



Research and Environment News from China

Number 35 – May 2007

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Introduction

The Chinese government has announced its first national action plan to respond to climate change during a state council conference chaired by the premier Wen Jiabao, describing the climate change effects in China and measures China will take. The interest in international cooperation was specifically emphasised. Local governments are urged to implement the action plan, including the organization of public awareness campaigns on environment protection.

Besides, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) announced that 4,000 small coal mines will be closed by the end of the year, with the objective of closing 10'000 by 2010, due to their negative impact on the environment.

Science & Technology

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space information
gene controlling rice

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reduce railway pollution
coal-bed methane mining
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first clean fuel plant



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1. Chinese lawmakers fret about food safety
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KEYWORDS

- food safety*
hand-foot-mouth outbreak
China virus outbreak

Activites coming up soon

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
June 28-30, 2007
Wind Power Asia 2007
China World Trade Centre, Beijing
Tel: 86-10-8814 5170 / 86-10-8814 5171
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 constructs space information "highway"

(People's Daily Online, 2007-05-23)

China will construct a spatial information system which is composed of 60 to 70 satellites, and will launch the "Chang'e 1" lunar orbiting spacecraft in the second half of this year.

[China constructs Compass Navigation Satellite System \(Beidou 1\)](#)

Zhang Weiqing, General Manager of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation, and Chairman of the Chinese Society of Astronautics said on the 16th that China will establish a spatial information system, composed of 60 to 70 satellites, during the "11th Five-Year Plan" period (2006-2010), so as to better serve the nation's economic and social development.

[Satellite R&D shifts from experiments to services](#)

Zhang Qingwei said that the spatial information system will include communication and broadcasting satellites, earth resource satellites, meteorological satellites, navigation satellites, scientific experiment satellites, and so on. Next year, China will launch three small satellites for environmental monitoring and disaster prediction. It also plans to launch another four satellites of similar type in another 2-3 years to come, so as to provide large-scale, 24-hour monitoring, prediction and assessment of the state of ecological damage, environmental pollution and natural disasters; and improve China's comprehensive capacity for disaster reduction and environment protection.

After attending the 11th Pacific Rim International Symposium on Space, which was jointly hosted by the Chinese Society of Astronautics, the American Astronautical Society and the [Japanese](#) Rocket Society, Zhang stated that China is shifting from using satellites for experiments to providing real services.

[China will develop nearly 100 spacecrafts during "11th Five-Year Plan"](#)

Ma Xingrui, Vice President of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation, disclosed at the China International Aviation and Aerospace Forum, that during the "11th Five-Year Plan" period, China will develop nearly 100 spacecrafts, including communications and broadcasting satellites, earth resource satellites, retrievable satellites, meteorological satellites, navigation satellites and scientific experiment satellites.



Ma added that China is developing a new generation of satellites, including the Feng Yun 3 Polar Orbiting Meteorological Satellite and the Feng Yun 4 Geo-static Orbiting Meteorological Satellite. This series of satellites will enhance China's capabilities in the prevention of major disasters, monitoring and emergency response. In addition, the country is also making endeavors to develop ZY-1 2B, 03 and 04 satellites. They will be widely used in agriculture, forestry, water resources, minerals, marine life, disaster reduction, environmental protection, as well as urban planning and management, and mapping of areas. The Marine 2 satellite, which is under development, will conduct comprehensive surveys of winds, wave fields, wave height, the ocean's gravitational field, ocean circulation and sea surface temperature.

"Chang'e 1" to be launched in the second half of this year

Ouyang Ziyuan, the chief scientist of China's lunar exploration program said on May 16th that so far the satellite, rocket, launch site and ground control of the program are ready and the "Chang'e 1" will be launched in the second half of this year. During the second phase of this program, China will launch a soft landing device and a lunar rover. The first will do site exploration and the second will conduct an inspection.

China has attracted much attention from space experts in different countries since it announced the three-phase "Chang'e Project" as its first lunar exploration program. Ouyang Ziyuan for the first time disclosed the launch time to the public.

The satellites, rockets, ground-based monitoring, launch site and the ground data receiving devices are all ready, Ouyang said, and China can fulfill its mission in the second half of this year.

