



Research and Environment News from China

Number 34 – April 2007

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Introduction

A high ranking Swiss delegation headed by State Secretary for Education and Research, Charles Kleiber, visited Beijing and Shanghai from 22 to 26 April. The purpose was to hold discussions on the implementation of the bilateral cooperation strategy for science and technology. The strategy of bilateral cooperation countries is part of the dispatch on the promotion of education, research and technology in the period from 2008 to 2011 that the Federal Council submitted to the Swiss parliament. The delegation included the director of the Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology, the President of the Swiss National Science Foundation, and Presidents of major universities.

During the visit of the Swiss delegation in Beijing, a public commemoration event took place in celebration of the 300th anniversary of Leonhard Euler. Prof. Rolf Jeltsch of ETH gave a speech titled "Leonhard Euler – his life, personality, discoveries and their impact today" and State Secretary for Education and Research, Charles Kleiber, extended an invitation to 16 Chinese Ph.D. students in applied mathematics to attend the 6th International Congress on Industrial and Applied Mathematics at ETH in July 2007. They will also visit research institutions and be able to explore opportunities for cooperation with Swiss colleagues.

Science & Technology

1. **China's railway network enters high speed era**
2. **China emerging as global R&D hub**
3. **China's nuclear plants generate 54.8 billion kwh of electricity in 2006**
4. **China's self-made satellite launched**
5. **China to develop five more oceanic survey satellites**
6. **China launches second oceanic survey satellite**
7. **More China-made high-speed trains to hit the rails**
8. **China launches "Compass" navigation satellite**
9. **Bullet trains set to join fastest in the world**
10. **China's nuclear industry seeks self-reliance**

KEYWORDS

railway network

global R&D hub

nuclear plants

China's self-made satellite

oceanic survey satellites

oceanic survey satellite launched

high-speed trains

navigation satellite launched

bullet trains

China's nuclear industry

Environment

1. **More Environmental-friendly Buses to Cut Pollution in Beijing**
2. **Pollution Figures to Be Made Public**

KEYWORDS

bus pollution

pollution figures



- 3. **SEPA Blocks 12 Industrial Projects for Lack of Public Support** *industrial projects blocked*
- 4. **China tackling illegal timber imports, says FM spokesman** *illegal timber imports*
- 5. **Beijing's Public Transport to Go Greener** *greener public transport*

Energy

KEYWORDS

- 1. **Media Supervision on Energy Consumption Urged** *energy consumption*

Health

KEYWORDS

- 1. **HIV cases hit record high in Shanghai** *HIV cases*
- 2. **Chinese Vice Premier calls for improvements to community medical services** *medical services*

Activites coming up soon

May 20, 2007
16th IAA Humans in Space Symposium
Beijing, China
Tel: 86-10-62559882
April 2007
May 20-23, 2007
The 14th International Conference on Interdisciplinary Mathematical & Statistical Techniques
Shanghai, China
May 23, 2007
The 10th Multinational Urban Traffic Conference and Exhibition
Beijing, China
Tel: 86-10-6217 0166
May 28, 2007
Int'l Conference of Resource Recycling Utilization
Tianjin, China
Tel: 86-10-68594793
May 2007
The 7th International Conference for Computing Science
Beijing, China
May 2007
2007 China Automobil Technology Expo
Wuhan, China
Tel: 86-10-6528 6970



June 5 – 7, 2007
The 11th International Electric Power Industry, Power Network Technology & Power Supply Equipment Expo
Guangzhou, China
June 5 – 7, 2007
The 3rd International Renewable Energy & Energy Environmental Protection Technology Expo\
Guangzhou, China
June 11, 2007
ISES 2007 Solar World Congress & Int'l Solar Energy Exhibition
Beijing, China
Tel: 86-10-6217 4059
June 19, 2007
The 10th China Int'l Environmental Protection Exhibition and Conference – CIEPEC 2007
Beijing, China
Tel: 86-10-5155 5020
June 25, 2007
BioEco 2007
Tianjin, China
June 2007
ChinaNano 2007
Beijing, China
Tel: 86-10-6859 7244
July 16 – 20, 2007
6th International Congress on Industrial and Applied Mathematics
Zurich, Switzerland
http://www.iciam07.ch
August 2007
ICIC 2007
Qingdao, China
Tel: 86-551-5591195
November 22, 2007
The 6th China Int'l Mechanism, Hardware & Mould Exhibition
Dongguan, China
Tel: 86-10-6859 4793

