments.

The document, to be made public at the end of this month, will also urge the public to be more aware of the importance of conserving resources.

The circular economy concept is that one facility's waste output - including energy, water, materials, and information - can be another facility's input. In theory, waste and emissions can be zero during the process of economic development.

"Those are among the government's major steps to sustain stable economic growth," said Zhai Qing, a deputy department director of the National Development and Reform Commission.

The government will draw from international experiences in its efforts to quadruple the country's gross domestic product (GDP) by 2020.

Zhai said that his commission will hold a high-level forum on resource efficiency on June 24-26. The State Council Development and Research Centre and a group of cabinet ministers will attend the event. Experts, chief executive officers and officials worldwide are invited to share their resource-saving ideas. The aim is to help China realize the



goal of increasing per-capita GDP from the current US\$1,000 to US\$3,000 in 2020 in spite of growing population, Zhai said.

"To gain sustainable development, China must stop its startling waste in resource exploitation and take measures to protect the worsening environment," Zhai said.

According to an earlier government report, the reckless exploitation of resources has led to shocking waste. It cited Shaanxi Province, where only 30 per cent of the coal is mined while 70 per cent is left underground forever. From 1949 to 2003, Shaanxi coal output totalled 35 billion tons.

Feng Fei, a department director of the State Council Development and Research Centre, also said that development based on a circular economy will be essential for China to sustain its fast-paced economic growth while mitigating negative environmental impact.

Last week, China and the United Nations entered into a 12-year programme to tackle the problem of growing energy demand and severe energy shortage.

Alongside the Global Environment Facility, which provides US\$17 million for the first three-year phase of the programme, the Chinese Government will co-finance US\$31 million, and the Chinese business sector has agreed to contribute US\$32 million for technical upgrades. The money will mainly be used to improve energy use in industry and building sectors.

"I believe that through the programme of intervention, efficiency of the major end-use energy sectors will improve dramatically," said Khalid Malik, UN resident coordinator and UNDP resident representative in China. It is estimated that the first three-year phase will result in carbon emission reductions of approximately 12 million tons.

The desertification and desert land areas in China shrink for the first time

(People's Daily, 2005-06-15)

The latest monitoring results show that desertification and desert land areas in China have shrunk for the first time since the founding of People's Republic of China in 1949, but there will still be a severe situation for the prevention and control, said Zhu Lieke, deputy director of the State Forestry Administration on June 14.

The State Forestry Administration made the third nationwide survey on desertification and desert land from November 2003 to April 2005. The results show that China has nearly 2.64 million square kilometers of desertification land by the end of 2004, accounting for 27.46 per cent of the country's territory, and a total of 1.74 million square kilometers of desert land, covering 18.12 per cent. Compared with 1999, 37,924 and 6,416 square kilometers of the land areas were reduced respectively. The deputy director said, "This shows that the conditions of desertification and desert land have come under the stage of the "balance between reclamation of desert and destruction" from "destruction above reclamation of desert".

The Chinese government made two surveys on desertification in 1994 and 1999 respectively. Zhu Lieke said, "In fact, the desertification and desert land have started to shrink since 2000. Take the desert land for example. The annual expansion area of 3,463 square kilometers by the end of last century has been turned to the annual reduction area of 1,283 square kilometers."

Specialists say aside from natural factors such as dry weather that cause land desertification, the main factor is the unreasonable human activities, namely over-farming, overgraze, denudation and abuse of water resources.

"The direct economic losses caused by desertification are as high as 54 billion yuan annually, and the desertification threatens the production and lives of nearly 400 million people," said Zhu Lieke. At the same time, Zhu pointed out that despite that greater results have been achieved in the prevention and control work, the ecosystem in the sand areas is far away from stable state and there will appear reversion likely. Meanwhile there are still more than 500,000 square kilometers of desert land that can be brought under control and nearly 320,000 square kilometers of land with evident desertification tendency. It will take at least dozens of years to fulfill the desertification-control projects with



more difficulties. In addition, there also exist different man-made factors causing desertification. The unfavorable climate, which has influence on accelerating desertification, cannot be underestimated.

