

中国新闻

NEWS FROM CHINA

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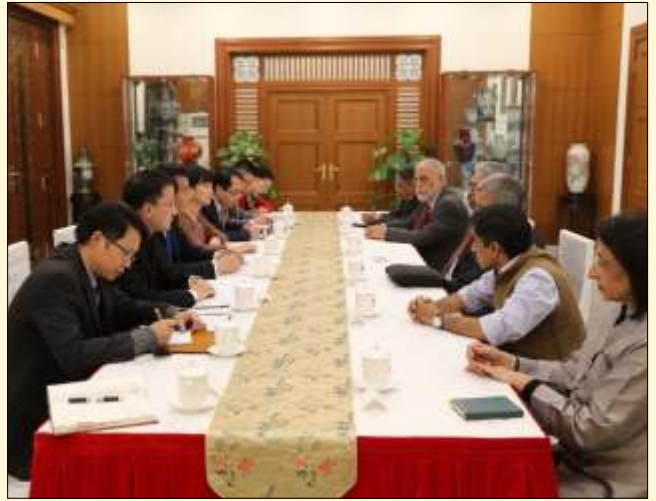
February 2017

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Chinese Ambassador Luo Zhaohui and his wife Dr. Jiang Yili met with the King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyal Wangchuk .



Chinese Ambassador Luo Zhaohui held a talk on Sino-India relations in 2017 with Indian experts .



Chinese Ambassador Luo Zhaohui met with Vice President of Congress Party Rahul Gandhi.



Chinese Ambassador Luo Zhaohui and his wife Dr. Jiang Yili gave a reception to several countries' ambassadors in India and exchanged views on issues of common interest



Chinese Ambassador Luo Zhaohui attended a meeting of non-resident Chinese students



Chinese Embassy organized planting activity.

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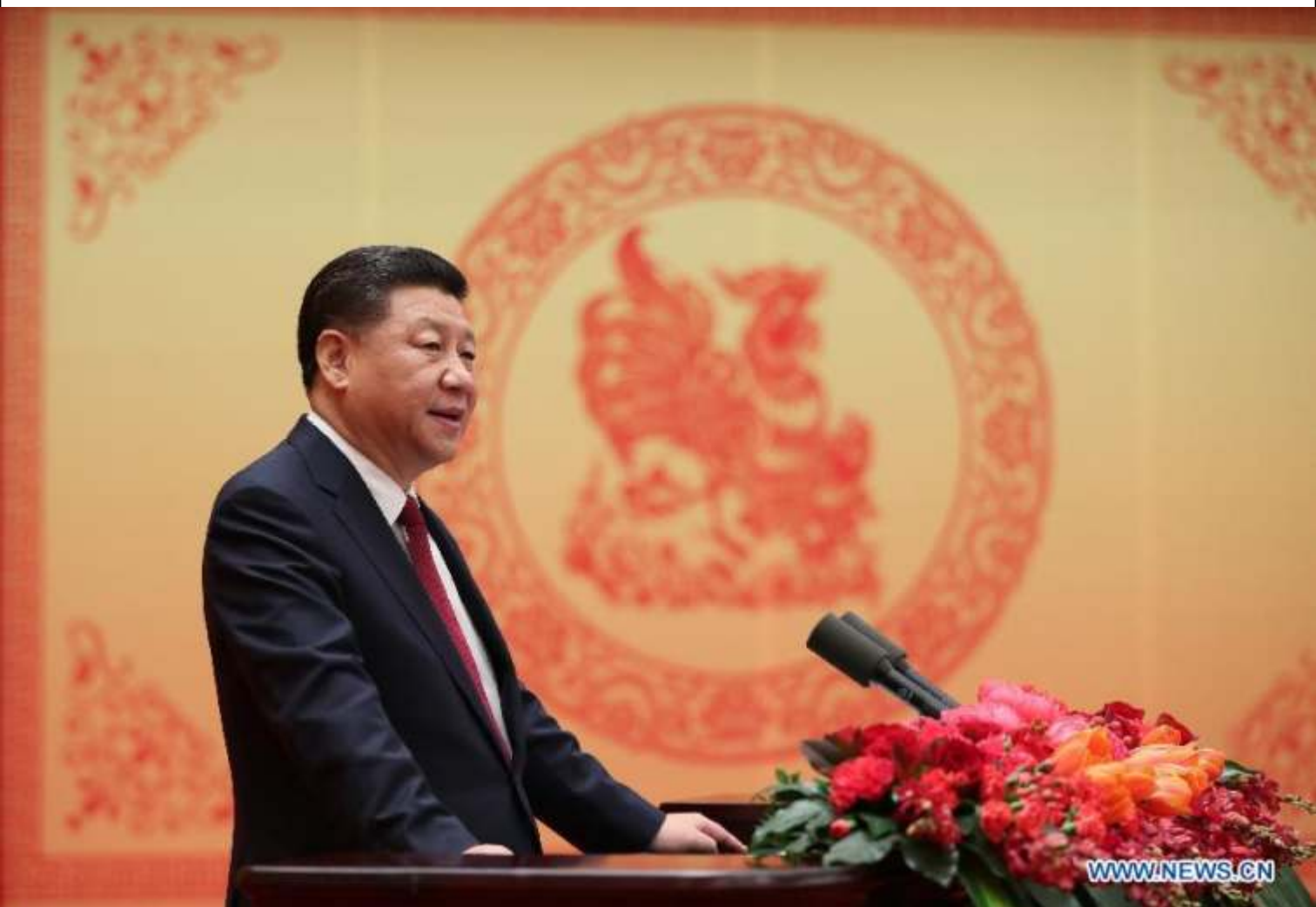
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Spring Festival

CHINESE LEADERS EXTEND SPRING FESTIVAL GREETINGS



Beijing Jan. 26 (Xinhua) — President Xi Jinping, on behalf of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, extended Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese Thursday at a reception in Beijing.

Xi, also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered his

speech to a gathering at the Great Hall of the People, greeting all Chinese in the mainland, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and abroad.

The reception was presided over by Li Keqiang. Other leaders including Zhang Dejiang, Yu Zhengsheng, Liu Yunshan, Wang Qishan and Zhang Gaoli were also present.

Addressing the event, Xi said

China has made a good start to the country's 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) and taken various works to a new level in 2016.

Economic growth continued to rank among the top in the world. The first battles have been won in the final campaign against poverty. The lives of the people have continued to improve and major achievements have been made in reform and opening-up, he said.



China achieved breakthroughs in national defense and military reform, promoted rule of law, and advanced strict governance of the CPC, Xi added.

The country has made major contributions to world peace and development with its own development and progress, the president said.

“The Chinese people have great dreams, but also have a great spirit to work hard and endure hardship to realize such dreams,” Xi said.

He called on the people to salute



to those diligent, brave Chinese people as well as to heroes, model workers, veterans and all who contribute to the country's development.

In 2017, the CPC will convene its 19th National Congress, setting out a new blueprint for socialism with Chinese characteristics, Xi said.

The president called on all Party members, the military and people of

all ethnic groups to unite closely around the CPC Central Committee and make new progresses to prepare for the 19th CPC National Congress.

Xi stressed that the Chinese nation highly values true affection and righteousness. He called for treating others with honesty and sincerity, and being open and above board in life.

Xi hoped that under the

leadership of the CPC, all of the people in the country can roll up their sleeves to work hard for the goal of building a moderately prosperous society, achieving the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, and building a community of shared destiny for all humanity.

This year's Spring Festival, or Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on Jan. 28.

LUNAR NEW YEAR HOLIDAY CELEBRATED ACROSS CHINA



Tourists take a selfie at the Changdian Temple Fair during Chinese Lunar New Year holiday in Beijing, capital of China, Jan. 30, 2017. (Xinhua/Wang Xibao)



People watch performance at Qingjiangpu temple fair during Chinese Lunar New Year holiday in Huai'an City, east China's Jiangsu Province, Jan. 30, 2017. (Xinhua/He Jinghua)



Tourists ski at Taoranting Park during Chinese Lunar New Year holiday in Beijing, capital of China, Jan. 30, 2017.



People participate in a tug of war game in Zhengda Town of Songtao Miao Autonomous County, southwest China's Guizhou Province, Jan. 28, 2017. On the first day of the Chinese lunar new year, people enjoy themselves through various ways around China. (Xinhua/Li Tian)



Folk artists perform a lion dance during the Spring Festival in Wuxi, east China's Jiangsu Province, Jan. 29, 2017. (Xinhua/Huan Yueliang)



Citizens visit an international temple fair held in Shijingshan District of Beijing, capital of China, Feb. 1, 2017. The temple fair was a carnival held during the Chinese Lunar New Year holiday with many cultural performances. (Xinhua/Zhang Chenlin)

CHINESE SPRING FESTIVAL CELEBRATED AROUND THE WORLD

Beijing, Jan. 26 (Xinhua) — On the eve of the approaching Chinese Lunar New Year, the rest of the world is sharing the joy and excitement of the Asian country, a manifestation of the worldwide influence of China's most important festival, also known as the Spring Festival.

OCCASION FOR STRENGTHENING TIES

Some national leaders, on the festive occasion, expressed wishes for a stronger bilateral relationship.

British Prime Minister Theresa May on Thursday sent her wishes to

those celebrating the festival worldwide through the government's website, pledging to further develop Britain-China relations, which have a stronger basis than ever before.

"We receive more Chinese investment than any other major European country. We've got around 150,000 Chinese students studying here and the number of Chinese tourists visiting has doubled in five years," she said.

As 2017 marks the 20th anniversary of the return of Hong Kong to China and the 45th anniversary of the establishment of

the ambassadorial relations between Britain and China, May said she hoped both countries will further their ties in various fields.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari also expressed optimism over the strategic partnership between Nigeria and China, noting the two countries had reached a consensus to give full play to corresponding development strategies, strong economic complementarity, and enormous cooperative potential.

The Chinese Lunar New Year celebration emphasized the concept of family and the opportunity of



reunion — values shared by both Nigeria and China, Buhari wrote in a recent statement released by his office.

During a meeting with young Sinologists in Saint Petersburg University, the city's Vice Governor Alexander Govorunov said that Russia-China education cooperation has showed a positive trend, with 250 agreements signed between various universities of the two countries.

St. Petersburg needs to expand its knowledge regarding the Chinese language, culture, economics, law and tourism to further relations with China, Govorunov said at the meeting, which was part of a series of month-long cultural events the city hosts in celebrating the Spring

Festival.

OCCASION FOR GATHERINGS

During this time of the year, Chinese embassies as well as people of Chinese origin hold various receptions and parties in their respective countries to socialize with their counterparts and friends.

Earlier this month, the Chinese Embassy in Cuba held a New Year's reception, welcoming dozens of people of Chinese descent and Cuban guests.

The Chinese Ambassador to Cuba, Chen Xi, assured that the next 12 months will be decisive for strengthening political and commercial ties between the two

countries in search of bilateral prosperity, as well as the bonds of friendship that have existed for more than 50 years.

The attendees extended their wishes for good fortune to the Chinese people and the future of bilateral relations.

The Chinese embassies in the United States, Nepal, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt and Rwanda held all kinds of activities to mark the occasion, attracting members from various circles of their host countries.

President of the French National Assembly Claude Bartolone also threw a party in Paris recently to celebrate the Chinese



Lunar New Year.

OCCASION FOR GALAS

China's Spring Festival provides another chance for global revelers to celebrate.

China's Zhejiang Traditional Chinese Orchestra and Shaanxi Broadcasting Chinese Orchestra performed in a concert featuring traditional Chinese music at the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg on Wednesday.

The concert, which is part of the month-long cultural events in honor of the Chinese Spring Festival in St. Petersburg, proved to be a big success.

However, foreigners were no longer satisfied with being part of the audience of the festive galas, so

they took to the stage instead.

What's more, over 1,000 Ghanaian students from the capital's junior high schools on Wednesday performed Chinese songs and dances to celebrate the Spring Festival.

The event, hosted by the Confucius Institute at the University of Ghana Basic Schools, Legon, was attended by officials from the Chinese embassy and Chinese company representatives.

During the event, students from the Confucius Institute also displayed their proficiency in spoken Chinese and knowledge of Chinese music, dance and traditional costumes.

Daria Larionova, a 21-year-old Ukrainian student, acted as a co-host

of a feast entitled "The fate gathered us in Ukraine," held recently at the Boryspil International Airport in Kiev to greet the Spring Festival.

