



Research and Environment News from China

Number 39 – September 2007

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Introduction

China has invested USD 39.9 billion in R&D last year, 22.6% more than in 2005 and which corresponds to 1.42 percent of the GDP. China has set an investment target of putting two percent of its GDP into R&D by 2010, according to the 11th Five-Year Program for National Economic and Social Development (2006--2010). 71.1 percent of the total was spent by companies (state-owned or private). Government research agencies spent 56.7 billion yuan; higher education institutions spent 27.7 billion yuan, accounting for 18.9 and 9.2 percent respectively. About 234.28 billion yuan, or 78 percent of China's total R&D spending went into development work. Only 16.8 percent went into application research and 5.2 percent went into basic scientific research.

While the R&D budget in China does not perfectly reflect the innovation, as mentioned, Chinese President Hu Jintao recently announced in a seminar about educational development strategy that China should take initiatives to improve education and therefore maximise the number of professional and skilled people.

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October 25 to 28, 2007
The 5th Beijing International Clean Vehicle Technology Exhibition & Forum
National Agriculture Exhibition Center and Beijing Landmark Hotel
November 22, 2007
The 6th China Int'l Mechanism, Hardware & Mould Exhibition
Dongguan, China
Tel: 86-10-68594793

Environment-related international tenders and investment opportunities:

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

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Science & Technology

High-speed trains to be finished by end of 2007

(People's Daily, 2007-09-13)

Railway Minister Liu Zhijun said that China will complete the production of trains with a speed of 300 to 350 kilometers per hour, by the end of the year. And in the coming years, trains with sleeper cars, dining cars and baggage cars, will also be produced.

Liu Zhijun said that in the 11th five year plan period, China will mainly develop trains with a speed of 300 to 350 kilometers per hour; and develop related products in order to achieve innovation in design and manufacturing. China's railways should have their own high-power engine products, said Liu Zhijun.

R&D Spending Exceeds US\$39.9b in 2006

(Xinhua, 2007-09-13)

China invested 300.31 billion yuan (US\$39.9 billion) in research and development (R&D) last year, boosting science and technology innovations in order to develop a more sustainable economy.



The R&D investment jumped by an annual rate of 22.6 percent, or 55.31 billion yuan, according to a statement jointly released by the National Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Finance on Wednesday.

The spending accounted for 1.42 percent of the gross domestic product in the world's fastest-growing major economy in 2006 and is the highest proportion ever, the statement noted.

China has set an investment target of putting two percent of its GDP into R&D by 2010, according to the 11th Five-Year Program for National Economic and Social Development (2006--2010).

R&D spending by companies hit 213.45 billion yuan, accounting for 71.1 percent of the total, according to the statement.

Government research agencies spent 56.7 billion yuan; higher education institutions spent 27.7 billion yuan, accounting for 18.9 and 9.2 percent respectively.

About 234.28 billion yuan, or 78 percent of China's total R&D spending went into development work. Only 16.8 percent went into application research and 5.2 percent went into basic scientific research.

The pharmaceutical, special instruments, electrical machinery, general instruments, transport manufacturing, rubber, and electronics sectors spent more than one percent of their sales revenues on R&D.

The government has earmarked 168.9 billion yuan for the science and technology front. This is a 26.5 percent increase, or 35.36 billion yuan, from 2005. The sum was 4.2 percent of the government's total expenditure last year, the highest since 1998.

China to build new space launch center in southernmost province

(Xinhua, 2007-09-23)

China plans to construct a new space launch center in Wenchang, China's southernmost Hainan Province, according to official sources.

The new launch center aims to serve the next-generation rocket carriers that do emit poisonous and pollutive gas and new-type spacecraft. The new launch site will be mainly used for launching synchronous satellites, heavy satellites, large space stations, and deep space probe satellites, according to the plan which has been approved by the State Council and the Central Military Commission.

Hainan is located in a low-latitude region, which is helpful to increasing the capacity of rocket carriers and extending the life span of satellites.

A spokesman for China's space program said the Chinese government works on peaceful use of the outerspace to promote development of human civilization and social development and benefit the whole Mankind.