Environment-related international tenders and investment opportunities:

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



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Science & Technology

China's railway network enters high speed era

(People's Daily Online, 2007-04-13)

Vice Minister of Railways Hu Yadong announced Wednesday that on April 18, the railway speed limit will be raised for the sixth time, allowing trains in most parts of the country to travel 20% to 30% faster, at speeds of more than 200 and up to 250 kilometers per hour. China has entered an era of high speed railway travel which will benefit both people and economic development.

Passenger transportation capacity to increase by 18%

According to Hu Yadong, 212 pairs of trains will increase their speed to more than 200 kilometers per hour. They are not only operating in eastern coastal areas such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, but also in northwest and northeast China. Travel time between big cities will be substantially reduced. The number of trains that set off in the evening and arrive in the morning will increase from 32 to 337. The speed of passenger trains along 18 lines will be increased to more than 120 kilometers per hour.

The increase in train speed does not mean an increase in prices. Taking a train will be more comfortable than ever before. There will be Class A and Class B seats and a dining carriage. Both kinds of seats are very comfortable but in Class A there are fewer seats and there is more room. There will be audio and video systems in the train. Lights and signs in the train all meet international standards. The environment in the train is also much better than the current passenger trains.

The Ministry of Railways has formed four food companies which will supply passengers with different foods according to passenger needs, the season and the region. They will ensure that prices on the train are no higher than those off the train.

Train will be safer

Vice Minister Hu Yadong said China has mastered all the technologies needed for trains to travel at a speed of 250 kilometers per hour. The electricity supply system, railway facilities and train control system are all world class.

He said the Ministry of Railway has always paid great attention to safety on the railways after increasing speed limits. Since 2003, China has invested approximately 100 million yuan in upgrading railway lines.

Cargo transport capacity will increase by 12%

Hu Yadong said the speed limit increase will promote the rail cargo industry. On the new cargo train map, there are 121 lines, 30 more than in 2004. The new train map incorporates 90 major cities and 8 ports across China. "This will be very convenient for the transportation market," said Hu Yadong.

According to the new train map, there has been a substantial increase in the number of direct lines for resource type products such as coal, iron and oil. The number of direct lines for these products has risen to 406, up 226 lines from 2004. A transportation network for resource products will be formed and help guarantee the transportation of key national materials in the future.

China emerging as global R&D hub

(China Daily, 2007-04-13)



Many Chinese producers, previously manufacturing according to the buyers' designs, are innovating and designing new products for global market in the second wave of sourcing from China, an article in the Business Week said last week.

The article by Jim Hemerling of Boston Consulting Group divided the sourcing of components and products from China into three stages: Wave 1.0, China for low cost; Wave 2.0, China participates in innovation; Wave 3.0, China as global center for procurement.

The first wave of Chinese sourcing was driven by Western companies' competitive search for low cost components and finished goods, with numerous U.S., Japanese, and European companies establishing corporate beachheads in China, according to Hemerling.

Wave One sourcing from China took off when manufacturers demonstrated they could produce quality products for less money, more often than not using the buyers' own designs, said the article.

Gradually, many Chinese suppliers moved far beyond being arm's length suppliers, in a wide range of industries, from consumer electronics and IT equipment to automotive manufacturing.

They started to innovate and collaborate with their customers on component and product design, marking the transition to sourcing 2.0, the article said.

That was evidenced by China's skyrocketing investment in R&D. China was the world's second biggest investor in R&D after the US in 2006, estimated the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, according to the author.

Using purchasing power parity as its measure, OECD estimated that the U.S. would spend \$330 billion on R&D, China \$136 billion, Japan \$130 billion, and the EU-15 a combined \$230 billion.

The author also referred to the establishment of more than 700 R&D facilities in China by multinationals, citing statistics from the 2005 World Investment Report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

The article went on to claim that sourcing wave 3.0 is underway, citing the IBM announcement that it is moving its global procurement headquarters to Shenzhen as the most visible sign.