Dressed in a qipao, a body-hugging traditional Chinese dress, Larionova added to the Lunar New Year's atmosphere in the airport, which is decorated with red lanterns, Zodiac-themed paper-cuts and works of Chinese calligraphy.

"In my opinion, the most entertaining Lunar New Year custom is joint cooking and eating of dumplings. It creates a very friendly atmosphere! It is really great," Larionova said.

The Chinese Lunar New Year is the most important festival in China, and falls on Jan. 28 this year.

External Affairs

CHINESE PRESIDENT EYES SHARED, WIN-WIN DEVELOPMENT FOR MANKIND'S FUTURE

Geneva, Jan. 19 (Xinhua) — Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday called for building a community of shared future for mankind and achieving shared and win-win development amid growing challenges and risks.

While expounding his vision of mankind's future in a keynote speech at the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), the leader of the world's second largest economy championed a world of lasting peace, common security for all and

common prosperity, as well as an open, inclusive world, and a clean, beautiful world.

The president underscored the principle of equality in establishing a fair and equitable international order, saying that in a new era, the international community should uphold sovereign equality and work for equality in right, opportunity and rules for all countries.

"We should advance democracy in international relations and reject

dominance by just one or several countries. All countries should jointly shape the future of the world, write international rules, manage global affairs and ensure that development outcomes are shared by all," he said.

SHARED FUTURE

In his speech delivered at the Palace of Nations, Xi listed such priorities as partnership, security, growth, inter-civilization exchanges and ecosystem in building a

community of shared future for mankind.

“We should stay committed to building a world of lasting peace through dialogue and consultation,” he said, noting that countries should foster partnerships based on dialogue, non-confrontation and non-alliance.

“Nuclear weapons, the Sword of Damocles that hangs over mankind, should be completely prohibited and thoroughly destroyed over time to make the world free of nuclear weapons,” the president said.

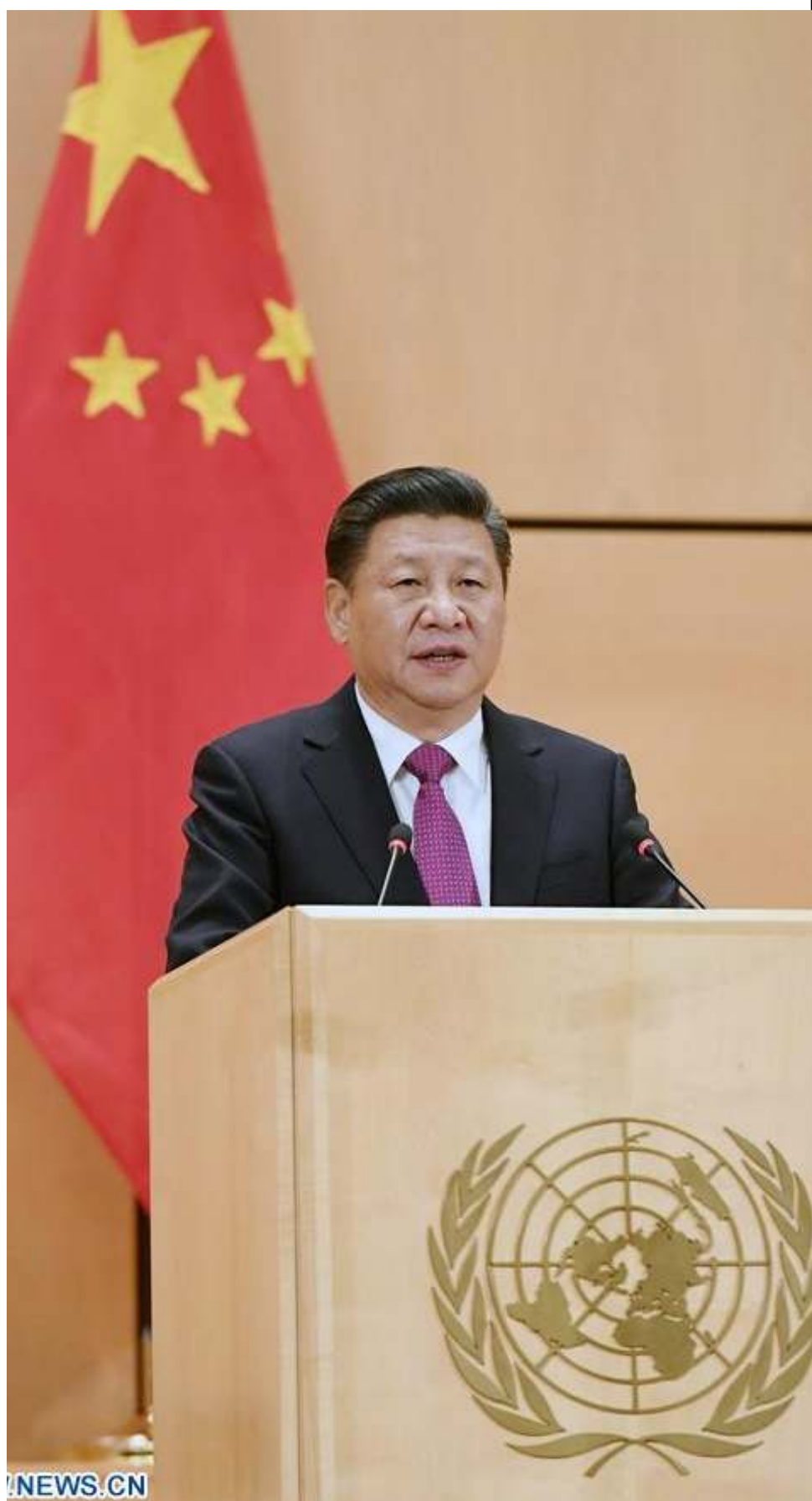
He urged the international community to build a world of common security for all through joint efforts, saying that all countries should pursue common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security.

China has decided to provide an additional 200 million yuan (about 29 million U.S. dollars) of humanitarian assistance for refugees and the displaced of Syria, he announced.

In his vision of building a world of common prosperity through win-win cooperation, Xi advocated building an open world economy while warning against protectionism.

“Trade protectionism and self-isolation will benefit no one,” he said.

“We should strengthen coordination and improve governance so as to ensure sound growth of economic globalization



and make it open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all,” he said.

Xi also suggested that the international community build an open and inclusive world through exchanges and mutual learning, and make the world clean and beautiful by pursuing green and low-carbon development.

“We should pursue green, low-carbon, circular and sustainable way of life and production, advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a balanced manner and explore a model of sound development that ensures growth, better lives and a good environment,” he said.

CHINA’S COMMITMENT

In his speech, President Xi said that China remains unchanged in its commitment to upholding world peace.

“For several millennia, peace has been in the blood of us Chinese and a part of our DNA,” said Xi.

“Do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you,” he quoted from Confucius, a great ancient Chinese sage.

He noted that China has grown from a poor and weak country to the world’s second largest economy not by committing military expansion or colonial plunder, but through the hard work of its people and their efforts to uphold peace.

“China will never waver in its pursuit of peaceful development. No matter how strong its economy grows, China will never seek

hegemony, expansion or sphere of influence. History has borne this out and will continue to do so,” he vowed.

The Chinese leader also pledged that China will remain unchanged in its commitment to pursue common development.

“China’s development has been possible because of the world, and China has contributed to the world’s development. We will continue to pursue a win-win strategy of opening-up, share our development opportunities with other countries and welcome them aboard the fast train of China’s development,” said Xi.

According to Xi, China has provided foreign countries with over 400 billion yuan (about 58.4 billion U.S. dollars) of aid between 1950 and 2016, while since the outbreak of the international financial crisis, China has contributed to over 30 percent of global growth each year on average.

He went on by saying that in the coming five years, China will import eight trillion dollars of goods, attract 600 billion dollars of foreign investment, make 750 billion dollars of outbound investment, adding that Chinese tourists will make 700 million outbound visits.

“China remains unchanged in its commitment to foster partnerships,” he said in the speech.

He also said that China pursues an independent foreign policy of peace, and is ready to enhance friendship and cooperation with all other countries on the basis of the

Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

China has formed partnerships of various forms with over 90 countries and regional organizations, and will build a circle of friends across the world, he said.

The Chinese president said China will strive to build a new model of major country relations with the United States, a comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination with Russia, partnership for peace, growth, reform and among different civilizations with Europe, and a partnership of unity and cooperation with BRICS countries.

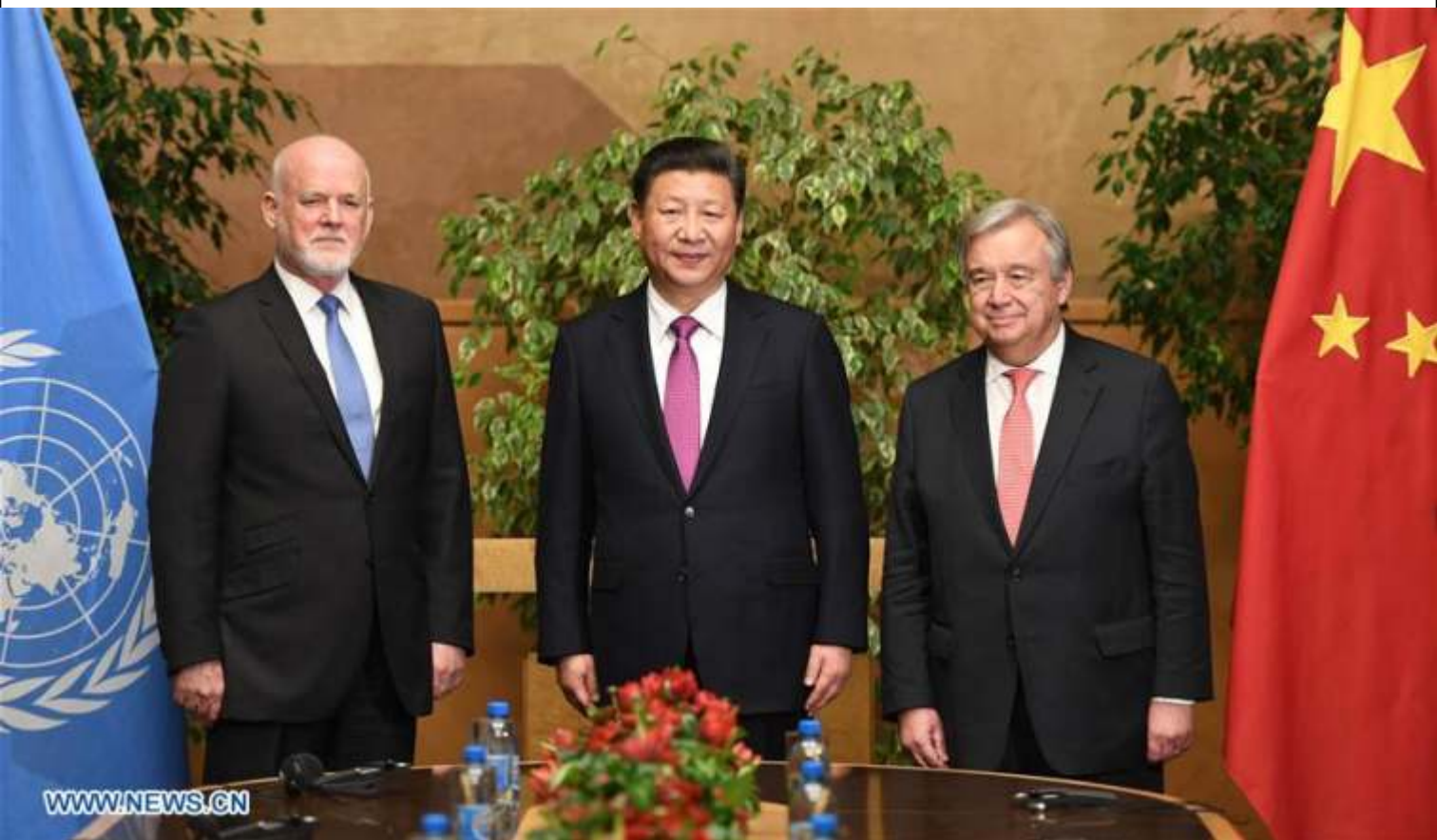
China is also going to remain unchanged in its commitment to multilateralism, said the president.