In 1958, China began building its first rocket launch site in northwest China's Jiuquan. At present, the country has three space launch grounds. The other two are located in Taiyuan, capital of north China's Shanxi Province and Xichang in southwestern Sichuan Province.

These launch sites have carried out over 100 space launches, sending over 100 satellites and six manned spacecraft into space.

Self-developed 'bullet' train to debut

(Xinhua, 2007-09-24)

China's first self-designed and self-manufactured passenger train with a designed speed of 300 km per hour, equal to that of the famous Japanese bullet train, will roll off the production line by the end of this year, the manufacturer has announced.



The new high-speed trains, which can seat around 600 passengers, will run on the 115-km-long Beijing-Tianjin rail route before the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in August. The rail journey between the two cities will be reduced from the current 70 minutes to around 30 minutes.

Production of the high-speed train is well underway and the first train will debut at the end of the year, said a spokesman of the Sifang Locomotive and Rolling Stock Co., Ltd. based in Qingdao, a coastal city of east China's Shandong Province. Currently, China's fastest domestic trains run at a service speed of up to 250 km per hour.

Sifang Locomotive, a subsidiary of China Southern Locomotive and Rolling Stock Industry (Group) Corporation, will deliver 10 such trains to the Ministry of Railways in the first half of next year, said the company.

China launched its sixth train speed boost on April 18 bringing the country more firmly into the era of high-speed train travel. Trains run on the Beijing-Harbin, Beijing-Shanghai and Beijing-Guangzhou rail routes at speed of up to 250 kilometers per hour.

A Eurostar train shattered the record for the quickest rail journey between Paris and London when it traveled at 300 km per hour on the UK speed track on Tuesday.

French national railway's TGV bullet trains, currently the world's fastest, travels at a service speed of 320 km per hour. China's planned Shanghai-Hangzhou maglev railway will allow trains to run at 450 km per hour.

Environment

Chinese official expounds position on environmental protection, sustainable development

(Xinhua, 2007-09-05)

A senior Chinese official on Wednesday in Rio de Janeiro said China supports efforts to improve global environmental protection to achieve sustainable development.

China is ready to actively participate in discussions on environmental protection, China's Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Yesui told an informal meeting on environmental protection and sustainable development. The two-day ministerial environmental meeting opened here Monday, gathering representatives from 22 countries and the UN.

Zhang, head of the Chinese delegation to the meeting, said the environmental problems boil down to the issue of development.

Three principles in dealing with the problems should be established, Zhang said. The first principle to meet environmental challenges is to ensure a balanced development of economy, society and environment, the Chinese official said.

Secondly, any measures in this regard should be taken in the framework of UN reforms, especially in reforms of its branches in charge of economic and social affairs, he said. Finally, short-term measures and long-term targets in environment protection should be differentiated.

In dealing with environmental protection, the international community should try its best to carry out the widely-recognized measures while continue to discuss those with disputes, Zhang said.

The role of the UN Environmental Program should be enhanced and its efficiency and ability in tackling the problems strengthened to promote coordination between multilateral environmental protection conventions provide steady and sufficient fund for global fight against environmental degradation and render technical support for developing countries.

The participants discussed a variety of issues including challenges in environmental protection and cooperation in sustainable development.

China solicits public opinion on draft law on water pollution



(Xinhua, 2007-09-05)

China's top legislature on Wednesday publicized a draft of the Water Pollution Prevention and Control Law, which promises heavier punishments for water polluters and irresponsible officials, to solicit public opinion.

The General Office of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) publicized the draft, which has been submitted to the 29th session of the NPC Standing Committee for the first review, inviting the public to convey their opinions through the standing committees of provincial or municipal people's congresses, the Law Committee of the NPC or the NPC website.

All the opinions will be collected and submitted to the law committee by October 10, according to the NPC general office. According to SEPA statistics, the country saw 1,406 environmental pollution accidents in 2005, 49.2 percent of which involved water pollution.