China to embark on path of "green rise"

(People's Daily, 2005-06-19)

A senior Chinese official in charge of environmental protection Saturday warned that environmental crisis coupled with many social problems will come earlier than expected if the country fails to embark on a path of "green rise" immediately.

Pan Yue, deputy director of the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), said at the Seventh Green China Forum, which started here Saturday, that although China has become the biggest manufacturer in the world after experiencing rapid economic development over the past 20 years, it "has paid a high environmental price".

The forum has attracted more than 200 governmental officials, experts and business people to discuss ways to sustainably develop the country.

Pan said that serious pollution is occurring in a China with a per capita GDP lingering between 400 and 1000 US dollars, whereas it emerged in western countries when the per capita GDP was 3,000 to 10,000 dollars.

"The pollution load of China will quadruple in 2020 when the country's GDP quadruples if the pace of pollution remains unchanged." By then, China will only have six out of the current 45 major mineral resources, Pan said.

China ranks first in daily water consumption and sewage discharge, and second in energy consumption and carbon dioxide discharge. Its energy consumption is seven times that of Japan, six times that of the United States and 2.8 times that of India interms of unit GDP.

China currently has a population of 1.3 billion, compared to the 600 million it had when New China was founded in 1949. But land suitable for people to live has shrunk from six million square kilometers to the current three million square kilometers due to serious soil erosion.

Pan added that people should not be happy about China being called "the World Factory" like we were several years ago, since China only makes "low grade industrial products" for the developed countries "by using our own resources".

Pan criticized the view of developing first and preventing and controlling pollution later, saying it is "absolutely wrong".

Pan urged that China should embark on the path of a "green rise" to calmly face the "green barrier" erected by the developed countries and pledged that China will honor all signed international pacts on environmental protection like the Kyoto protocol.

15 enterprises buy "green power" in Shanghai

(People's Daily, 2005-06-10)

http://english.people.com.cn/200506/10/eng20050610_189644.html

Beijing public buildings urged to cut energy

(China Daily, 2005-06-13)

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-06/13/content_450969.htm



Health

Nestle's apology: Too little, too late

(China Daily, 2005-06-10)

Nestle, the Swiss food industry Goliath, finally issued an apology on Sunday for having allowed excess iodine levels into some of the milk powder it sells for infants and young children in China.

The company stressed that the affected milk powder, detected on May 25, had already been withdrawn from Chinese store shelves.

The firm issued a public statement to say that the high iodine levels were not believed to be a threat to public safety.

"We apologize for the mistake in deviating from the National Standard regarding the content of iodine in some Nestle milk-based powder products," the company said. "While there is no safety or health issue, we recognize that this deviation has caused some concerns amongst consumers and the public at large."

Despite Nestle's claims that the milk powder is still safe for consumption, various health experts at home and abroad have said that infants and children may be prone to pathological changes of the thyroid gland from excess iodine intake, particularly younger children and infants.

And the firm's decision to apologize appears to have come only grudgingly, since Nestle officials first continued to defend the milk powder and dithered for several days after the inspector's findings were made known. Stores began pulling the product from their shelves after the inspector's warnings.

The iodine-affected milk powder was found during a May 25 survey by quality inspection authorities in East China's Zhejiang Province. The "Jin Pai Growing 3-Milk Powder" exceeded national standards set for the iodine.

According to its statement, Nestle is investigating the problems with its production process and raw materials. Officials have said that new procedures will be established to ensure an increase in the frequency of iodine testing, thereby making certain that milk powder products comply with Chinese standards.

Josef Mueller, president of the Nestle greater China Region, was trotted out to make a public appearance as a featured guest on China Central Television's BizChina programme, where he apologized and repeated the company's line.

"This happened in spite of our total commitment to comply with the national standard," Mueller explained.

But it is not surprising that critics are saying that Nestle's and Mueller's apologies have come a little too late for the firm's image to withstand the negative feelings already implanted in many Chinese consumers' minds.

Qiu Baochang, a lawyer for the China Consumers' Association, was quoted as saying Nestle was only reacting to all the adverse publicity, and the apology was a "late response" coming just because of that pressure.

An online survey taken indicates the apology may be falling on deaf ears. As many as 87 per cent of consumers said they would stop purchasing Nestle products, primarily because of the firm's lukewarm response to the milk powder issue after the problem was found.