He hailed multilateralism as an effective way to preserve peace and promote development, saying that for decades, the UN and other international bodies have made a universally recognized contribution to maintaining global peace and sustaining development.

China will firmly uphold the international system with the UN as its core, the basic norms governing international relations embodied in the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, the authority and stature of the UN, and its core role in international affairs, he added.

Also on Wednesday, the Chinese government presented a cloisonne vase to the UNOG, which was unveiled by President Xi and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

XI URGES UN TO PLAY CENTRAL ROLE IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE



SWITZERLAND-GENEVA-XI JINPING-UN-MEETING

Chinese President Xi Jinping (C) meets with Peter Thomson (L), president of the 71st session of United Nations General Assembly, and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in Geneva, Switzerland, Jan. 18, 2017. (Xinhua/Zhang Duo)

Geneva, Jan. 18 (Xinhua) — Chinese President Xi Jinping said here Wednesday that the United Nations, the most universal, representative and authoritative inter-governmental organization, should play a central role in global governance.

Xi made the remarks while meeting with Peter Thomson, president of the 71st UN General Assembly, and UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres at the UN office in Geneva.

China will stick to the path of multilateralism, safeguard UN charters and related principles, and support the world body's bigger role in maintaining world peace and promoting common development, he said.

In the current situation, the UN's role needs to be strengthened instead of being weakened, he said, adding that multilateralism should be upheld in face of all kinds of global threats and challenges.

The Chinese president also said that while economic globalization is a result of growth in productivity and the tide of history, it needs to be properly managed and guided, so as to unleash more of its dividends.

“The interests of all nations are connected, while their future is shared. The old way of chasing profits and hegemony must be banished, and should be replaced with a new pattern of using rules and institutions to better coordinate relationships and interests,” he said.



He said China always advocates that all nations are equal and can follow the development path which can best accommodate their different conditions, adding that Beijing would like to, via the United Nations, share its experience in running the country.

For their part, Thomson and Guterres noted that the Chinese president had reaffirmed China's

commitment to multilateralism in his speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos Tuesday.

Xi's statement, which has been highly regarded by the international community, is a key guarantor for the UN and the multilateral enterprise, they noted.

They also applauded China's long-term contribution to

combating climate change, reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development, and supporting peacekeeping missions.

The UN is willing to join China in promoting world peace and development, and in realizing the goal of building a community of shared future for mankind, said the two senior UN officials.

XI STEPS UP SPORT DIPLOMACY WITH HISTORIC VISIT TO IOC

Lausanne, Switzerland, Jan. 18 (Xinhua) — Chinese President Xi Jinping, an avid football fan who is not shy from showing off his skills, has added an important chapter to his sports diplomacy.

Xi paid a visit on Wednesday to the headquarters of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the Swiss city of Lausanne and toured the Olympic Museum. It was the first official trip to the IOC

by a Chinese head of state.

"It was really a historic visit, and also a very successful visit," IOC President Thomas Bach told reporters. "The presence of

President Xi Jinping showed the excellent cooperation between China and the IOC.”

With China’s preparations for the 2022 Winter Olympics well underway, the Games were the main focus of the meeting between Xi and Bach.

“Before we had talks last evening and today, I always said we are very confident about the success of these Winter Games. Now, after his visit, I would say we are sure it will be a success,” said Bach.

Sport has become a recurring theme in Xi’s diplomatic efforts. In 2012, Xi, then China’s vice president, kicked a Gaelic football during a visit to Croke Park Stadium in Dublin, Ireland. In the same year while visiting the United States, he watched an NBA game between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Phoenix Suns and received an autographed jersey from British football star David Beckham.

His passion for sport didn’t fade away after assuming presidency in 2013. In 2014, Xi attended the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi. In 2015, he ended his state visit to Britain with a tour of English Premier League club Manchester City.

Observers say Xi’s enthusiasm for and participation in sport tell both his own story and that of China’s.

“As the top political leader of the country, Xi’s interest in sport, especially popular events, really closes the emotional distance between him and the people. It perfectly shows his approachable style,” said Lu Yuanzhen, a sport sociologist in China.

“Involvement in sports events



helped the president foster a gracious and modest public image, which is in line with his open approach to governance,” Lu added.

The influence of sports on Chinese politics is nothing new.

“One of the most classic cases is so-called ‘Ping-pong Diplomacy’ which facilitated the restoration of the China-U.S. relations in the 1970s,” said Ruan Zongze, vice president of the China Institute of

International Studies.

“In the new epoch of diversified diplomacy, sport is believed to make things easier by enhancing intimacy among countries,” Ruan observed.

Xi has never tried to conceal his personal attachment to football. In 2011, he announced three personal football-related wishes: for China to qualify for another World Cup, to host the event and, finally, one day, to win it.



While China has yet to achieve these goals — the last and only time China qualified for the World Cup finals was in 2002 — Xi remains resolute.

In February 2015, China's central reform group, chaired by Xi, approved an ambitious plan to boost the level of football in the country.

The series of measures introduced included establishing 50,000 football schools within 10 years, making the game compulsory for some elementary and middle-school students and separating the Chinese Football Association from government bureaucracy.

Bach spoke very highly of Xi's

overall enthusiasm for sport.

“He has a clear vision about the important role of sport in society and a clear vision for the importance of sport in education for young people,” said Bach. “This is why I told him that, in this respect, he is a true Olympic champion for the youth.”

XI HIGHLIGHTS CHINA'S ACTIVE ROLE IN MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

Beijing, Jan. 24 (Xinhua) — Having just concluded a heartwarming visit to snow-covered Davos in Switzerland, Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday traveled to Chongli ski area in north China's Hebei Province to inspect preparation for the 2022 Beijing

Winter Olympic Games.

From the World Economic Forum (WEF) to the exciting global sporting venue, the spirit held by the Chinese president is consistent — sharing, openness, effectiveness and sustainability.

In a historic visit to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland last week, Xi “showed the excellent cooperation between China and the IOC,” as noted by IOC President Thomas Bach, adding an important chapter to Xi's



CHINA-XI JINPING-2022 WINTER OLYMPICS-INSPECTION (CN)

Chinese President Xi Jinping encourages children attending skiing winter camps at Genting Ski Resort as he inspects preparatory work for Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games in Zhangjiakou City, north China's Hebei Province, Jan. 23, 2017. (Xinhua/Lan Hongguang)

sports diplomacy.

The Chinese head of state has indeed been busy bringing Chinese wisdom and proposals to the world through multilateral platforms, especially since last year.

In September, Xi hosted the G20 Hangzhou Summit under the theme "Toward an innovative, invigorated, interconnected and inclusive global economy," setting out China's policies on global governance and solutions for world economic recovery in a series of

speeches.

In October, Xi attended in Goa, India a summit of the BRICS grouping Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, and jointly issued a declaration pledging an enhanced role of the emerging-market bloc in the global governance system.

In November, Xi urged members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum to stay committed to taking economic globalization forward with vigorous measures, in a speech

at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Peru.

"China aims to tackle the problems of inequality, exclusiveness and inefficiency in the previous globalization process and provide better global governance products for the world," said Fan Yongpeng, an associate professor with the China Institute of Fudan University.

"Since the G20 Hangzhou Summit, we have heard more of China's sober, rational and

constructive voice at a time when no one is willing to take on a leading role,” Fan said.

In his first overseas visit to Switzerland and the WEF annual meeting in January, 2017, Xi injected some much needed confidence in the development of the global economy against the backdrop of sluggish growth and rising anti-globalization sentiment.

Analyzing the root causes of the sluggish global economy and the problems for which globalization has been made the scapegoat, Xi pointed to a lack of robust driving forces for global growth, inadequate global economic governance, and uneven global development.

He stressed the importance of developing a dynamic innovation-driven growth model, a model of open and win-win cooperation featuring a well-coordinated and inter-connected approach, and a model of fair and equitable governance in keeping with the trend of the times, and a balanced, equitable and inclusive development model.

Xi pledged that China’s development will continue to offer

opportunities to business communities in other countries with steadily increasing investment, reliable free trade agreement and win-win development projects such as the initiative on the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, popularly known as the Belt and Road Initiative.

The Belt and Road Initiative, proposed by China in 2013, aims to build a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient Silk Road trade routes. It has won support from over 100 countries and international organizations.

Recalling the Chinese president’s addresses from the APEC meetings in the Philippines in 2015, to the G20 Hangzhou summit in 2016 and now to the 2017 Davos forum, Jack Ma, the founder and executive chairman of Alibaba Group, said he saw China’s increasingly mature role on the world stage, and growing leadership and accountability as a big country.

President Xi’s instinct and foresight are impressive, he told Xinhua, “He saw today from the future, and saw China from the

world.”

Xi’s visit to the U.N. Office at Geneva (UNOG) last week, in which he expounded the concept of building a community of shared future for mankind, was not only the first by a Chinese head of state in the 21st century, but also a significant move of China’s multilateral diplomacy.

Following Xi’s keynote speech at the Palace of Nations in Geneva, Peter Thomson, president of the 71st U.N. General Assembly, and U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres both pledged that the U.N. is willing to join China in promoting world peace and development, and in realizing the goal of building a community of shared future for mankind.

After the successful multilateral diplomacy tour at the beginning of the year, the Chinese president continues to prepare for a host of events with global significance, including a Belt and Road forum for international cooperation in Beijing in May, and the ninth BRICS leaders’ summit in southeast China’s coastal city of Xiamen in September.

BUILDING THE BELT AND ROAD TOGETHER FOR CLOSE INTERNATIONAL CO- OPERATION AND WIN-WIN DEVELOPMENT

The Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) will be held in Beijing from 14 to 15 May 2017. People from both home and abroad have expressed keen interest in the BRF since President

Xi Jinping recently announced it at the Davos Forum. On the occasion of the 100 day countdown, State Councilor Yang Jiechi, who is in charge of the preparatory work, gave a comprehensive overview in an

interview with the People’s Daily and China Daily.

Q: China will host the BRF in May this year. What is your vision for the Forum? What are the objectives

that you hope to achieve at the Forum?

A: President Xi Jinping announced at the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos on 17 January that in May this year, China will host the BRF in Beijing, which aims to discuss ways to boost cooperation, build cooperation platforms and share cooperation outcomes. The Forum will also explore ways to address problems facing global and regional economy, create fresh energy for pursuing interconnected development and make the Belt and Road Initiative deliver greater benefits to the people of all countries. These messages from President Xi have outlined our vision and considerations for the Forum and set the direction for our preparatory work.

In the fall of 2013, President Xi Jinping put forward the Belt and Road Initiative to enhance complementarity and synergy of development strategies and promote common progress of participating countries through closer international cooperation. Over the past three years and more, the Initiative has made good progress in various cooperation and won warm response and active participation. Now it is at a critical juncture of making all-round progress. The BRF will be a good occasion for us to review past progress and plan ahead.

The BRF will be the highest-level forum under the Initiative since its launching over three years ago, and an important diplomatic event China will host this year. It has great significance for international and regional cooperation. Under the

leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core, we hope to achieve the following objectives at the BRF: first, thoroughly review the progress under the Initiative, showcase important early harvest outcomes, further build consensus for cooperation and sustain the momentum of cooperation; second, discuss major cooperation measures going forward, facilitate greater synergy of development strategies, deepen partnership and work for interconnected development; third, while promoting China's economic and social development and structural adjustment, work to advance international cooperation for win-win outcomes. As one Chinese saying goes, a tree needs strong roots to grow tall and a river needs an inexhaustible water source to flow far. By hosting the BRF, we look forward to working with others to take the Belt and Road forward, lay a more solid foundation and foster greater connectivity for world economic growth and deeper regional cooperation so as to bring more benefits to various countries and their people.

Q: The Belt and Road Initiative was put forth more than three years ago. What are its achievements since then? How has it been received internationally? Has it made any difference to people's lives in other countries?

A: The Belt and Road Initiative was proposed by China. Yet it's not going to be China's solo show. A better analogy would be that of a symphony performed by an orchestra composed of all participating countries. This Initiative is meant to be a major

international public goods benefiting all countries. It is not an empty slogan, but rather a series of visible and concrete actions centering around the crucial link of connectivity and infrastructure development as a key part of economic cooperation, which is well-suited to the needs of countries and regions along the route.

We are committed to the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. We stress practical cooperation, win-win outcomes and step-by-step progress. We are looking to align China's development with that of other countries and encourage greater synergy between their respective development strategies and cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative. This will be conducive to expanded regional investment and domestic demand, job creation and poverty reduction and to a higher level of development of the entire region.