The draft law stipulated the amount of pollutants discharged into water by a factory should not exceed the limit set by national or local regulations, and offenders will be fined 100,000 to one million yuan. Those who discharge pollutants to drinking water sources will be fined 100,000 yuan to 500,000 yuan, the draft amendment said.

Environmental protection officials who fail to set up a water pollution emergency response scheme, or delay reporting and hide water pollution accidents will receive administrative punishments or even criminal charges, according to the draft bill.

Factories that reject supervision and examination from environmental protection departments will be fined 10,000 yuan to 100,000 yuan, the draft amendment said.

After the first reviews, the NPC made the decision to publicize the draft law to solicit public opinion and amendments based on public opinion will be submitted for further review.

Heavy rain causes pollution in lake

(China Daily, 2007-09-06)

Chaohu Lake, one of the city's major water sources, has become highly polluted after torrential rain in eastern Anhui Province. Three of the nine rivers that border the lake were reportedly heavily contaminated, while the water quality of the other six was described as mildly polluted or intermediate.

An official with the water environment protection office under Anhui Province, who only gave his surname Lu, said flooding caused the contamination.

"Floods that swept the area in August have caused fertilizers that were not absorbed in nearby fields to enter the lake and thereby increased phosphorous levels in the water," he said. "Chaohu Lake has low motility and has not been able to sufficiently dilute (the chemical)."

Lu said the city of Chaohu, which is on the east side of the lake, was not affected by the pollution. Although it depends on the lake for its water supply, he said the intake point for the city's water supply was far away from the worst of the contamination. He said local government officials haven't found an effective measure so far to solve the problem.

"The lake is not deep and mostly enclosed, making dilution more difficult," he said. "And we have not invested enough money (to deal with the situation)."

Duan Liping, from Chaohu, said tap water had a bad smell about two or three weeks ago but improved after it was treated with chemicals.

"We've got used to pollution," she said. The lake became polluted in the 1980s when nearby cities began to develop, Lu said. "Factories were established and waste was not properly handled before releasing it into the lake."

"It was only after 1995 the city began to process domestic sewage." Lu said the provincial capital Hefei changed its



water supply from the lake to the Yangtze River because of pollution. He said there had been efforts to clean the river and there had been improvements, "but there is still much to be done."

WWF to help preserve Yellow Sea ecosystem

(China Daily, 2007-09-08)

The World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) launched the Yellow Sea Ecoregion Support Project (YSESP) on Friday to conserve the marine ecosystem.

The project, supported by Japan's electronics giant Panasonic, is part of WWF's Global 200 - which lists 238 regions across the world that need immediate conservation.

The seven-year regional marine conservation project aims to redress public concern and ensure proper protection and effective management of the critical habitats in and around the Yellow Sea by supporting local communities' sustainable conservation activities.

Five Chinese and three South Korean organizations, including environmental NGOs, environment-related grass-roots government bodies, research institutes, communities and the media, could get about 40,000 yuan a year for conservation work.

The last date for submitting applications is October 31. The conservation activities, mainly public education, of the chosen organizations will last through next year.

"Although the money is not big, the project stresses how people can work in partnership," said Dermot O'Gorman, Country Representative of WWF China.

The project will be implemented by WWF in China in cooperation with the State Oceanic Administration, State Environmental Protection Administration and State Forestry Administration on other environmental issues.

Pilot schemes in China and South Korea have to adopt international standards of conservation.

The project is expected to present a successful Asian human-marine ecosystem co-existence model, O'Gorman said.

The Yellow Sea is noted for its extreme biodiversity because of its world-class continental shelf.

Tree plan being retooled

(China Daily, 2007-09-20)

The State Council's decision last week to suspend a massive forestation project was aimed at making some adjustments to the scheme, rather than in response to worries about food security, agriculture officials said yesterday.

They were responding to suggestions by experts that the move reflected policymakers' concerns that the forestation program was using up farmland.

"It is not a stop," Qin Yucai, an official from the State Council Office for Western Region Development, said during an online interview at www.gov.cn yesterday.

"The plan to return 1.3 million hectares of farmland to forest or grassland between 2006 and 2010 will not change. The country just needs to make a temporary amendment to the project's structure."