The orbit design for the "Change 1" lunar exploration satellite has been completed. After the satellite enters the geosynchronous orbit, it will complete a flight of 380,000 km with the help of multistage propulsion, and then, enter the orbit of the moon. 122 experts from 80 universities and research institutes will form the committee of lunar exploration and study the data received from the "Chang'e 1" during its one-year flight.

Ouyang Ziyuan said, "We will draw a three-dimensional map of the moon, map out the distribution of more than 10 elements on the moon, measure the thickness of lunar surface soil, and monitor the space environment outside the moon."

He also added that China will use Long March 3A carrier rockets to send its first lunar exploration satellite "Chang'e 1" into the space. The entire launch will be completed at the Xichang Satellite Launching Center.

Scientists Isolate Gene Controlling Rice Size and Weight

(Xinhua News Agency April 13, 2007)

Chinese scientists have successfully identified a rice gene that controls a grain's weight and are experimenting with the new discovery to boost grain yield.

The previously unknown gene, called GW2, is responsible for limiting a grain's size and weight, said scientists with the National Key Laboratory of Plant Molecular Genetics in Shanghai.

Lin Hongxuan, one of the researchers, said a weaker dominance of the gene could speed up the splitting of grain cells and enlarge the size, which would lead to higher weight and output.

Scientists have picked out the gene in existing large-grain varieties in which the GW2 gene is relatively recessive and introduced it into small-grain varieties.

This led to new varieties from grains larger than the original. Though each rice spike contained fewer grains as they grew larger and heavier, the overall weight still increased markedly.

While scientists agree this discovery will be valuable for improving grain yield, they stress that it's too early to predict how it would enhance the rice output if applied in a paddy field.

Their research results have been published on the website of Nature Genetics on April 8, while all the three judges described it as a landmark discovery in rice cultivation.

Earlier reports said Lin's research team had also identified the gene controlling the grain's quantity.



They were also working on that gene in the hope of controlling both quantity and quality and producing varieties with higher yields.

Environment

Chinese vice premier stresses pollution control

(Xinhua, 2007-05-07)

Chinese Vice Premier Zeng Peiyan has urged local governments to push forward industrial restructuring and take effective measures to curb pollution.

China's commitment in reducing energy consumption and cutting pollution is "unalterable", said Zeng during his inspection tour in central Hunan Province from May 29 to May 2.

Local governments must carry out the policy and fulfil the goal with full efforts, Zeng said.

Dongting Lake, the country's second largest freshwater lake, has suffered serious pollution in recent years.

Earlier this month, more than 100 paper mills that discharge chemical waste into the lake were ordered by Hunan authorities to be closed after they failed to live up to promises to reduce pollution.

Zeng urged local governments to continue such efforts and take more measures to promote the environmental-friendly industry and technology.

China has set a goal to slash its energy consumption per unit of domestic gross product by 20 percent and the discharges of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and chemical oxygen demand (COD) by 10 percent between 2006 and 2010.

During his four-day tour in Hunan, Zeng also visited factories, residential communities and farmers.

He urged local authorities to be more attentive to the concerns of the public and help solve their difficulties, especially in housing.

China closes down 3,176 polluting companies last year

(Xinhua, 2007-05-06)

China closed down a total of 3,176 polluting enterprises amid a campaign in which 720,000 companies have been checked for their pollution discharges last year, according to the country's top environment watchdog.

In the campaign, the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) and other departments investigated 28,000 cases violating related environmental laws and regulations and settled 13,000 of the total.

Threats to the sources of drinking water, industrial parks densely distributed with polluting enterprises and construction projects likely to damage the environment were the major targets in the campaign, according to the administration.

"Pollution by industrial parks has been curbed effectively," said an official with the administration.

A total of 1,981 industrial parks across the country, involving 29,890 enterprises, were subject to investigation, and 4,162 polluting companies got severe punishment, the official said.

Other six ministerial departments, including the Ministry of Supervision, participated in the campaign.

China failed to meet its energy conservation and pollution control targets last year, and environmental degradation remains a prominent problem stifling China's economic and social development.