Indeed, Nestle was caught remarkably flat-footed for a multinational firm of its global standing. Many believe it reacted with the speed and alacrity of a sailor drunk on shore leave.

How could a company so ham-handedly handle a crisis involving milk powder in China, some are asking, when the market here is still in shock from a tainted-milk powder scandal that claimed the lives of more than 13 infants just last year?

To create goodwill and trust with its valued Chinese consumers, Nestle should work hard to re-establish brand loyalty through offering quality products people can depend on.

That's the way the free market works.



New vaccines developed to ward off bird flu outbreak

(People's Daily, 2005-05-25)

Chinese scientists announced Wednesday two newly developed vaccines are fully capable of stopping the spread of the deadly H5N1 strain of the bird flu virus to fowl, water birds, mammals or humans.

They also said they are willing to provide technical support in epidemic prevention to other countries and regions and contribute to the breeding industry and public health security worldwide.

Chen Hualan, director of the China National Bird Flu Reference Laboratory, based in Harbin, capital of Heilongjiang Province, said the two new vaccines developed by her lab had proved to be a success: having passed a state-level appraisal, plus a permit granted by the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture for sale on the market.

"Experiments show the efficiency rate of the newly developed vaccines in preventing infection by the H5N1 virus is 100 percent," said Chen.

In the meantime, China has developed three new technologies with which it takes less than 10 hours to confirm a bird flu epidemic, comparing 72 hours in the past, with more time being gained for prevention measures or for taking action.

Dr. Bernard Vallat, Director General of World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), said China leads the world in research on bird flu and relevant technologies for prevention.

More of the two new vaccines have been sent to Gangcha County, where dead migratory birds, confirmed by Chen's lab to be caused by the deadly H5N1 virus, were found on May 4, in a bid to prevent the deadly avian disease from further spreading.

The Chinese Ministry of Agriculture also made an announcement about the incident last Saturday. It is the first reported bird flu case on the Chinese mainland since last year when China successfully wiped out the primarily avian-borne epidemic disease.

Sources said some of the dead migratory birds discovered in Gangcha County, northwest China's Qinghai Province, migrated from Southeast Asia. Migration is blamed as an important for spreading of bird flu virus, and China is on the route of migratory birds in Asia.

There is a higher risk for waterfowl to be infected with the deadly bird flu virus after mingling with migratory birds already carrying the killer disease. The bird flu virus can easily spread to domestic fowl and even humans via the water birds infected with the H5N1 virus.

There were no reports in the world of vaccines being tested on water birds before China began its research. The latest experimental results show that the newly developed vaccines of Chen's lab are equally effective in water fowl, and ducks and geese, which when inoculated with the vaccines did not develop bird flu symptoms.

"With the vaccines, one activated and the other inactivated, the important way for spreading of bird flu virus can be cut off," said Chen.

Compared with conventional ones, the inactivated bird flu vaccine can provide stronger protection against infection in water birds such as ducks and geese upon inoculation, while the term of effectiveness on chickens will be prolonged by four months. The bird flu activated vaccine can produce a protection shield against assault of the H5N1 virus in fowls within nine months after inoculation.

"Both the activated and inactivated vaccines are safe to food security, as the meat of fowls being inoculated with the vaccines have been shown not to be affected," said Chen.

An estimate made in February 2004 by UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) said about 100 million domestic fowl died of the H5N1 virus or were culled because of the infection between late 2003 and 2004. Direct economic losses were placed at 500 million US dollars.



At least 52 people in Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia were diagnosed as being infected with the bird flu virus and died.

World Health Organization (WHO) warned over one million more people could die if the H5N1 virus were spread from human to human. The human deaths caused by the common flu each year are between 250,000 and 500,000, but scientists believe mortality caused by the bird flu among human beings would be much higher.

According to Chen, some chicken farms in Vietnam have been conducting experiments with the new bird flu vaccines developed by Chen's lab over safety and effectiveness.

Agricultural officials in Vietnam said they would inoculate all their domestic fowl with the new bird flu vaccines once the experiments prove positive.

"We will spare no effort in offering support to other countries if necessary," the Chinese scientist promised.