Wu Xiaosong, an official with the National Development and Reform Commission, said the experts' comments showed a lack of faith.

"Such suggestions actually express doubt about the country's policy," he said.



Wu said the bumper grain harvest over the past three years proves the project of returning arable land to forest has not affected food security.

Wu cited Wulanchabu in Inner Mongolia and Yan'an in Shaanxi Province as examples, saying efforts to reforest barren arable land in these regions had actually helped boost grain production.

Most of the arable land involved in the forestation project is threatened by desertification or located on slopes, which is not suitable for grain cultivation.

He said the forestation project had helped improve the environment and freed up resources to focus on quality farmland.

Qin said the project had not affected any productive grain land.

To continue the green drive of turning arable land into forest, the authorities will invest 201 billion yuan (\$26.45 billion) in such projects in the next eight years, raising the total financial input into greenery to 430 billion yuan.

The money will be used to provide subsidies to farmers and protect forests, which were considered top issues by policymakers.

The authorities launched the campaign to return farmland to forest in 2000.

By the end of last year, more than 9 million hectares of arable land had been turned into forest or grassland.

China's environmental situation remains serious: report

(Xinhua, 2007-09-24)

<http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/6270121.html>

Energy

China willing to strengthen cooperation on civilian nuclear energy: official

(Xinhua, 2007-09-17)

China is willing to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation on civilian nuclear energy with other nations, a senior Chinese official attending a meeting on nuclear energy here said on Sunday.

The peaceful use of nuclear energy was important to the Chinese government, Chen Deming, deputy head of the National Development and Reform Commission of China, told the second ministerial conference of the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) here.

Chen, head of the Chinese delegation, said China has fixed on its policies on route and closed nuclear fuel cycle for the development of nuclear electricity.

He said that as long as nuclear security and non-proliferation were assured, the peaceful use of the nuclear energy could be extended around the world in a safe, economic and reliable way.

With an open and constructive attitude, China is ready to strengthen cooperation on global nuclear energy with other nations.

On the sidelines of the conference, Chen Deming also met Samuel Bodman, the minister of energy department of the United States, and exchanged opinion on issues of mutual concern.

The delegates from 16 states, including China, also signed a document on the principles of the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) at the conference.



The GNEP, which is sponsored by the United States, is aimed at guaranteeing broad access to nuclear technologies and preventing proliferation.

The second ministerial conference of the GNEP was held at the headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Sunday and was attended by 38 ministers and senior officials from different countries as well as key intergovernmental organizations such as the IAEA and Eurotom.

Health

China launches nationwide campaign on food safety in catering sector

(Xinhua, 2007-09-05)

As public anxiety over food and product quality continues, China's health authorities announced on Wednesday a new nationwide campaign on food safety in the catering sector.

According to an action plan drawn up by the State Council, the inspection program will last from September to the end of this year, Health Minister Chen Zhu said at a press conference held by the Information Office of the State Council.

The inspection will target school dining halls, canteens set up at construction sites, small restaurants and those situated in rural areas or city suburbs.

Those who are found to have purchased or used substandard food products will be subject to severe punishments, according to the Health Ministry.

Excessive use of food additives and the use of "non-foodstuff" materials in food will also be strictly forbidden and punished, the ministry said.

The ministry said it hoped the four-month campaign will further regulate the business operations of the country's catering companies and greatly reduce food poisoning accidents and diseases originating from poor quality food.

Incidents of mass food poisoning continue to occur in China. On August 16, 74 teenagers fell sick after eating at a boarding school in north China's Shanxi Province.

Local health bureau and quarantine authorities closed the school's dining hall in Xinjiang county. The students, who were diagnosed as suffering from bacteria food poisoning, all recovered the next day after medical treatment.

Earlier media report said that during March to May this year, China's health authorities inspected 146,465 restaurants and school canteens, of which 964 had their food hygiene licenses revoked and 8,352 were punished.

Chen said the ministry had set up a monitoring network on food contamination and diseases originating from poor quality food and is considering publicizing the sanitation record of catering businesses to further improve food safety.