China reported 161 pollution accidents last year. The administration suspended 163 projects that would damage the environment with a total investment of 770 billion yuan (96 billion U.S. dollars).

Many of the projects were highly-polluting and energy-costly, such as constructions of steel and power plants.



This year China has made greater efforts to fight against pollution. In March, SEPA published a long list of more than 6,000 industrial polluters, including well-known companies and factories such as Sinopec's Nanjing facility and a steel plant owned by Beijing Shougang Company.

SEPA has required all the companies on the list to install automatic monitoring and control systems which are directly connected to local environmental protection departments.

It also orders local environment departments to make site checks at least once a month and ensure the appropriate pollution discharge fees are paid.

SEPA also issued a draft measure recently, requiring environmental departments at all levels to make public 17 categories of environmental information including laws, regulations, policies and standards regarding environmental protection.

China to reduce railway pollution by 10 pct by 2010

(Xinhua, 2007-05-10)

China will reduce pollution caused by railway by ten percent by 2010, according to a blueprint composed by the Ministry of Railway.

According to the 11th five-year railway environmental protection plan, which set goals from 2006 to 2010 and kicks off Wednesday formally, emission of sulfur dioxide in railway sector will be limited to 41,818 tons in 2010.

Meanwhile, it plans to make green with plants along 30,000 kilometers of railway.

The ministry will strengthen inspection on environmental protection in railway construction projects, speed up managing of passenger train waste and develop advanced technologies, the ministry said without giving further details.

China keen to promote coal-bed methane mining

(Xinhua, 2007-05-10)

http://english.people.com.cn/200705/10/eng20070510_373334.html

China calls for coordinated global efforts to address climate change

(Xinhua, 2007-05-22)

China on Monday fully elaborate on its stand on climate change, and urged the industrialized nations to take a lead in tackling the "severe challenge around the globe".

"To deal with climate change is a systematic and integrated work and requires the international community enhance cooperation and make joint efforts," said Chinese State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan.

While meeting with a UN special envoy on climate change Han Seung-soo, Tang, a veteran diplomat, set forth comprehensive viewpoints on how to tackle climate change as some nations are pressing the largest developing country to take more responsibility.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon had appointed three special envoys on climate change, including South Korean Foreign Minister Han Seung-soo.

The special envoys will solicit the views of national leaders, including those who are key actors in the climate change negotiations. First, feasible scenario after national situations and development level after consultation.

Tang demanded the developed nations take a lead on greenhouse gas emission reduction and provide assistance for the developing countries in terms of technology transfer and capital, while the developing countries follow the path of sustainable development.

"The developed nations have both responsibility and capability to contribute more to climate change," said Tang.



"Only When the developed and developing nations join hands can climate change be solved fundamentally," he added.

Tang highlighted the principle of "common but differentiated

responsibilities" in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which he said lays foundation for international cooperation and holding together global partnership.

Tang also hoped a feasible scenario on climate change should be instituted by taking into account national situations and development level of each country.

As a developing country, China is not obligated to meet targets set by the Kyoto Protocol, under which 38 industrialized countries must reduce their gas emissions by an average of 5.2 percent below 1990 levels, during the period 2008 to 2012.

But China has realized it must do its part to slow global warming as the country has become the world's second largest carbon dioxide emitter and is likely to overtake the United States in the near future.

The Chinese government has set a goal of reducing energy consumption per unit of gross domestic product by 20 percent by 2010, while pollutant discharge should drop by 10 percent.

China has taken a series of measures to deal with climate change, and has achieved notable results in this regard, said Tang.

At a teleconference meeting in early May, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao has urged more curbs on industries that consume more energy and release more pollutants in a bid to ensure a healthy and fast economic growth.

Wen also said to meet the target is an urgent demand of global climate change and the coal-dependant China should bear the responsibility to reduce pollutant emission.

China supports the UN's active role in dealing with climate change, hoping the UN could help promote talks on gas emission reduction mechanism after the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012, said Tang.

Han Seung-soo spoke highly of the constructive and active role China has played in climate change, saying the international community should make joint efforts to fight the global problem.