"Today's China is the center of an economic maelstrom that grows larger and more powerful (and increasingly complex) every day," the author said.

R&D centers originally set up to support product localization for the Chinese market are now going full force in developing new products for the global market, according to Hemerling.

These rapid changes, which will continue to accelerate, mean that many Western companies have to rethink their global procurement operations, the article said.

The author made specific reference to the electronics as a combination of low cost R&D capabilities and deep multi-layer networks of electronic suppliers clustered together has turned China into the dominant global electronics hub.

But wave 3.0 does not stop within the electronic industry. The author also mentioned General Motors which has relocated its power-train electronics procurement offices to China.

Other companies and industries will follow suit, Hemerling predicted. An evaluation of China sourcing operations of leading multinationals by the Boston Consulting Group indicated that many are still struggling with sourcing 2.0; only a few have started to come to grips with wave 3.0.

China's nuclear plants generate 54.8 billion kwh of electricity in 2006

(Xinhua, 2007-04-24)

China's nine operating nuclear power units generated 54.8 billion kwh of electricity in 2006, or 1.9 percent of the country's total, an official with the state atomic energy agency has said.



Sun Qin, director of the China Atomic Energy Authority, disclosed the figures at the on-going seventh China international nuclear industry expo which kicked off in Shanghai on Monday.

Sun said China's current operating nuclear power units have a total installed capacity of 6.99 million kilowatts, and the country will have 11 units in operation by the end of 2007, with total capacity of 9.11 million kilowatts.

China plans to increase its nuclear power capacity to 40 million kilowatts by 2020, to account for four percent of the country's total electric power, according to the country's medium and long-term development plan for nuclear power building.

China built its first nuclear power plant in east coastal Zhejiang Province in 1991.

The nuclear industry expo, a biyearly event, was first held in Shanghai in 1995. The current three-day event attracted nearly 200 enterprises from more than 20 countries and regions worldwide.

China's self-made satellite launched

(Xinhua, 2007-04-11)

http://english.people.com.cn/200704/11/eng20070411_365578.html

China to develop five more oceanic survey satellites

(Xinhua, 2007-04-11)

http://english.people.com.cn/200704/11/eng20070411_365515.html

China launches second oceanic survey satellite

(Xinhua, 2007-04-12)

http://english.people.com.cn/200704/11/eng20070411_365549.html

More China-made high-speed trains to hit the rails

(Xinhua, 2007-04-13)

http://english.people.com.cn/200704/13/eng20070413_366123.html

China launches "Compass" navigation satellite

(Xinhua, 2007-04-14)

http://english.people.com.cn/200704/14/eng20070414_366498.html

Bullet trains set to join fastest in the world

(China Daily, 2007-04-18)

http://english.people.com.cn/200704/18/eng20070418_367534.html

China's nuclear industry seeks self-reliance

(China Daily, 2007-04-24)

http://english.people.com.cn/200704/24/eng20070424_369200.html

Environment

More Environmental-friendly Buses to Cut Pollution in Beijing

(Xinhua News Agency, 2007-04-19)

Beijing transport authorities are to phase out 2,500 buses which fail to meet emissions standards and buy 2,810 environment-friendly vehicles this year.

Eighty percent, of 2,350, of the public transport vehicles to be purchased by the city this year will be buses with diesel engines that have achieved the European IV standard for emissions, and 160 will be trolleybuses.

The city would buy another 300 buses which run on compressed natural gas, bringing their total number to 4,000, said Feng Xingfu, deputy general manager of Beijing Public Transport Holdings Ltd.



"Compared with the European III standard, European IV has cut particle emissions by a further 80 percent. European IV buses will have more engine power and improved fuel efficiency." said Feng.

"Beijing is in fact keeping in pace with European countries," he added.

Vehicle emissions are a major source of pollution in the Chinese capital. The municipal government has announced it will renew public transport vehicles that fail environment standards before the 2008 Olympic Games.

The public transport company has upgraded 11,000 buses since 2004, or 60 percent of the total. The number of renewed buses is expected to reach 20,000.

The design of the new vehicles will be more passenger-oriented. For example, the buses will be lower and more accessible to the elderly, and handrails will be more convenient for passengers, Feng said.