The Chinese government began a four-month nationwide campaign late last month to improve the quality of goods and food safety.

The campaign will target farm produce, processed food, the catering sector, drugs, pork, imported and exported goods and products closely linked to human safety and health.

Letter of executed head of China's drug watchdog used to warn local officials

(Xinhua, 2007-09-07)

A letter written by the disgraced former head of China's drug watchdog Zheng Xiaoyu shortly before his execution in July is being used to warn local government officials against corruption.



Zheng's letter titled " Posthumous Writings of Remorse" was read to prosecutors in Bozhou city, Anhui Province, at a routine meeting recently to encourage the legal officials to draw lessons from the case and maintain an honest work ethic, Friday's Procuratorial Daily reports.

The newspaper quoted Zheng's letter as saying the drug standards agency and the position he held were "extremely important".

"As an official, one must be responsible," the letter continued, according to the newspaper, "(the death sentence) let me see thoroughly and clearly the anti-graft resolution of the central authorities."

After reading out the letter, Tao Fangde, chief prosecutor of Bozhou, told the city's prosecutors to "maintain a high sense of responsibility, stay away from corruption and remain committed to investigating and dealing with corruption cases".

Zheng, 63, was sentenced to death on May 29 by the Beijing Municipal No. 1 Intermediate People's Court after being found guilty of taking 6.49 million yuan (850,000 U.S. dollars) in bribes and dereliction of duty.

He appealed for leniency in a second hearing on June 12. But the Higher People's Court of Beijing rejected Zheng's appeal on June 22 and upheld the death sentence. Zheng's death sentence was then approved by the Supreme People's Court (SPC).

"Zheng's dereliction of duty has undermined the efficiency of China's drug monitoring and supervision, endangered public life and health and has had a very negative social impact," the SPC said at the time.

Zheng was the country's fourth senior official of his rank to be sentenced to death in recent years, following former vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Cheng Kejie and two former provincial deputy governors Hu Changqing and Wang Huaizhong. Cheng and Hu were sentenced in 2000 and Wang was sentenced in 2004.

China's farm products safe: official

(Xinhua, 2007-09-24)

<http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90778/6270159.html>

Education

Chinese president calls to develop education as priority

(Xinhua, 2007-08-31)

Education should be developed as a priority to help train more professional and skilled people for building a moderately prosperous society and propelling socialist modernization, said Chinese President Hu Jintao on Friday.

At a seminar in the Huairen Hall in Zhongnanhai, the compound where China's leaders work and live, Hu discussed the educational development strategy with more than 100 model teachers from around the country.

After hearing their opinions and suggestions, Hu expressed his appreciation and greetings on behalf of the Communist Party of China and the government. China will mark its 23rd Teachers' Day on Sept. 10.

"You are the excellent representatives of all teachers in China. With the nation and people in mind, you have set good examples with your silent and selfless sacrifice in your careers," Hu told the teachers.

Education was the basic way of raising moral standards as well as cultural and scientific levels, he said, ordering further determination and more funding to ensure compulsory education, promote vocational education and raise the quality of higher education.

Equality in education should be set as a basic state policy to shorten the gap in educational standards between urban and rural areas, he said.



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Environment, Science, Technology, Health section

He called on the public to show more respect to teachers so their enthusiasm, initiative and creativity will be fully developed.

He also encouraged more young people to teach in the countryside, remote areas and places where teachers are needed most.

Premier Wen Jiabao, Vice President Zeng Qinghong, and Li Changchun, who are members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, also attended the seminar.

Chinese senior official stresses development of education

(Xinhua, 2007-09-07)

Education should be developed as a priority to serve the socialist modernization drive, said a Chinese senior official.

Li Changchun, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, made the remarks during his visit to Huazhong University of Science and Technology.

Li said efforts should be made to strengthen the training of teachers, and encourage excellent people to work in the educational field.

He called on the public to show more respect to teachers.

He also stressed the ideological education of college students, saying new ways should be tried to enhance the ideological and political education.

"We should sum up the experience in ideological education on college students we have gained since the 16th CPC National Congress and continuously improve ideological education on campus," Li said.