Drought Leaves 1.6 Mln People Short of Drinking Water

(Xinhua News Agency May 25, 2007)

More than 1.6 million people in western China are facing drinking water shortages due to a severe drought, local government sources said.

The worst drought in 60 years has hit the central and eastern areas of the northwestern province of Gansu, leaving nearly 900,000 people short of drinking water and affecting 1.46 million hectares of cropland, according to the Gansu provincial flood control and drought relief office.

Qingyang, Pingliang and Tianshui in eastern Gansu have not seen any significant rainfall for the past two months, the office said.

Crops are expected to fail on about 80,000 hectares while another 100,000 hectares will not even be planted because of the drought, it said.

In worst-hit Qingyang, it's costing residents 80 to 110 yuan (US\$10.3 to 14.2) for a cubic meter of water.

Though there was moderate rainfall over the past few days, it did little to alleviate the drought in worst-hit areas, the office said.

Drought is also plaguing the southwestern province of Sichuan, which saw its worst drought in half a century last summer.



Seventy-two counties of Sichuan have not had rain for 20 to 28 days, said Zuo Xiong, deputy director of the Sichuan provincial meteorological station.

As of Sunday, 760,000 people and 810,000 livestock in Sichuan faced drinking water shortages, according to an official with the provincial water resource department.

The two provinces are considering trying to make artificial rainfall to alleviate the drought.

Three Gorges Reservoir at Risk of Upriver Pollution: Expert

(Xinhua News Agency May 25, 2007)

The water quality in China's Three Gorges reservoir on the Yangtze River is being polluted by discharge from industry and towns upstream of the giant dam, a Chinese environmental scientist said on Thursday.

While the water quality in the mainstream of the Yangtze River is relatively good, the river's main tributaries such as the Jialing River, Tuojiang River and Wujiang River upstream from the Three Gorges reservoir are seriously polluted, Wei Fusheng, vice director of Chinese Society for Environmental Sciences, said at the annual meeting of the society.

About 75 percent of the pollutants in the reservoir are from the three main tributaries, said Wei, who is also a member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering.

More than 60 percent of the organic pollution in the reservoir comes from industry, agriculture and urban settlements along the banks of the Yangtze River and the Jialing River, Wei said.

Another report on Yangtze River protection and development released by the Nanjing Institute of Geography and Limnology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences last month showed that more than 600 kilometers of the Yangtze River are in critical condition. Almost 30 percent of its major tributaries are seriously polluted.

The report also assessed the Three Gorges Dam project, showing its huge reservoir is seriously polluted by pesticides, fertilizers and sewage from passenger boats.

The Three Gorges Project, the world's largest hydropower project, includes a 185-meter-high dam and 26 generators. It is located on the middle reaches of the Yangtze.

There are 160 million people living in the Three Gorges area in five provinces and municipalities.

Environmental Situation Continues to Deteriorate

(Xinhua News Agency May 23, 2007)

Spring sandstorms helped sweep away air pollutants and reduce the number of heavy pollution days at the beginning of the year, but the nation's overall environmental situation continues to deteriorate with several major rivers and lakes clogged with heavy discharges of industrial waste, the country's environment watchdog said in Beijing today.

"Pollution worsened in many parts of the country in the first quarter of the year according to nationwide monitor results," Pan Yue, deputy director of the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA), said in Beijing today.

The improved air quality in some cities is absolutely no reason for complacency because foul air emissions are beyond acceptable limits in other cities," Pan said.

Eight sandstorms from north China helped produce an additional 13 days of clear skies and fresh air for each city, reducing the size of airborne particles.

According to the SEPA official, China's seven major water systems including the Yangtze River and Yellow River remained "mildly polluted", with no obvious alteration in water quality in general.

An earlier report on Yangtze River protection and development said that more than 600 kilometers of the river are in critical condition, and pollution, damming and too many boats have caused a dramatic decline in Yangtze aquatic life.



Pan said pollution of three rivers -- the Songhuajiang River in northeastern China, Huaihe River north of the Yangtze River and Haihe River near Beijing and Tianjin -- had worsened a great deal. He said that the situation of the Taihu Lake and Chaohu Lake in East China and Dianchi Lake in Yunnan Province had also deteriorated dramatically.