Pollution Figures to Be Made Public

(Xinhua News Agency, 2007-04-27)

China's environmental departments and polluters will each have to publish information regarding environmental degradation and pollution, according to a draft measure tabled yesterday by the country's environmental watchdog.

"Environmental departments at all levels are required to make public 17 categories of information including laws, regulations, policies and standards regarding environmental protection," said the draft issued by the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA).

The measure, which will come into effect on May 1, 2008, tailed a State Council decree on Tuesday that sought to create additional state transparency by requiring all departments to report information more openly.

The draft measure would require environmental information within 20 working days and to be made easily accessible to the public. Furthermore, any request for information from the public must be handled within 15 days.

"Polluting companies, after being black-listed, have 30 days to publish information concerning their bad discharges in local media," states the regulation. This draft comes amidst a rising trend of pollution-related lawsuits that expand by 30 percent annually.

Pan Yue, vice director of SEPA, said China's current environmental regulations were lacking in terms of "information transparency," a gap that is not conducive to public participation in environmental protection.

"The public's right to know, to participate and to supervise should be fully considered in environmental protection. Massive public participation is needed," Pan argued. "People should participate more than planting trees or cleaning rubbish. They should take part in policy-making."

Since February last year, SEPA has declared a war on excessive pollution and public mood, stopping 43 projects worth a total of 160 billion yuan (US\$20.7 billion) after public outcry at the environmental impact these would have.

SEPA Blocks 12 Industrial Projects for Lack of Public Support

(Xinhua News Agency, 2007-04-27)

Twelve industrial projects are denied environmental protection approvals to operation on grounds that the public have not been invited to assess pollution control measures, China's environment watchdog announced on Thursday.

They are among the 43 projects, with a combined investment of 160 billion yuan (US\$20.5 billion), that had been rejected construction by the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) in the past year.

Among the blocked projects, 29 were in the highly polluting industries such as coal-burning power stations and various chemical plants.

The other 31 had finally been granted the approval after they carried out public opinion consultation properly, said Pan Yue, deputy director of the SEPA.



"We refuse to hand out environmental protection approvals to these projects for they failed to pass public assessment. Some failed to properly inform the public on potential pollution and some collected the opinion that did not reflect the thoughts of the majority," he said.

In March last year, the SEPA issued provisional regulations to require industrial project managers to consult public opinion -- for example by conducting public survey and hearing -- on a project's potential impact on the environment before construction starts.

Public involvement must be carried out in "an open, equal, extensive and convenient way," said the regulations.

He said public opinion helped reduce many pollution threats including a chemical plant in central Wuhan city that emitted eroding gas and a coal-burning power station in southeastern Fuzhou city that caused floating dusts.

China first looked into a way of involving the public in 2005, when a construction project in Yuanmingyuan, a former imperial garden in the northwestern suburbs of Beijing, caused an uproar in the country.

The SEPA on Wednesday issued another document ordering environmental departments and polluters to publicize information regarding environmental degradation and pollution.

Companies or factories exceeding pollution levels and whose facilities are not up to environmental standards will have to report this information, the document says.

"Polluting companies have to publish information concerning the discharge of main pollutants in local media within 30 days after local environmental departments draw up company blacklists," according to the regulations.

The document came after the release of a decree on Tuesday by the State Council to boost official transparency by ordering government departments to be more open in reporting information.

China tackling illegal timber imports, says FM spokesman

(Xinhua, 2007-04-17)

http://english.people.com.cn/200704/17/eng20070417_367317.html

Beijing's Public Transport to Go Greener

(China Daily, 2007-04-24)

<http://www.china.org.cn/english/olympic/208514.htm>

Energy

Media Supervision on Energy Consumption Urged

(Xinhua News Agency, 2007-04-28)

China's top legislator on Friday called on the media to increase supervision over energy consumption and pollutant emissions to assist the authorities' efforts to control pollution.

Wu Bangguo, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, said the media should play a role in arousing the public's awareness of energy-saving and exposing problems and irregularities.

Wu was speaking to journalists from the state media who are expected to report on a nationwide environmental protection supervision tour.

The top legislator urged "in-depth reports" on the issues that most concern the public and ones that receive the most complaints.