Government reveals plan to combat AIDS

(China Daily, 2005-06-02)

AIDS and HIV are to be fought on three fronts—prevention, intervention and treatment, announced the central government yesterday.

The strategy is part of a five year plan to combat the deadly disease which affects nearly a million Chinese at least.

Wang Longde, vice-minister of the Ministry of Health and the director of the Office of the Working Committee for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control under the State Council, said the government had devised a wide range of measures for its second five-year plan to bring infection under control.

Prevention first

"First and foremost will be the emphasis on raising public awareness of HIV/AIDS prevention, which is vital to prevent the disease from spreading wider," he told China Daily.

China's first five-year plan on HIV/AIDS prevention and control (2001-05) ends this year. The second-from next year to 2010-will be critical in combating the deadly disease, said Wang.

AIDS/HIV first surfaced in the country in 1985, and is now mainly spreading among high-risk groups including blood sellers, drug abusers, prostitutes and homosexuals.

The second part of the strategy "is to identify as many HIV carriers as soon as possible," said Wang.

According to a report jointly prepared by the United Nations and the Ministry of Health in 2003, China has an estimated 840,000 HIV/AIDS recorded cases.

But only 7.4 per cent of those infected have been reported. The figure last year was 12.4 per cent while the rate of reported cases around the world is 11 per cent of estimated sufferers.

"Without knowing who the carriers are, how can governments provide the sufferers with a comprehensive care project?" asked Wang, who said the government wanted a holistic approach to combat the disease.

China made extensive efforts last year to identify victims, especially in high-risk groups, said Wang.

Thousands have been tested for HIV in Henan and other major provinces and regions where illegal and unsafe blood donations for cash and other forms of transmission were rampant in the 1990s, the minister said.

A survey in Henan last year showed that 25,000 of 280,000 blood donors in the last decade tested positive for HIV, according to provincial health authority of Henan. The nationwide figure will be released on December 1, World AIDS Day, Wang said.

Three high-risk groups which are targeted for prevention and intervention are prostitutes, homosexuals and prisoners, among whom the infection rate is believed to be worryingly high.



"The nation had 190 State-level surveillance and monitoring sites last year and 57 will be added this year," Wang said. At provincial level, there are about 400 testing centres.

Four free charges

The third part of the strategy is to strengthen the "four free charges and one care" project, said Wang.

The care scheme offers free medicine for HIV carriers, free and anonymous HIV tests, free education for orphans of HIV/AIDS victims and free prenatal treatment of infected pregnant women.

Elderly people who have lost children to AIDS receive free care.

The central and provincial governments will continue to increase spending on HIV/AIDS control and prevention. "We will not only treat the disease, but also help victims make a living," Wang said.

Sixteen infected HIV by blood in hospital

(China Daily , 2005-06-02)

At least 16 people have been affected by the HIV virus after contaminated blood was used for transfusions at a hospital in Bei'an County, Heilongjiang Province.

An ongoing investigation by the county court and other officials has disclosed at least five farm workers received contaminated blood from 1999 to 2004. The nature of the disease, however, was undisclosed.

Four others were infected by the original five with the 'mysterious' disease at the farm 330 km north to provincial capital Harbin.

But China Daily learned yesterday there could be as many as 16 infected by HIV.

A statement from the Ministry of Health on Tuesday confirmed that nine victims 'were infected' because five received tainted blood from a supply at Workers' Hospital, located on a construction farm.

"We have admitted 16 AIDS patients from the farm since last September," said a nurse in the infectious disease department of the hospital, affiliated with the Heilongjiang General Bureau of State Farms in Harbin.

"Now nine patients are still hospitalized and their status is stable," the nurse said in a telephone interview.

A farm official with Bei'an Farm, who identified himself only as Li, said victims include farm workers and peasants around his farm or which the hospital is their only medical resource.

Li also said the Harbin hospital has been treating those patients, and their medical expenses, totalling around 1 million yuan (US\$121,500), were covered by the farm, which the nurse also confirmed.

An official with the Bein farm court said it is still investigating the incident. He said he was not sure how much in reparation each victim might receive.

The statement from the Ministry of Health said some relevant officials have been disciplined within the Party and others are subjects of the criminal investigation.