Drinking water quality in major Chinese cities monitored by the SEPA also deteriorated in the first three months with 69.3 percent rated as "qualified," 5 percentage points lower than the same time last year, he said.

Polluters Must Cut or Stop Production During Olympics

(China Daily June 1, 2007)

Heavy-polluting industries in Beijing will be told to scale back production during the Olympics next August, while some firms will be completely shut down, Vice-Mayor Ji Lin said yesterday.

"Some plants will be asked to adjust their working hours and production processes. Some plants will reduce production, while some will have to stop work altogether," Ji said.

"During the Games, we will place more restrictions on the Shougang Group to further reduce pollution."

Shougang, a major steel maker in the capital, is on schedule to relocate to Tangshan, a neighboring industrial hub. A coking and chemical factory was closed last July, reducing the amount of coal burnt in the capital by 3 million tons. The move also cut the amount of waste dust released by 7,300 tons.

More than 190 chemical plants have been shut as a result of anti-pollution schemes related to the Games.

On the subject of traffic control, the senior official cited the 1996 Summer Games in Atlanta. The host city coaxed some 2.5 million vehicles off the road to ease traffic flows.

"We will consider the experiences of previous Games, while taking Beijing's situation into account," he said.

Ji said Beijing would also turn away heavily loaded trucks and ban any gas stations that failed to install anti-leak devices before June next year.

No Lower than 26°C in Air-conditioned Rooms

(Xinhua News Agency June 4, 2007)

The temperature of all China's air-conditioned public rooms should be kept at no lower than 26 degrees centigrade, the State Council said on Sunday.

The State Council, or the cabinet, imposed the limit in a circular to all central and local government bodies, as an effort to save China's limited energy resources and brace for the upcoming electricity demand peak in summer.

All government agencies, associations, groups, companies and private owners in public buildings should "strictly comply with this rule", said the circular.

Doors and windows should be closed when air conditioners are on, added the circular, which also sets the temperature ceiling in winter at 20 degrees centigrade.

The circular also bans air-conditioners with low energy efficiency from entering the market and encourages users to make technical changes to make air-conditioners more energy-saving.

China's need of energy has soared as the economy has grown. The shortages of coal, electric power, petroleum and shipping capacity are the big challenges that China faces in its development.

On the same day, the State Council reiterated its intention to meet strict energy efficiency and pollutant reduction targets in an official work plan.

The plan shows that China will stick to the original plan of energy saving as well as reducing major pollutant discharges by 10 percent.



Energy

Jilin to open first 'clean fuel' plant

(China Daily 05/08/2007)

Northeast China's Jilin Province will open its first power plant using biological materials at the end of the year.

"With a total investment of 520 million yuan (\$67.35 million) and covering 8 hectares, the plant will convert 300,000 tons of stalks into 300 million kilowatts of electric power annually," said Wang Lingfang, chairman of the board of Shandong Luneng Construction Group.

Stalks, the stems of plants, used as feed for livestock, can be easily found in villages of China.

Construction of the Jilin Luneng Nongan Biology Power Plant, a subsidiary of the Shandong Luneng Construction Group, started on April 22.

Located in Nongan, one of the major grain production counties in China, the annual output value of the power plant is expected to be 220 million yuan (\$28.5 million).

"Our annual grain production is 2.5 million tons, which accounts for 10 percent of the whole Jilin Province. Each year, 7.5 million tons of stalks are available in the county," Li Zhongbin, head of Nongan county said.

The power plant will greatly boost development of the local economy, and increase farmers' annual income by 60 million yuan (\$7.8 million), he added.

More than 8,000 tons of ash fertilizer annually will also be provided to farmers for free after the plant begins operations.

Statistics show China produces 350 million tons of vegetable stalks every year, 24 percent of which is used as livestock feed, 15 percent as fertilizers, 40 percent as fuel, and 18.7 percent is discarded.

The country has abundant in biological resources, and together with its stalks production, it exceeds 720 million tons, of which 604 million tons can be used as energy.