The past three years have witnessed the launching, expansion, faster-than-expected progress and fruitful outcomes of the Belt and Road Initiative. More than 100 countries and international organizations have joined this Initiative, among which more than 40 have signed cooperation agreements with China, reaching a broad international consensus on Belt and Road Initiative. The UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, UNESCAP, APEC, ASEM, the GMS have all incorporated or reflected Belt and Road cooperation in their relevant resolutions and documents.

A number of important early harvests have been made. Economic corridor development is making steady progress. An interconnected infrastructure network is taking shape. Trade and investment has increased significantly. Key project cooperation is underway. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Silk Road Fund have provided firm support to financial cooperation. China Railway Express trains to Europe have been operating on the vast Eurasian continent, loaded with goods and matching the market needs of countries along the route. The trains have also set up a bridge of communication and friendship between peoples along the route, and become a welcome sight along the Belt and Road.

The joint development of the Belt and Road Initiative is an important channel to step up international cooperation, a cause embraced and advanced by all parties. It is generating new development opportunities to make people's lives better. It is fair to say that this Chinese initiative is delivering benefits to the whole world.

Q: In a world faced with sluggish economic, investment and trade growth, backlash against globalization and rising uncertainties, how do you envision the BRF's contribution to the global economy and international cooperation? What are the theme and agenda for the Forum?

A: It is true that the global economy is yet to emerge from the profound impact of the international financial crisis. The

recovery is fragile and slow, and the foundation for growth still shaky. There are rising protectionism, louder voices against globalization and the mounting tensions between openness, change and economic integration on the one hand and isolationism, outdated thinking and fragmented trade arrangements on the other. That being said, bilateral, multilateral, regional and global cooperation on infrastructure, connectivity and sustainable development is gaining momentum. In countries around the world, priority is given to the real economy, the manufacturing sector, industrialization and economic diversification. It is important to grasp new development opportunities and find effective means to overcome the difficulties and solve the problems.

History provides us a useful source of wisdom for addressing today's challenges. The land and maritime Silk Road over 2,000 years ago enabled people from various countries to defy national borders and conduct trade and friendly exchanges on camelback or merchant vessels. Those interactions left a glorious chapter in human history. History has proven that closed and exclusive arrangements have no future, while welcoming cooperation with open doors and

ensuring benefits for all is the only way forward. This still rings true today. As President Xi Jinping said earlier at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, "Any attempt to ... channel the waters in the ocean back into isolated lakes and creeks is simply not possible. Indeed, it runs counter to the historical trend." The Belt and Road Initiative, rooted in the Silk Road spirit of peace, cooperation, openness, inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit, follows the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits. Openness, inclusiveness and mutual benefit are the defining features of the Initiative and the very source of its strong appeal. We hope the BRF will help drive away the clouds of the economic doldrums and channel more positivity to global economic growth.

To better build consensus and advance cooperation, China has set "Belt and Road: Cooperation for Common Prosperity" as the Forum's theme. The agenda will focus on connectivity of policy, transportation, trade, finance and people. Discussions will be conducted on key topics such as infrastructure connectivity, economic cooperation and trade, industrial investment, energy and resources, financial support, people-to-people exchanges, ecological and environmental protection and marine cooperation. The Leaders Roundtable, the highlight of the Forum, will focus on two topics: Policy Synergy for Closer Partnership and Connectivity Cooperation for Interconnected Development.

To better build consensus and advance cooperation, China has set "Belt and Road: Cooperation for Common Prosperity" as the Forum's theme.

In our view, the theme and agenda are highly relevant, considering the circumstances and challenges our world faces. Underscoring the importance of international cooperation, connectivity and synergy, the theme and agenda largely overlap with the world's major agenda. I also wish to add that many national and regional plans and global agendas have emerged in recent years, including such regional initiatives as the Eurasian Economic Union, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, the Investment Plan for Europe, the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa and the APEC Connectivity Blueprint as well as global agreements like the Paris Agreement on climate change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The international community needs to seize this opportunity and form synergy between those initiatives to deliver cooperative and shared benefits.

Q: We have learnt that some foreign leaders will attend the BRF and there is great international interest in this event. How is the preparations going and which countries will participate in the Forum? What will be the outcomes of the BRF and what are your expectations?

A: We attach great importance to the preparations for the BRF. We have set up a committee to look after and coordinate the preparation. Thanks to the concerted efforts of responsible departments and the local government, the preparation is well underway. Many foreign leaders have expressed their interest in attending the event. Political

Leaders from about 20 countries have confirmed their participation, representing Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America at the Forum.

preparation is making steady progress. Arrangements about key events, venues, logistics and security are being substantiated. For the coming weeks and months, we will keep the international community updated about its preparation for the Forum whenever necessary, in a spirit of openness and transparency.

Leaders from about 20 countries have confirmed their participation, representing Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America at the Forum. This testifies to the great attention and support the Forum and the Belt and Road Initiative have received from the international community. We will also invite ministerial delegations from some countries, representatives of international organizations, former foreign heads of state and government, business leaders, experts and scholars to join the discussions on how to promote cooperation.

The success of the Forum very much lies in its outcomes, and we are working vigorously for that to happen. We hope that the Forum will deliver important outcomes in three aspects:

First, expanding international consensus on cooperation. The Forum is expected to encourage all parties to uphold the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, pursue peace and cooperation in a spirit of openness, inclusiveness and

mutual learning, and seek win-win and interconnected development. Economic growth, job creation, poverty reduction, delivering a better life to the people and environmental protection shall be underlined as the priorities of international cooperation. The Forum will also encourage the formation of synergy among national, regional and global development agenda, with a view to moving the world toward a community of shared future for mankind featuring common development and prosperity.

Second, enhancing practical cooperation in key areas. The Forum is expected to cement the good momentum of cooperation in all fields under the Belt and Road Initiative, paying particular attention to those key areas and directions with far-reaching and long-term implications. The Forum will enhance cooperation in infrastructure connectivity, trade and investment, financial support and people-to-people exchanges, facilitate a number of major projects and cooperation agreements, and come up with some key mid - to long-term measures.

Third, mapping out plans for long-term cooperation. In jointly building the Belt and Road, we will explore, together with the related countries, long-term cooperation mechanisms through equal-footed consultations that take the interests of all parties into balanced consideration. The Forum will help to enhance communication and coordination, build mutual trust and a solid network of partnerships, increase real input, deepen the convergence of interests, and draw up a blueprint of development in the

common interests of all parties.

Q: From your remarks, we get the sense that the BRF will help advance international cooperation, enhance the alignment between the Belt and Road Initiative and the development strategies of partner countries, and strengthen China's economic cooperation with the world. How then are we to understand the importance of the BRF to China's efforts to implement its 13th Five-Year Plan, boost all-round reform and opening-up, and achieve the two centenary goals (namely, ushering in a moderately prosperous society in all respects when the Communist Party of China celebrates its centenary in 2021 and becoming a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious when the People's Republic celebrates its centenary in 2049)?

A: The Belt and Road Initiative aims to promote common development and win-win cooperation. China does not intend to monopolize all the benefits or even take the lion's share, but will work with partner countries to make the pie bigger and divide it equitably. In this process, through strengthened cooperation among the parties, we will make contribution to the international community as well as promote reform and development at home. China will pursue its development in the context of international cooperation by fully reflecting international consensus.

As its economy enters the "new normal", China faces both opportunities and challenges, particularly regional disparity. With

an emphasis on expanding westward opening-up, the Belt and Road Initiative will accelerate development of China's western region, and contribute to a more coordinated development of the whole country. The Initiative covers multiple provinces, autonomous regions and major municipalities in China's interior and coastal regions. It hews closely to China's regional development strategy, new urbanization strategy and opening-up strategy, and will provide a strong boost to China's all-dimensional opening-up.

The Belt and Road Initiative will create synergy between China's efforts to boost international economic cooperation and to deepen reform and opening-up, enable China and partner countries to jointly pursue the new vision of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development, and facilitate China's endeavor to implement the 13th Five-Year Plan, boost all-round reform and opening-up, and achieve the two centenary goals. We are full of expectations and confidence about this.

Q: China successfully hosted the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Beijing in 2014 and the G20 Summit in Hangzhou in 2016. How is the Belt and Road Forum different from these two events and what are its unique features?

A: The APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Beijing, the G20 Summit in Hangzhou and the BRF are all important international conferences. The three events follow the same idea, namely, the emphasis on openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation, on connectivity and interconnected development

and on innovative development to tap potential driving forces and contribute to the well-being of people around the world.

The BRF has its own features compared with the previous two events. First, the Belt and Road Initiative is an international initiative for cooperation launched by China. The Forum is the first of its kind. Nevertheless, it is easier to draw the most beautiful picture on a piece of blank paper. Second, the Belt and Road Initiative is open to countries of different regions. The idea originates from the ancient Silk Road but the Initiative is not confined to it. We welcome the participation of various countries, international organizations, multinational corporations, financial institutions and non-governmental organizations in specific cooperation projects for achievements through concerted efforts. Third, compared with the well-established mechanisms that have long been in operation such as APEC and the G20, the Forum is more flexible in agenda items, cooperation areas and ways to advance cooperation. It will fully accommodate the comfort level and accessibility for the parties concerned.

We believe that the Forum will be a useful platform for strengthening coordination, mutual complementarity and international cooperation. We hope to work with other participating parties to push forward the Belt and Road Initiative so as to lay a solid foundation for the kind of cooperation that will facilitate long-term development and benefit the people, and usher in a better future for all.

CHINESE FM CALLS FOR EXPEDITING RCEP TALKS



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi (L) and his Australian counterpart Julie Bishop meet the press after the two countries' fourth round of diplomatic and strategic dialogue in Canberra, Australia, Feb. 7, 2017. Foreign ministers of China and Australia called for further strengthening of bilateral ties here on Tuesday. (Xinhua/Zhu Hongye)

Canberra, Feb. 7 (Xinhua) — Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Tuesday called for expediting the talks of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) for the construction of a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP).

China is open to any regional trade arrangement conducive to regional economic integration and global free trade system, Wang told a press conference after the fourth round of China-Australia diplomatic and strategic dialogue.

As for various regional or sub-

regional cooperation mechanisms in the Asia-Pacific, some are thriving while others are faltering, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), he said.

Wang stressed that practice on the ground has showed that any regional cooperation should take into consideration the needs for economic development rather than political factors.

"Either the RCEP or TPP or other regional arrangements is a possible path to the broader FTAAP," Wang said.

The top Chinese diplomat urged

relevant parties, including Australia, to make joint efforts to conclude the RCEP negotiations at an early date so as to contribute to achieving the common goal of building the FTAAP.

Launched in November 2012, the RCEP talks involve 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its six major trading partners - China, Japan, South Korea, India, New Zealand and Australia - with an aim of facilitating expansion of regional trade and investment.

REMARKS BY H.E. AMBASSADOR LUO ZHAOHUI ON THE OCCASION OF THE 'HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR' PERFORMANCE

Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Luo Zhaohui on the Occasion of the 'Happy Chinese New Year' Performance January 22nd, 2017, Royal Institute of Management, Bhutan

Your Royal Highness,

Your Excellency the Prime Minister of Bhutan,

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Kuzuzangpola,

I am so happy to be back to Thimphu again. My first trip here was 14 years ago. How time flies. Since then, something remains unchanged: the hard working people, their hospitality, and the blue sky. And there are also two small things that deeply impressed me: One is the many windows on the buildings; the other is the many dogs on the streets. Bhutan is a nice and quiet country. Human beings live harmoniously with the Mother Nature. That's why it is called the last Shangri-La.

What have changed are more direct air-link with the outside world, better road condition from Paro to Thimphu, and more beautiful buildings. I saw many small shops on the streets. More importantly, you have new leadership, and also the Gross National Happiness (GNH) is getting more and more popular in the world.





This is my first time to visit here as Chinese Ambassador to India. I am also in charge of the China-Bhutan relations. I appreciate the hospitality the Bhutanese government has extended to me and my delegation. As you all know, China and Bhutan are close neighbors linked by the great Himalayas. Friendship between our two nations could be traced back to thousands of years. We don't have formal diplomatic ties yet, but our friendship and cooperation are much better than many other bilateral relations. We have always regarded Bhutan as a trusted friend, and our two peoples always have family-like sentiment towards each other.