Sino-US programme targets HIV/AIDS

(China Daily , 2005-06-08)

The United States will contribute US\$35 million over the next three years in a joint effort with China to combat HIV/AIDS.

US Global AIDS Coordinator Randall Tobias, who made the announcement at a press conference in Beijing yesterday, said a close partnership between China and the United States was vital for tackling the disease.



"I am very, very impressed by the commitment made by the senior leadership of China," Tobias said. "My visit here on behalf of the president of United States, President Bush, is to better understand issues in China regarding HIV/AIDS."

According to the Ministry of Health, co-operation between China and the US on HIV/AIDS prevention and control began in 2002. Apart from the two governments, the partnership now involves institutions, non-government organizations and even businesses, the ministry said.

Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province is one of the beneficiaries of the collaboration.

Since last June, the US Global AIDS Programme has helped set up 15 of the province's 21 HIV surveillance sites at disease control and prevention centres.

Between June and November last year, 60 people tested positive for HIV, accounting for one-third of such cases detected in the province since the early 1990s.

"The programme has really helped us," said Wu Yuhua, a top researcher with the provincial disease control and prevention department.

"Assistance ranges from money grants to professional personnel, and, most importantly, it is based on our actual needs."

Wu said that after a year of effort, local authorities have realized the urgent need to bring the pandemic under control. In the coming year, the programme will help provide HIV/AIDS training for local disease control departments.

But the anti-HIV/AIDS campaign still has a long way to go.

According to the Heilongjiang disease control and prevention department, HIV/AIDS is now spreading from high-risk groups, such as blood sellers, prostitutes and homosexuals, to those in lower-risk groups - mainly through sexual transmission.

"The campaign against this monstrous disease started late in our province," said Wu. "We are still short of funds, facilities and professionals with proper knowledge about HIV/AIDS, despite assistance from the central government and foreign organizations in recent years."

The Chinese Government recently pledged 3.9 billion yuan (US\$474 million) to help local governments fight AIDS and HIV.

But as well as material support, a major change is needed in local authorities' thinking, said Wu.

World Blood Donor Day marked in Beijing

(China Daily , 2005-06-15)

Guan Lihong, a medical worker in Beijing, celebrated her 55th birthday yesterday by giving away a bit of herself her blood.

"It's the last time that I can make my contribution," said Guan who works at the Beijing Blood Centre and has regularly donated blood twice a year.

China's Law on Blood Donation does not allow people over 55 to donate.

Guan said her birthday means much more to her than just being one year older because the date is the same as World Blood Donor Day, which falls every June 14.

After giving blood herself, Guan went straight to work and helped hundreds of other people who came to her centre to donate blood - a simple but extraordinary act to celebrate the special day.



"Thanks to the millions of people who give blood voluntarily, thousands of lives are saved everyday," said Guan. "I am honoured to be one of the donors."

Pu Cunxin and Yang Lan, both of whom are household names in China, joined donors yesterday giving 200 millilitres of blood each at the blood centre.

Pu and Yang were invited by the Ministry of Health to promote voluntary blood donation.

"I am an ordinary citizen. I donate blood every year for those who are in need," said Pu. "But as a public figure, I want to encourage people to help save lives."

"World Blood Donor Day is a time to thank the regular, voluntary blood donors as well as a day for personal reflection," said Ge Jinglan, spokeswoman for the blood centre.

"Almost everyone can contribute to saving a life, either by becoming a regular donor or - if health reasons prevent that - by volunteering to help on blood donation days," said Ge.

The Ministry of Health announced yesterday that the country's lofty goal of phasing out blood selling by 2008 is already achieving results.

Statistic provided by the ministry show that blood donated by volunteers accounted for 93.6 per cent of the total clinical blood consumption in the first quarter of this year. The figure was 22 per cent in 1998.

China, WHO to provide AIDS intervention on homosexuals in Hunan

(People's Daily, 2005-06-19)

http://english.people.com.cn/200506/19/eng20050619_191115.html

China launches 3-year-long anti-drug people's war

(People's Daily, 2005-06-22)

http://english.people.com.cn/200506/22/eng20050622_191739.html

Two die of plague in Tibet, epidemic under control

(People's Daily, 2005-06-27)

http://english.people.com.cn/200506/27/eng20050627_192560.html