The annual media supervision campaign, dubbed the All-China Environmental Protection Century Tour, was first launched in 1993 with participants from 28 media including the People's Daily, Xinhua News Agency and China Central Television.

Between 2003 and 2006, the campaign organized nearly 300 journalists to tour around the country. About 1,200 new reports were filed.

The campaign sets a different theme for every year and will, for 2007, focus on reducing energy consumption and pollutant emissions, the targets that the central government admitted they failed to meet in the past year.

In the government work report delivered at last year's annual parliamentary full session, Premier Wen Jiabao said the goal of cutting energy consumption per unit GDP by 20 percent in the five-year period from 2006 to 2010. The goal for 2006 was four percent.

However, in March, the National Bureau of Statistics reported China's per unit GDP energy consumption fell 1.23 percent in 2006.

Despite the failure, Wen said the "serious" five-year target of energy consumption reduction will not be changed, and the government will try every means to reach the goal.

Slow industrial restructuring and over-heated growth of the heavy industry, especially the highly energy-consuming and polluting sectors, were to blame, according to experts and government officials.

Lots of outdated production facilities are still in operation. Meanwhile, some local governments and companies failed to strictly comply with laws, regulations and standards on energy saving and environmental protection, they said.

Health

HIV cases hit record high in Shanghai

(China Daily, 2007-04-14)

SHANGHAI: This city reported a record number of new HIV infections last year, according to the municipal public health administration.

There were 718 HIV infections last year, and 53 HIV patients developed AIDS. The number of infections represents a 54 percent increase over the previous year and a record.

Despite the higher figures, the incidence rate of the disease in Shanghai is still lower than the national average, said Cai Wei, vice-director of the municipal public health administration.

Shanghai reported its first HIV infection in 1987. Since then, 2,313 infections had been reported by the end of 2006. One hundred people have died.

Cai attributed the increase to a variety of factors present in the city, including the sex trade and drug addiction. Health authorities have been working to combat the disease, but many underground businesses offering sex services continue to operate in the shadows, making it difficult to compile accurate data.

Health authorities have been working with police to shed light on such businesses. And Shanghai is planning to strengthen its public health system under a three-year plan. The city is also slated to open more methadone clinics for drug users.

"Shanghai is like other larger cities in East China, which have been reporting more HIV transmissions through sexual intercourse in recent years," said an official surnamed Zhuang from the city's disease control center.

"All government departments should be involved," Zhuang said. "HIV is not just an infectious disease, it is a social problem, and fighting it will take coordination from all departments, from legal and educational bodies, to the women's federation and border inspectors."



The city's recently published five-year plan against HIV/AIDS emphasizes government intervention and education. It requires 90 percent of government officials to be trained in how to deal with the disease and calls for most citizens and migrants to receive some sort of education about preventing HIV/AIDS and blood safety.

Sexually transmitted diseases are becoming increasingly common in Shanghai. In March alone, the city reported 935 syphilis cases, accounting for more than a quarter of the new cases of serious infectious diseases in the city .

Health authorities operate three hotlines dealing with HIV/AIDS prevention. They provide information about the disease, expert advice about prevention and medical advice for infected patients.

"The hotlines are effective in spreading information and helping intervention," Zhuang said. "The treatment of AIDS is covered by the city's medical insurance system." He added that people who are not covered by the system can receive free medication if they apply.

Chinese Vice Premier calls for improvements to community medical services

(Xinhua, 2007-05-01)

Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi said on Monday that the community-based health care system should be further improved to benefit more people.

The major criterion for assessing community medical services is whether people living in the communities are satisfied with the services or not, Wu said while inspecting community clinics in Beijing.

"It's the government's duty to keep improving community-based medical services, which offer those who cannot afford expensive hospital bills convenient access to healthcare," Wu said.

She spoke highly of the performance of Beijing's community clinics, saying residents have benefited from improved service, better networks and lower charges.

She urged local governments to work out measures to attract more firms, social organizations and individuals to contribute to community medical services.

China's health care at community level and in rural areas has long suffered from a lack of doctors.

Earlier reports said that about 80 percent of China's two million registered doctors work in cities, and 80 percent of them work in major hospitals.