In recent years, remarkable achievements have been made in our practical cooperation in trade, agriculture as well as religion, cultural and tourism exchanges. We

really appreciate the contribution made by the Royal Monarchy, the Bhutanese government, and the people. I know the Prime Minister was in Goa last October and had a brief chat with Chinese President Xi Jinping. They also exchanged gifts.

I firmly believe that with the joint efforts of both countries, China-Bhutan relations will open a new chapter.

This time I bring with me a group of Chinese artists to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year. This year is the Year of Rooster starting from 28th of January. I know our Bhutanese friends will also observe your Losar New Year of the Fire Bird next month. So it is fair to say that the event today is a double celebration and double happiness.

For Chinese, Lunar New Year

Festival is just like Losar New Year, the most important festival. No matter where you are, or how far away you are, people always rush back to their families for reunion. Both Bhutanese and Chinese people cherish family values very much.

In Chinese culture, rooster stands for vitality and courage. On this occasion, I wish all the Bhutanese friends present good fortune in the Year of Rooster, and I also wish China and Bhutan enjoy everlasting friendship.

The artists today are from Xinjiang autonomous region in China. Their dance and song are very unique, showing the diversity of Chinese culture. Hope you enjoy it.

Tashi Delek!

China India Relations

REMARKS BY H.E. AMBASSADOR LUO ZHAOHUI ON THE OCCASION OF THE “HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR” PERFORMANCE

January 18th 2017, Kamani Auditorium

Dr. Udit Raj, Member of Parliament,

Ambassador Amarendra Khatua, DG of ICCR,

Dr. Aruna Sharma, Secretary, Ministry of Steel,

Mr. Mohammed Saqib, Secretary General, ICEC

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Namaste!

I am delighted to join you tonight in celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year. This year is the Year of Rooster starting from 28th of January.

For a Chinese, Lunar New Year Festival is just like Diwali in India, the most important festival. No matter where you are, or how far away you are, people always rush back to their families for reunion.

Both Indian and Chinese people cherish family values very much. Tonight, we are here celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year together like a family.

In Chinese culture, the golden rooster stands for vitality and courage. On this occasion, I wish all the Indian friends and Chinese friends present good fortune in the



Year of Rooster, and I also wish China and India enjoy everlasting friendship.

As you all know, China and India are both countries with long history and diversified civilizations. As a unique part of the Chinese culture, the culture of Xinjiang is wonderful in many ways. In the following dances and songs by the Xinjiang

Artists, you will have a taste of it and gain deeper understanding of the Chinese culture.

Culture and arts are borderless. As two close neighbours, cultural exchanges between China and India date back thousands of years. Last week, I visited the Ajanta Caves. I was amazed to discover many elements of Chinese culture in the

sculptures and frescos there. In the performances tonight, you may also find some elements of Indian culture. This is a continuation of China-India cultural exchanges in the new era and proof of the long-standing integration between our two civilizations. Let us enjoy the show!

Thank you!

“HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR” SHOW BY XINJIANG ART THEATER SONG AND DANCE TROUPE GAINED SUCCESS

Kamani Auditorium in New Delhi was decorated with red lanterns and thronged with people on January 18th. Presented by the Ministry of Culture P.R.C, the “Happy Chinese New Year” performance by Xinjiang Art

Theater Song and Dance Troupe gained huge success. It was the highlight of “Happy Chinese New Year” program held in India in 2017. H.E Ambassador Luo Zhaohui and his wife Counselor Jiang Yili, Director General of Indian Council

for Cultural Relations Mr. Amarendra Khatua, Secretary of Ministry of Steel Ms. Aruna Sharma, Lok Sabha Member Mr. Ujit Raj etc. enjoyed the performance together with over 800 audiences.

Ambassador Luo delivered a speech, in which he introduced the Chinese New Year culture and the values it contains. He pointed out that the cultural exchanges between China and India, two history-honored neighboring countries, date back thousands years ago. He was convinced the audiences shall know deeper about Chinese culture through the performances from Xinjiang, China.

Mr. Khatua and Ms. Sharma made good wishes to the Chinese people for the Chinese New Year in their speeches and expressed their thanks for the “Happy Spring Festival” performance brought by Xinjiang Art Theater Song and Dance Troupe. Both of them are expecting more cultural exchanges in the coming year.

The show started with group dance “celebration”, which was full of festive atmosphere, enthusiasm and reflected the spirit of Chinese people and their aspiration in pursuit of a better life. “Stomping dance” showcased a pleasant spring trip of young ladies, inspiring the audience’s imagination of the spring. The Hindi song “Tum Hi Ho”, which means “you are the only one”, caused sensation among audiences and the atmosphere in the auditorium reached a climax. Acrobatic programs such as “shaking hoola hoops” “hand technique” “Tiezhuang” made the audience feel nervous but won big applause thereafter. The last program “Uyghur Dolan Maxrap”, which was rich in regional flavor, led the whole event to another climax with its passion. The show came to end successfully in the applause and

cheers of the audience.

After the show, the audience thronged to the stage to take photos with the artists. An audience from New Delhi said that last year he enjoyed the “Happy Chinese New Year” program. This year he had been looking forward to it ever since he noticed the news. He said the show was truly spectacular! He wished that he would have the opportunity to watch another performance next year.

To accompany the above performance, Chinese Embassy in India arranged the “Happy New Year” photo exhibition. Audiences enjoyed the joyous scenes and moving moments from the “Happy Chinese New Year” program all over the world in 2016 through the photos.



VICE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS PARTY SH. RAHUL GANDHI VISITS EMBASSY OF CHINA IN INDIA

On Jan.19, Vice President of Congress Party Sh. Rahul Gandhi and Deputy Leader of Opposition Sh. Anand Sharma visited the Embassy of China in India at the invitation of Ambassador Luo Zhaohui. In a cordial and friendly atmosphere, the two sides exchanged views on the bilateral relations, party to party exchanges, international and regional situation and other issues. Counsellor Zhou Yuyun and Deputy-Director of Political Department Zhu Songbo from Chinese Embassy participated in the meeting.

Chinese Economy

CHINA INDUSTRIAL FIRMS POST PROFIT RISE IN 2016



Beijing, Jan. 26 (Xinhua) — China's major industrial firms ended their period of profit losses and reaped good returns in 2016 on the back of a construction boom, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said Thursday.

Those companies reported an 8.5 percent profit increase in 2016, reversing the 2.3 percent decline registered in 2015, the NBS said in a statement.

NBS statistician He Ping said the profitability of the major business of industrial firms rose 0.19 percentage points year on year to 5.97 percent in 2016.

In December, their profits grew 2.3 percent year on year, slowing by 12.2 percentage points from November.

The sharp profit slowdown in December was a result of soaring raw material prices, which pushed up China's producer prices to their highest level in more than five years.

Earnings recovery remained uneven across the sector, with coal mines and processors such as steel mills and oil refiners continuing to see smaller profit declines, while the advanced manufacturing sector saw its profits accelerate.

In 2016, profits of state-owned industrial enterprises rose 6.7 percent, while those of private companies increased 4.8 percent. Foreign-invested companies posted strong growth of 12.1 percent in profits.

He Ping partly attributed 2016's brisk growth to a lower comparison basis in 2015. The average growth

rate of profits in the past two years was less than the growth rate of industrial production, he added.

He underlined the fact that China's economy faces a complicated domestic and global environment, and the foundation for industrial recovery is not solid.

Supply-side reform should be deepened, an industrial upgrading should continue, he added.

China's economy grew 6.7 percent year on year in 2016, slowing from the 6.9-percent growth registered in 2015.

China's economy continued to run within a reasonable range, with its structure further optimized and development model transformed, NBS chief Ning Jizhe said earlier this month.



CHINA TO FURTHER OPEN UP DEVELOPMENT ZONES

Beijing, Feb. 6 (Xinhua) — China will continue to open up its development zones to attract foreign investment and promote international cooperation, according to the State Council Monday.

The government will support the country's development zones to improve their capability to facilitate foreign trade and encourage international business, according to a guideline released by the State

Council.

Development zones are pioneer areas in China's opening up campaign. China has over 1,500 national and provincial development zones, which enjoy preferential policies to help nurture technological innovation, free trade, tourism and other key drivers of economic growth.

The guideline said that China

would support qualified multinational companies based in the development zones to conduct two-way cross-border RMB cash pooling business.

It also said that companies in the development zones would be allowed to borrow RMB and other currencies from abroad by loans or bonds as long as they met certain regulations.

ECONOMIC WATCH: AGRICULTURAL REFORM KEY TO CHINA'S PROSPERITY



Beijing, Feb. 6 (Xinhua) — China's first central document of 2017 promises to maintain the drive to resolve rural issues on the road to a moderately prosperous society by 2020.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council released a document on supply-side structural reform in the agriculture sector on Sunday.

The first policy statement of year is widely referred to as the "No. 1 Central Document." For the past 14 years, it has been devoted to agriculture, farmers and rural areas.

Rural areas should make greater strides toward a moderately well-off society by raising agricultural efficiency and farmers' incomes, and promoting green production, the

document said.

"China's countryside should be a fascinating place. Agriculture is an attractive sector and farming should be an admirable occupation," said Tang Renjian, deputy director of the central rural work leading group.

URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE

Building the kind of moderately prosperous society China's leaders envisage by 2020 means doubling 2010 GDP and residents' incomes, while lifting the whole population above the poverty line.

The urban-rural income gap continued to narrow last year, with per capita disposable income of rural residents rising 6.2 percent compared to only 5.6 percent among the urban population, according to

the National Bureau of Statistics. The gap remains considerable however, with the per capita income of urbanites 2.72 times more than that of their rural counterpart.

This disparity was highlighted in the document, with "continuing weak growth in the incomes of agricultural workers" listed as one of the prime issues to be addressed through supply-side structural reform.

A better deal for farmers, along with ensuring food security, are central to the planned reform, Tang said.

SECURITY OF SUPPLY

During the reform process, it is imperative that national grain security be guaranteed, according to



the document. Output dropped slightly in 2016, ending a 12-year rising streak, but still the second highest year on record.

China has entered a stage of rapidly rising customer expectations. Consumers want their food to be of high quality and they seek greater choice. As Tang said, the basic objective of agricultural reform is to provide safe, edible food.

In pursuit of safer, more sustainable, higher quality products, there must be no increase in use of pesticides and fertilizers. Better quality-control and more systematic production will ensure the safety of produce.

A chain of innovation centers will be created, and clean production that uses less water will be promoted and polluted soil be rehabilitated.

BETTER PROSPECTS

Little can be achieved without financial support and professional expertise.

Fiscal support for agriculture and rural areas should show moderate growth and loans will be made easier to obtain, according to the document.

Public private partnerships, subsidies and special rural development funds are just some of the ways the government will

encourage investment, Tang said.

Migrant workers will be encouraged to return home and start their own businesses. Careers in agriculture will be made more attractive through professional training for farmers and managers. There will be incentives for college graduates, entrepreneurs and returned students from overseas to bringing their technological and managerial skills to rural areas.

If the right people can be attracted to start businesses in the countryside, it will lead to the fast development of new industries and new ways of making money, according to Tang.

ECONOMIC WATCH: CHINA'S MONETARY POLICY TO BE MORE PRUDENT, NEUTRAL

Beijing, Feb. 5 (Xinhua) — China's monetary policy is expected to be more prudent and neutral, to rein in asset bubbles and guard against financial risks, economists have said.

The central bank, the People's Bank of China (PBOC), Friday raised the interest rate for seven-day repurchase agreements, a key tool used to adjust monetary policy, and for longer 14 and 28-day repo rates.

In January, the PBOC also raised rates on its medium-term loan facility for the first time since it debuted the facility in 2014.

China has kept prudent monetary policy since 2011. However, in practice the policy has been slightly loosening for a period

of time due to downward pressure on economic growth, according to Zhang Xiaohui, assistant governor of the PBOC.

Top policy makers said at the annual Central Economic Work Conference in December that China would maintain a "prudent and neutral" monetary policy in 2017.

In an article published Friday in China Finance, a PBOC-run financial magazine, Zhang described the monetary policy for 2017 as "more neutral" and "more prudent."

"China should keep its monetary policy prudent and stable, appropriately expand aggregate demand to avoid an overly-rapid economic slowdown and at the same time refrain from excessive money

supply to prevent bubbles," she said.