"Compared with coal, stalks have a low carbon and sulfur content. To promote this type of power plant throughout the country will not only improve the quality of the environment, but also effectively solve the shortage of coal which many enterprises face," Sun Li, director of the Energy Research Institute of Shandong Academy of Sciences, said.

Shanxian County in East China's Shandong Province opened its first biological power plant at the beginning of the year.

East China's Jiangsu Province and Heilongjiang Province in China's Northeast are also embarking on plans to build such plants.

Denmark was the first country in the world to build plants using stalks to generate electricity. Its first plant opened in 1998.

Today, the largest power plant using stalks is the Elyan Power Plant in England. It has a power generating capacity of 38 megawatts.

Health

Chinese lawmakers fret about food safety

(Xinhua, 2007-05-07)

Food safety has become a major issue of concern for Chinese lawmakers, as 19 motions and 78 suggestions were proposed to improve food quality during the annual session of China's top legislature this March.



An official with the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), or China's top legislature, said nearly a third of the 3,000 NPC deputies signed the motions and suggestions.

China's food safety watchdog announced in November 2006 that it had nabbed seven companies that were producing salted red-yolk eggs contaminated with dangerous red Sudan dyes.

Sudan dyes are used legally in the leather and fabric industries, but are banned for food use.

Statistics from the Ministry of Health show that in the fourth quarter of 2005 alone, China reported 54 serious food poisoning cases, with 1,897 people becoming sick and 39 dieing.

The official said the NPC has amendments to the Food Hygiene Law on this year's legislative agenda.

Experts predict that more detailed provisions are likely to be added this year to strengthen supervision of the production and circulation of food, and prevent substandard food from entering the market.

An official from the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council said his department will finish drafting the amendments to the Food Safety Law soon.

Hand-foot-mouth outbreak contained

(Xinhua, 2007-05-19)

A hand-foot-mouth outbreak that began in April in Linyi city of east China's Shandong Province has been contained and no new deaths have been reported, said an official with the provincial health department on Saturday.

The outbreak in Linyi began in late April. Some 470 patients had recovered as of Friday.

Another 393 people, mainly children, are suffering from the disease, and 223 of them are in hospital, provincial health department deputy director Bao Wenhui told Xinhua. The patients are scattered in different counties and towns in the Linyi area.

A two-year-old girl -- diagnosed as a probable hand-food-mouth patient -- died in hospital on April 29 after developing symptoms of fever and vomiting.

Hand-foot-mouth disease, also known as coxsackievirus infection, is a common childhood illness that mainly affects children under 10. Symptoms include fever, sores in the mouth and a rash with blisters. It often begins with a sore throat. Moderately contagious, the disease can be transmitted through nose and throat discharges. It can sometimes be fatal if complications occur.

Local health departments have launched a public awareness campaign -- reminding parents that one of the best preventive measures for the disease is frequent handwashing -- and isolated the children affected. They are monitoring the outbreak closely using a daily reporting system.

Shandong Province recorded 2,477 cases of hand-food-mouth disease in 2005, including one death, and 3,030 cases in 2006, two of which were fatal.

China virus outbreak kills third child

(Xinhua, 2007-05-24)

A viral disease that has broken out in eastern China's Shandong province has killed a third child, Xinhua said on Thursday.

The news agency said that an 11-month-old boy had developed a fever and blisters before dying on Tuesday in a hospital in Linyi city, where 1,263 cases of "hand, foot, and mouth disease" have been reported since April.

The virus, which typically causes painful blisters around the mouth and throat and hands and feet, had already claimed the lives of a 14-month-old boy earlier this month and a two-year-old girl on April 29.

Xinhua cited the provincial health bureau as saying that the outbreak of the virus, which is highly contagious among children but not normally fatal, was "slowing down."



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun Svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

Embassy of Switzerland in China
Environment, Science, Technology, Health section

The local government has launched a campaign to remind parents to take preventive measures such as frequent handwashing.

Chinese bloggers in Shandong said in early May that 26 children had died in the outbreak. Local media said authorities in Linyi had denied that figure.