"The relatively easy monetary policy environment created by cuts to benchmark interest rates and reserve requirement ratios since late 2014 has changed," said Lian Ping, chief economist at the Bank of Communications.

"Monetary policy is currently shifting toward prudence while tilting to slight tightening, a trend that has become more and more clear since the second half of 2016," Lian added.

China International Capital Corporation (CICC), a Beijing-based investment bank, said that authorities were turning their focus to "curbing asset bubbles and guarding against economic and



financial risks.”

At the Central Economic Work Conference in December, the Chinese leadership pledged to make a priority of preventing financial risks, saying that curbing asset bubbles would assume more importance in 2017.

The caution is justified by the property market, which saw housing prices jump sharply in 2016, and changes to inflation.

China’s consumer price index, a main gauge of inflation, in December increased 2.1 percent year on year. But producer prices rose 5.5 percent, the highest in more than five years, fanning inflation expectations.

However, analysts said policymakers would take a gradual approach, given internal and

external uncertainties in China’s economy, which needs to further consolidate.

China’s economy grew 6.7 percent year on year in 2016, higher than most other major economies, but the slowest annual expansion in 26 years.

“The PBOC’s moves will effectively guide market interest rates up, but we do not expect benchmark deposit and lending rates to be adjusted in the near term, considering both internal and external uncertainties on China’s economy,” CICC said.

“The direction of the PBOC’s policy is very clear, but it will resort to an orderly and progressive approach,” Zeng Gang, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, told Xinhua in an interview.

“The authorities will take into account the impact of its policies on the financial market and the real economy, and the monetary policy will remain prudent on the whole,” said Zeng, who expects the policy to be further adjusted if the Chinese economy experiences major changes.

The central bank would be “very cautious” and “look carefully before taking each step” in changing monetary policy, said Lian, of Bank of Communications, adding that the PBOC would look at reactions in the domestic financial market and the real economy.

“No big moves are expected as the central bank will also take into consideration the U.S. Federal Reserve’s possible rate decisions and the renminbi’s exchange rate fluctuations,” Lian said.

CHINESE INSURERS INVEST 240 BLN USD INTO INFRASTRUCTURE, LIVELIHOOD IMPROVEMENT



Beijing, Feb. 7 (Xinhua) — Chinese insurers had initiated 651 investment projects with registered capital of 1.65 trillion yuan (about 239.8 billion U.S. dollars) in infrastructure and livelihood improvement by the end of 2016, official data showed.

The investment was made through equity and bond purchases,

as well as asset support plans, which mostly went into transport, energy, real estate, healthcare and elderly care, according to the Insurance Asset Management Association of China (IAMAC).

Chinese insurance capital has also provided funds to national development strategies such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the Yangtze

River Economic Belt and the coordinated development of Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei.

Insurers have invested 592.3 billion yuan in the Belt and Road Initiative and 135.9 billion yuan in the Yangtze River Economic Belt by the end of 2016, said the IAMAC.

The association encourages

insurance companies to provide funding to develop the country's real economy, as insurance capital is considered as large and stable long-term funds.

Speaking of stock investment, the IAMAC called for Chinese insurance companies to be friendly investors to listed companies and cornerstones of the capital market, instead of making aggressive stake buyouts and bringing excessive intervention to the operation of the listed companies.

The "barbaric" behavior of some Chinese insurers using leveraged money to buy shares of listed companies raised regulatory concerns late last year. Triggering sharp volatility in the market, such moves annoyed corporate executives and caused individual investors to suffer.

Some 1.88 trillion yuan of China's investment capital had been put into stocks by the end of November last year, accounting for 14.37 percent of the total, according to the China Insurance Regulatory

Commission.

The IAMAC said insurers should avoid speculative investment, safeguard the stability of the capital market and maintain good communications with stake holders and management of listed companies.

The association expects insurance companies to increase the holding of blue-chip stocks to rejig their investment portfolio, as market interest rates will remain low in the period ahead.

CHINA STARTS YEAR OF ROOSTER WITH ROBUST GROWTH MOMENTUM



China's tourism industry raked in 423.3 billion yuan (61.7 billion U.S. dollars) in revenue during the Lunar New Year holiday. The volume marked a year-on-year increase of 15.9 percent, according to calculations by the China National Tourism Administration. During the seven-day holiday, which ends on Thursday, some 344 million visitor trips were made, up 13.8 percent from the same period last year. (Xinhua/Wang Xin)

Beijing, Feb. 3 (Xinhua) — The year of rooster started with a resonant crow for China with impressive economic performances.

As the key engine of the world's second largest economy, consumption posted strong growth in the past week as Chinese people spent more on shopping, dining, travelling and movie-going.

Shops and restaurants across China reported robust sales from Jan. 27 to Feb. 2, with sales in the catering and retails sectors reaching 840 billion yuan (120 billion U.S. dollars), up 11.4 percent year on year, official data showed.

Sales of traditional festival-related goods, jewelry, household appliances and digital products saw rapid growth. Major jewelry stores in Gansu, Hebei and Anhui provinces reported double-digit sales growth, with rooster-themed accessories most favored by consumers.

The week-long Lunar New Year

holiday also saw record box office as more Chinese people became movie-goers.

About 3.3 billion yuan (480.5 million U.S. dollars) were taken at the box office from Jan. 27 to Feb. 2, up 10 percent year on year, according to Maoyan.com.

Travel is also popular. During the seven-day holiday some 344 million visitor trips were made, up 13.8 percent from the same period last year, of which about 6.15 million were overseas trips, up 7 percent year on year.

Tourist ventures took 423.3 billion yuan (60 billion U.S. dollars) in revenue during the period, up 15.9 percent.

Behind the spending are changing preferences and ways Chinese people consume. Chinese consumers now want high-quality, personalized and varied products and services.

In addition to strong consumption, the manufacturing sector also expanded. The manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) came in at 51.3 in January, staying in expansionary territory for the sixth month, pointing to a stabilizing economy.

A separate survey of the service sector showed steady growth, with non-manufacturing PMI up 0.1 to 54.6.

Financial, insurance and Internet and software information technology were among the fastest growing service sectors, while transportation, catering and property sectors reported contractions.

Supported by consumer spending and the service sector, China's GDP grew 6.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2016 and the full-year GDP growth stood at 6.7 percent, well within the target range.

NEW TRENDS OF CHINA'S OVERSEAS TRAVEL IN SPRING FESTIVAL

The Spring Festival holiday is a peak period for Chinese to travel overseas, with 6.15 million overseas trips made this year, up 7 percent from last year.

Travel website Ctrip said that Chinese tourists are estimated to have spent 100 billion yuan (about 14.5 billion U.S. dollars) over the seven-day holiday.

SOUTHEAST ASIA IS HOTTEST DESTINATION

"It's a totally different way to celebrate Spring Festival in a foreign country," said Li Chunhong, from the southern city of Nanning. Her family just returned from five-day trip to Thailand, among a growing number of Chinese who visit Southeast Asia to celebrate Spring Festival.

According to online travel agency Tuniu.com, outbound tourists accounted for 48 percent of its Spring Festival business. Southeast Asian countries are the most popular destinations, with Thailand top of the list.

TRAVEL FEVER SPREADS TO SMALLER CITIES

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TRAVEL FEVER SPREADS TO SMALLER CITIES

People from smaller cities are now more keen to venture abroad.

China National Tourism Administration reported that inland cities have become important sources of outbound tourism.

Li Jianlin, general manager of Guangxi overseas travel agency’s Nanning branch, said that tickets on chartered flights from Nanning to Phuket and Bangkok were sold out Jan. 26, the eve of Spring Festival, and Feb. 5.

Tuniu.com said that second-tier and third-tier cities, such as Nanjing and Wuhan have generated the fastest growth in outbound tourists this holiday.

The number of UnionPay overseas transactions rose nearly 40 percent this holiday to 462 billion yuan. As Chinese tourist numbers grow, more hotels, restaurants and stores overseas have started to take UnionPay cards.

DIVERSE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES ARE NEEDED

In addition to shopping and sightseeing, Chinese tourists have shown interest in a wide variety of travel experiences.

Fu Hua, president of Beijing Damei International Travel Agency, said tours to the United States have gained popularity as tourists can see the northern lights in Alaska or travel to the United States by cruise ship.

Celebrating Spring Festival at the bottom of the earth is not a dream. According to Tuniu.com, ten tourists, most from Shanghai, went to the South Pole.

“The growth in overseas tourism can be attributed to higher incomes,” said Fu. Other factors, such as simpler visa procedures and more flights also contribute to the boom.

Indians in China

CHINA'S AMAZING CULTURAL IMPACT

by Prahlad Prathibha

In the last decade, China has emerged as a major cultural power. Its presence is felt in every major or minor festival across the globe. There is no festival in the world where Chinese arts and artistes in performance are not showcased. The barriers of language, culture-specific performances of opera, music or dances, which the West would ordinarily term ‘ethnic’ and keep out of mainstream performance venues, no longer hold true where China is concerned. It is amazing how, with strategic planning, soft outreach and a huge

budget, China has overcome hindrances to the consumption of culture and the arts.

China’s traditional culture is an attraction to the West, especially with its rapid rise as a major economic power. China quickly understood that economic rise is not sustainable without expanding cultural footprints; and, without becoming more “acceptable” by increasing its reach on the world stage. China’s engagement with several countries, through bilateral and festival cooperation, has drawn widespread

attention to Chinese arts and artistes and has led to its rise also as a “super soft power.”

Several international festivals are being organized in China’s provinces. Most of these started many years ago as regional affairs. With more funds available and a clear directive to intensify cultural engagements with a global community of festival directors, artistes, NGOs and cultural arms of foreign governments – with the single-point agenda of placing China on the world map – these regional



festivals have now transformed into international events where artistes from around the world are invited to perform.

My engagement with China and its artistes began in 2012, when I was invited to the China Shanghai International Festival Forum, the flagship event of China's global cultural festival

My meeting with directors of these international festivals in different regions led to my dance group – Prasiddha Repertory – being invited twice to perform in Chengdu in Sichuan Province and Zhangjiajie in Hunan Province. While the International Festival of Intangible Cultural Heritage (IFICH) in Chengdu, organised in collaboration with UNESCO, had

112 participating countries, the Zhangjiajie Country Music Festival saw 27 countries, including the U.S., South Africa, Australia, Italy, Russia, and Brazil. The events were staged in the area's world heritage sites. The opening ceremony was in the spectacular Huanglong Ecology Cave where all the participating countries performed. After the inaugural performance, every country had a generous schedule for maximising their exposure to the region for Chinese audiences.

Prasiddha Repertory's performances were organized in picturesque places around the Baofeng Lake, Laomowan, Tianzi Mountain, Tianmen Mountain (where the Hollywood movie *Avatar* was shot), and Xibu Avenue. Apart from the fact that it was an

unforgettable experience, our hosts took care of everything – including stay, food preferences, technical needs and comfort of the groups. So much so, that by the time we left, all of us were in love with China. The extent to which the Chinese can strategize to deliver desired outcomes, as the gigantic IFICH demonstrated, is impressive.

Chengdu, with UNESCO collaboration, has developed a 100-acre park dedicated to intangible cultural heritage (ICH). I haven't come across any other place in the world that has such a vast area devoted to multiple museums, theatres, and theme parks, as well as audio-visual shows, sculptures, paintings, musical instruments, printed material, and the like dedicated to the country's cultural

heritage. The ICH Park was the venue for the opening ceremony of the festival, which brought together 112 countries and an audience of 25,000.

For me, Chengdu was a surprise package that unfolded the many Chinese delights on offer. I was told that culturally, Chengdu is China's "most intense city." I understood why I saw the entire city wearing a festive look. Every road, lamp post, and sidewalk had been utilised for branding and promotion of the festival. Huge billboards sported an interesting tag line: 'Everyone Be a Cultural Transmitter.' With hundreds of volunteers wearing T-shirts sporting the same message, there seemed to be, literally, a cultural explosion.

To top it, the roads were closed to general traffic for providing security to the artistes from 112 countries. The security which we were accorded was comparable to

that of high government functionaries. Police cars with lights flashing escorted us artistes to the venues, making us feel like powerful celebrities.

During the rest of our tour, we were greeted by hundreds of enthusiastic people lined up on either side of the long roads, waving Indian flags and taking pictures as we went about our performances for a week in Gaoxin District, Pixian Town, Dujiangyan Tourist Resort, Jintang City, and Bailu Hill Resort in Pengzhou. All were beautiful, picturesque venues, but I would like to specially mention Dujiangyan. The magnificent stage set against the backdrop of a huge, ancient shrine with the power irrigation channel across the Min River lit up in a fantastic way was stunning. My dance group finished its performance to deafening applause from an audience of 15,000. The climax was the closing dinner, which gave all the performers a glimpse of

Chinese opera and a taste of delicious food from all continents.

More recently, in October 2015, I was invited to the China Shanghai International Festival Forum for the purpose of building a network of festivals from countries along the Silk Road.

Ms. Catherine Wang, the culture specialist, and Mr. Liu Wenguo, artistic director of China Shanghai Festival, had invited directors of festivals from 60 Asian and European countries, which were on the ancient 'Silk Road.'

China is a stellar example of what can be achieved through culture and cultural diplomacy. It has changed the world's perception of China and Chinese culture.

(The author is an Indian classical dancer and culture specialist, is the founder and director of Delhi International Arts Festival)

CHINESE MUSEUMS IN PURSUIT OF PRESERVING THE CULTURE

by Prof. Sudha Dhingra

Every visit to China is a window to new sights and insights. In March this year, on my third visit - for an international conference at the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology (BIFT) - I met a variety of people from diverse fields.

After my first trip to China in 1998, last year, I visited Shenzhen for the International Cultural Industries Trade Fair. That gave me a glimpse

of China's efforts to preserve, protect, promote and market its tangible and non-tangible cultural assets and aspects.

China today is vastly more developed. Beijing is flourishing, affluent and attractive. In the last decade, people across the world have got well exposed to technological advancements and the Chinese capacity to mass manufacture goods

for all markets and segments. However, I was more surprised by Chinese efforts to preserve, promote and take pride in their heritage.

On the Conference's second day, we visited the Museum of Ethnic Costumes in BIFT. On entering the third floor of BIFT's general building, the first thing I saw was a huge map of China, with dots in many colours indicating the



location of minority ethnic people in the various provinces.

The Museum of Ethnic Costumes is a cultural research institute and one of the 10 best specialized museums in China. It has a fabulous collection of costumes, textiles and accessories belonging to various ethnic groups from China. The museum has six halls showcasing Han, Miao, Zhuang and Mongolian people besides many other minorities.

I was awestruck by the vastness of the space, the wealth of material and the beautifully mounted artifacts which were well displayed. Each piece was preserved with care and

attention. The museum has a hall of trappings; and, sections on gold jewelry, batik and indigo-dyed textiles, costumes and accessories. We were informed that the exhibits - old pieces in silver, precious stones and other metals - were authentic, not replicas. The documentation was excellent with elaborate captions in Chinese and English. Each ethnic group's clothes and accessories like headgear, shoes and jewelry were mounted on stands, cases and specially-created structures. The preservation of the pieces was immaculate. Special clothing and ceremonial clothing were also displayed.

The Miao people live in South

China, mainly in Hunan, Guizhou and Yunnan provinces. The beautiful skirts, jackets, pants and robes of Chinese patterned silks, delicately embroidered with satin stitches in white, pale pink, sapphire blue and other rich hues were so eye-catching that I could have spent hours studying their structure and imagery.

Intricately embroidered baby-carriers which women used for strapping infants on their back, embroidered tiny shoes which would have attracted the attention of young girls, and bags specially made for storing coins, jewelry and silks, were some of the museum's proud possessions.

The Mongolian Barag tribe's costume with lantern sleeves could inspire many a design student in the world. Furs and skins, fish-skin coats and pants of the Hezhen people and deer-leather bags and gloves of the Mongolians were showcased for visitors to admire the skill of the craftspeople.

The Han people's costumes included shirts, gowns, undergarments, waistcoats and very interesting accessories such as forehead bands, ear-tabs and handkerchief. Silver ornaments for the body and hair were displayed with photographs elaborating how these are to be worn. Heavy silver ornaments for waist, chest, wrists and head were mesmerizing. In one item of head gear, the most intricate layers of fine, delicate flowers made

in silver metal had assorted handcrafted butterflies, bees, dragonflies and praying mantises nestling around a phoenix, the mythical bird symbolizing power and beauty.

Many types of looms used for putting together the elaborately-woven silks and tapestries known as kesi were displayed in the museum. The museum has more than 10,000 objects in its collection, out of which about 500 are displayed. It was a treasure house for students and scholars not only of fashion, but also of history and textiles.

Next day, we visited a lingerie factory, which surprisingly had a museum on its premises. One huge wall in the museum was dedicated to the history of lingerie in the world,

giving details of patents and trends. Another wall depicted the history of lingerie in China. The museum also housed the company's range of lingerie styles tastefully exhibited on mannequins and wall panels.

My three-day stay in Beijing was very exciting. The visits to two very different museums - the Museum of Ethnic Costumes and the Lingerie Museum - afforded me an insight into the rich culture and heritage of China. It is an impressive testimony to the resolve and attempts of the people and organizations to preserve their past so as to have a meaningful present and an enriching future.

The author is Chairperson of Textile Design Department, National Institute of Fashion Technology, New Delhi, India.

A CHINESE CITY WITH AN INDIAN CONNECTION

by Shakoor Rather

It is the city of historical pagados, magnificent sunsets, and tea fields running into thousands of acres. In ancient texts, the city is known to have places named "Upper India", "Middle India" and "Lower India".

The city I'm talking about, however, is not in India at all. It is a city nestled amidst hills and a picturesque lake in China.

Hangzhou

While reading Tan Chung's

book *Across the Himalayan Gap: An Indian Quest for Understanding China*, as a child, I discovered this lesser-known connection that Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province has with India. An ancient Buddhist monk in the year 326 came from western India to Hangzhou and after seeing a hill next to West Lake declared that the hill had been brought there from Magadha (modern-day Bihar). The hill was then named Tianzhushan (Indian Hill) and Fellaifang (the peak that has flown from India), ultimately leading to the names "Upper India",

"Middle India" and "Lower India" on the Chinese map of Hangzhou.

Being a history buff, I wanted to visit this city and see for myself the object of this curious connection between two countries. I got the opportunity this year when in June I travelled to China as part of a media delegation.

The first place we went to when we reached Hangzhou one misty morning in June was West Lake. Celebrated by poets and artists since the 9th century, the lake



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encompasses islands reachable by boat, temples, pavilions, gardens and arched bridges.

I was awestruck by the scenery, the high peaks and the dewy lotus leaves on the ground, caressed by the log and playing hide and seek with the eye.

But what can possibly divert your attention from these breathtaking views?

Museums

Hangzhou, famous for Chinese calligraphy and seal carvings, is also home to renowned museums. I visited the National Tea Museum,

National Silk Museum, and Zhejiang Provincial Museum where ancient textbooks, life-sized exhibits and cultural relics in dim, flickering lights created an impression of being transported back in time to China of yore, where sharp-eyed merchants along the Silk Route haggled with buyers and princesses sipped hit tea poured from delicate Yixing clay teapots.

While one can visit China on their own, since the country is safe, even for women, travelling in a group affords a sort of comfort that you might need in a foreign land where most people cannot speak your tongue. The people, however, are warm and hospitable, and despite

the language barrier, will do their best to help you.

Once, when a cab driver who I asked to ferry me from our hotel to Qiantang River Bridge quoted as double the normal fare, an old man within earshot quickly started walking towards me. His knees wobbling and head shaking vigorously, the man held his fingers to indicate to me that the driver was charging too much. I smiled and nodded. Here we were, two complete strangers who will never see each other again, united briefly, as the result of a kind act. Such is the power of travel, of kindness.

PEOPLE OF MIAO ETHNIC GROUP DANCE TO CELEBRATE SPRING FESTIVAL



People of Miao ethnic group dance during a gathering to strengthen friendship and to celebrate the Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, at Lindong Village in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Feb. 7, 2017. (Xinhua/Zhang Ailin)



Women of Miao ethnic group make toasts during a gathering to strengthen friendship and to celebrate the Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, at Lindong Village in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Feb. 7, 2017. (Xinhua/Li Bin) (lb)



Women of Miao ethnic group participate a gathering to strengthen friendship and to celebrate the Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, at Lindong Village in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Feb. 7, 2017. (Xinhua/Li Bin) (1b)



People of Miao ethnic group dance during a gathering to strengthen friendship and to celebrate the Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, at Lindong Village in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Feb. 7, 2017. (Xinhua/Li Bin) (1b)

PEOPLE PERFORM SHEHUO IN NORTH CHINA

People perform Shehuo, an ancient form of gala, in Heguo Township of Nanhe County, north China's Hebei Province, Feb. 7, 2017. Over one thousand villagers from five villages nearby took part in the gala. (Xinhua/Zhu Xudong)(wsw)



VILLAGERS CONDUCT TRUMPET PERFORMANCE IN C CHINA

Villagers play trumpets in Luoge Village, Zhumadian City of central China's Henan Province, Feb. 7, 2017. Luoge trumpet, which is made of copper sheets and has a history of 1,800 plus years, was listed as one of the intangible cultural heritages of Zhumadian City in 2010. (Xinhua/Feng Dapeng) (zwx)





DRAGON DANCE PERFORMED AMID RAPE FLOWERS IN SW CHINA'S GUIZHOU

People perform dragon dance amid rape flowers in Manxi Village of Yuqing County, southwest China's Guizhou Province, Feb. 6, 2017, to celebrate Chinese Lunar New Year. (Xinhua/He Chunyu) (ry)



INTEREST IN CLASSICAL CHINESE POETRY SHOULD BE CULTIVATED: POLL

by Li Yan (People's Daily Online)

The just-concluded “Chinese Poetry Competition” television show has rekindled Chinese people’s interest in classical Chinese poetry. A recent survey suggests that most Chinese people still believe it essentially important to cultivate interest in the subject.

China Youth Daily recently conducted a poll of 2,000 people aged between 18 and 35, which showed that 18.5 percent often read or study classical poetry, 70 percent believed an interest in classical poetry should be fostered in society, and 75.5 percent thought classical poetry education should be

strengthened.

Of the respondents, 51.2 and 48.8 percent of the respondents were male and female respectively, and 30 percent were from Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou or Shenzhen. Another 16.4 percent came from other first-tier cities, while 32.7 percent came from second-tier cities and 16.3 percent were from third- and fourth-tier cities; the remainder were from rural areas.

“Classical poetry has become increasingly interesting [to me] as time passes. I can recite simple lines [taught] in primary and middle

school,” a bank clerk born in the 1990s said.

A total of 59.8 percent of those polled said the popularity of internet culture has affected the popular perception of classical poetry.

“Understanding the meaning of poetry is different from using it in real life because our language environment has changed, which has made it hard to popularize classical poetry. Moreover, internet slang is on the rise,” one respondent explained.

SAY 'I LOVE YOU' WITH CLASSICAL CHINESE SCROLL

by Deng Zhangyu

While many people celebrate Valentine’s Day with roses and chocolates, some choose to do it in a Chinese way: sending their girlfriends a long scroll of a Chinese painting with a romantic love story and poem.

The scroll was recently issued by Zaidao Culture, a publisher known for prints of ancient books and manuscripts by famous Chinese poets and calligraphers. On it is the romantic Ode to the Goddess of the Luo River, a signature work by Cao

Zhi, the son of Cao Cao, warlord of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220). It tells the story of the son’s enchantment with the goddess of the Luo River.

The print on the scroll is by legendary calligrapher Wang Xianzhi of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), whose work is now collected by the Capital Museum in Beijing. Accompanying the poem is a painting by ink painter Chou Ying of the Ming Dynasty. It shows Cao Zhi playing a guqin (a stringed

instrument similar to the zither) as he gazes at the goddess.

According to Zhao Zhaoxia, founder of Zaidao Culture, many Chinese young people like this kind of traditional and cultural way to show their love.

Reproduced on rice paper and silk to represent the traditional way of Chinese culture, the scrolls are produced by Artron, an art publisher and art data company.



SICHUAN-TIBET RAILWAY EXTENDING TO PLATEAU



At the beginning of 2017, 26 bridges and seven tunnels between Chengdu Plain and Ya'an City were under busy construction. Lhasa-Nyingchi Railway, a segment of Sichuan-Tibet Railway, was built in full swing.

Sichuan-Tibet Railway, a key project in the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), is the second "heavenly road" after Qinghai-Tibet Railway. It starts from Chengdu, goes through Ya'an, Garze, Chamdo and Nyingchi, and finally arrives at Lhasa. The 1,900-kilometer railway perches at

over 3,000 meters above sea level. It will cross many fault zones. It's like the largest rollercoaster in the world.

With a total length of 1,739 meters, Jinji Guan No.2 tunnel is the first tunnel from hilly area in Sichuan to Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. It is expected to be completed in March.

The railway is divided into three sections from west to east: Lhasa-Nyingchi, Nyingchi-Kangting, and Kangting-Chengdu. In June of 2018, Chengdu-Ya'an Railway will be open to traffic. The survey and

research of Ya'an-Kangting Railway has been finished. With an investment of about 36.67 billion yuan, 435-kilometer Lhasa-Nyingchi Railway has started building in June of 2015. Kangting-Nyingchi Railway is the longest segment, which is also the most difficult part in the construction of Chengdu-Tibet Railway.

The survey of Sichuan-Tibet Railway began in the early days of the PRC. In 2014, the railway has started building. It will meander through mountains and cross the

major rivers such as Menjiang, Lancangjiang, Jinshajiang and

Yarlung Zangbo, the highest of which is about 4,400 meters. To

travel from Chengdu to Lhasa will take about 13 hours by train.



BETTER ENVIRONMENT AND RICHER VILLAGERS IN TIBET'S TOWN

Bare mountains dominate the scene upstream along the Yarlung Tsangpo River from Lhasa.

It is a big surprise when rows of neat saplings on the north bank catch people's sight after 3 hours' drive with boring scene. "Here is Elmar Town", the locals say.

In the Liu Guo Village of Elmar town, Namling County, Tibet, there are rows of neat trees, though trees in winter aren't as lush as in summer.

It's hard to imagine that this place was well known for its windy

and sandy conditions just three or four years ago.

In 2014, Tibet launched an afforestation project in the "Two Rivers and Four Streams" (namely, the Yarlung Tsangpo River, the Nujiang River, the Lhasa River, the Nyang Qu, the Ya-lung River and Sengye Khabap) area, which held more than 80% of the region's total population, in order to conserve water, prevent wind and control sand.

Elmar Town is right the starting point of the project.

During the following three years since 2014, Namling County has built the "Ecological Demonstration Zone of North Bank of the Yarlung Tsangpo River".

A total of 1.3 million seedlings of various types have been planted in 26 thousand mu (1,733 hectares) areas, with the survival rate over 95%, which attained the preliminary effect of water conservation and sand control. Besides, the area's oxygen content is up by 5% and air humidity by 10%.

Afforestation has not only

improved the ecology, but also helped a lot of poor people shake off poverty.

According to Sangye, a 74-year-old forest ranger of the town, spring ploughing was even seriously affected in the past due to wind and sand.

Today, because of the prevention and control effort, soil quality is better, crop yields higher. He even got 40,000 Yuan (5,832 US dollars) by selling potatoes alone in a year.

In addition, forest rangers have 1,300 Yuan monthly wages, and an extra subsidy of 100 Yuan per day if participating in tree planting.

"Last year the family get an income of 70,000 Yuan (10, 205 US dollars), which is almost 8,000 Yuan (1,166 US dollars) per capita", the old man's joy is written all over his face.

"Apart from the trees, we have



also organized villagers to plant 47,000 mu of grass, which providing poor people with an income of more than 1,700 Yuan per capita," said Sonam Chophel, head of the town.

In 2016, a total of 25,082 poor people of Namling County became forest rangers and wetland administrators, with an annual per

capita post subsidy of 3,000 Yuan.

In addition, an 890-mu tree nursery base was constructed and 3.8 million seedlings cultivated, with more than 60,000 seedlings sold, bringing economic benefits of more than 2 million Yuan, according to Wang Dingfeng, head of the County.





TIBET INPUT 80 PCT OF FINANCES ON PUBLIC WELFARE IN 2016

These days, the 82-year-old Drolgar Tsomo from Bilin Village, Namshan County of Nyingchi is very happy: she has just moved into the social welfare housing in the county. "It's so bright and spacious here," she said, "There's a TV, heating, and everything! It's very comfortable to live here."

The social welfare housing in the county has received 135 elderly people since its opening on January 9, 2016.

The institution has purchased

furniture, electrical appliances, and other daily necessities, implemented a solar energy central heating system, and built an elderly recreational area, a sun canopy, and a place to dry clothes outside.

The county hospital and Tibetan hospital specially send full-time doctors to provide basic medical services to the elderly residents. "We hope that all of the elderly people can be comfortable and at ease living here," said Zhang Wei, director of Civil Affairs Bureau of the county.

According to the Finance Department of Tibet, Tibet's general public budget of 2016 was 173 billion Yuan (25 billion U.S. dollars), of which about 127 billion Yuan (18 billion U.S. dollars) was invested into public welfare, accounting for 79.8 percent.

What's more, Tibet has been spending annually over 70 percent of its finances on public welfare in the last four years, within which its public welfare investment was doubled.



TIBET TO RELOCATE 263,000 POOR PEOPLE BY 2020

Tibet plans to relocate 263,000 poor people in the next three years from 2016 in order to get 590,000 rural and pastoral residents out of poverty by 2020, according to official sources.

The 263,000 poor people live mainly in the following locales: high and cold areas, areas with endemic disease, resource-poor areas, high-mountain and canyon areas, ecologically fragile areas, places with poor local infrastructure, areas with slow development of production, places with low living standards, areas of deep poverty, and places with difficulty or only by relocation to shake off poverty.

The ecological system on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is fragile. The implementation of relocation will not only help improve people's living



conditions, but also benefit environmental protection and ecological construction.

Tibet achieved an investment of 8.52 billion yuan to promote the construction of public services in

poor areas, help 130,000 people out of poverty, and complete the relocation of 77,000 people currently living in poverty, according to TAR's Government Work Report of 2016.

In 2017, Tibet plans to relocate 163,000 people currently living in poverty.

Aside from Tibet, there are currently 22 provinces (regions and municipalities) that engage in poverty relocation schemes, including Guangxi, Gansu, Yunnan, and Hubei provinces.

A total of 9.82 million people living in poverty will be relocated during the "13th Five-Year Plan" period(2016-2020).



“EXPRESS CORRIDOR” FOR HIGH-END OVERSEAS TALENTS IN TIBET

“I’m so happy to hear this news. The express corridor would save so much time. Our two newly chosen foreign players might be able to play in the new season,” said Liang Junchao, general manager of Lhasa Pure Land Men’s Basketball Club, the first professional basketball team in Tibet.

Tibet will start a new foreign workers’ work permit system from April 1st, 2017 along with the rest of China, according to the region’s Human Resource and Social Security Bureau.

The “Foreign Worker’s Work Permit” is a valid legal document for

foreign workers in China, in a move to realize one permanent number for each person.

The work permit system is designed to further remove obstacles in the current management system, such as overlapping and scattered work functions, multiple management processes and lack of communication, etc.

It will greatly reduce related procedures and shorten processing time. In addition, an “Express Corridor” will be added for high-end foreign talents in China, including their application of work permit, according to Zhao Yunhua from the

Human Resource and Social Security Bureau of TAR.

He adds that the system will use the “notify and promise” system to expedite the process for high-end foreign talents who have no criminal records.

There are almost 200 foreign workers in Tibet in the fields of education, scientific research, technology, management, restaurant and entertaining, business management, and the hair and makeup industry, etc., and most of them are from Nepal, India, and South Korea.



THANGKA GETS NEW LEASE OF LIFE



An ongoing thangka exhibition at Beijing's National Art Museum of China showcases dozens of paintings from recent years that celebrate contemporary artists' endeavors to enliven the tradition.

Shortly after the 10th Panchen Lama (1938-89) passed away, Shalu Wangdu, 43, started painting a thangka to remember him. The full-time painter in Lhasa once met Panchen at the Shalu Temple in his native Shigatse.

He painted for around 10 minutes a day. "I picked up my brush only when I felt most comfortable. The glory and happiness were always with me (when I painted)," he says.

It took him 11 years to finish the work that portrays the 10th Panchen Lama in the center and two deities below. And it won him a gold prize at

the First China Thangka Art Festival in Lhasa in 2014.

The painting is now on show at a thangka exhibition, Heavenly Tibet, at Beijing's National Art Museum of China, which runs through Jan 18. The display includes dozens of paintings produced in recent years that celebrate contemporary artists' efforts to enliven the thangka tradition.

Viewed as an encyclopedia of Tibetan culture, the genre depicts religious subjects, such as Buddhist deities and lamas, and also non-religious themes like history, legends and medical knowledge. They are either painted on cotton or embroidered on silk.

The ongoing exhibition largely features Buddhist thangka. Some are framed using glass and others are

mounted on a textile backing, a traditional method so that nomadic Tibetans can roll up the paintings and travel with them.

Thangka is also called a moving shrine to revere Buddhas.

The displayed paintings showcase the characteristics of major thangka schools. And they reveal new developments where painters blend in personal aesthetics, according to Lhapa Tsering, curator from the Tibet Painting Academy in Lhasa.

In Green Tara Goddess by Shalu Wangdu, the central deity is not placed in an elaborate composition featuring many small Buddhist figures and patterns, and a clear division between heaven and Earth.

The background is pale green with loosely scattered patterns,

presenting a refreshing, elegant touch.

“The painting, however, looks no less brilliant than others that were painted in the traditional style,” says Lhapa Tsering.

The exhibition highlights China’s efforts to preserve thannga art over the decades.

Thangka was included on the national list of intangible cultural heritage in 2006.

Separately, Regong art, a collective of plastic arts including thannga that is practiced in Qinghai province’s Tibetan villages, was added to UNESCO’s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009.

As of now, China has six State-level thannga inheritors. Three are from the Tibet autonomous region and the others are from Tibetan areas in Sichuan and Gansu provinces.

Among them, Ngawang Jigme, a professor of Tibet University, is the only State-designated inheritor who follows the traditional techniques that use Tibetan mineral and plant pigments.

Tibet University started thannga courses in 1985 and now grants bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees. It has helped to modernize thannga, which for centuries was passed down only to family members and apprentices. Also, it allows girls to study and practice the

age-old tradition that was earlier the exclusive preserve of boys.

Lhasa has hosted an annual Thangka Art Expo since 2011. There, experts also discuss how to improve and build a healthy market for thannga.

At the expo, master painters and scholars also critique works by thannga painters and decide whether to upgrade their ratings.

Konchog Je, a first-grade painter at Lhasa’s Tibet Thangka Academy, says that the latest expo, held from Dec 23 to 25, saw artists from different schools team up to improve thannga technically and artistically.

Tibet’s official figures show that, as of the end of 2016, the region has honored four “lifetime thannga masters” and 99 “graded painters” who fall into three ranks.

Also, the number of non-governmental thannga institutes, including fine art academies, training centers and painters’ studios, in the area has reached almost 300. They produce some 200 painters every year.

A booming economy and improving living standards have also made thannga sought after.

Tibet now has more than 30 thannga companies whose works are sold at home and abroad, racking up 100 million yuan (\$14.5 million) last year, say official statistics.

An imperial thannga embroidered on silk in the Ming

Dynasty (1368-1644) sold for \$45 million at a Hong Kong auction in 2014. It shows a wrathful Raktayamari in brilliant red with patterns woven with gold thread, testimony to the exquisite techniques in vogue during the reign of emperor Zhu Di.

Shalu Wangdu says the thriving market for thannga has also raised the painters’ social status and incomes even though some sell inferior works for quick profits.

To check this problem, last year, Tibet’s cultural administration put into effect a classification system for thannga, which defines the art and specific categories it is divided into.

Policymakers hope the system can better regulate thannga.

The system marks the first step for Tibet to build up a regulatory framework for painted and embroidered thannga pieces, as well as for the manufacture of pigments and painting tools.

Ngawang Jigme says painters and craftsmen in the past devoted themselves to thannga more out of love and responsibility. Hopefully now, with the implementation of the laws, the tradition will be safeguarded.

Shalu Wangdu says while intelligence and practice make a good painter, it is moral integrity that identifies a real master.

SNOW LEOPARD LAMA ON THE QINGHAI-TIBET PLATEAU

“Protecting the ecological environment is protecting life, and life not only includes people and snow leopards, but all beings.” Golog Zhoujie, wearing burgundy robes and with a camera over his shoulder, expresses his views on ecological protection.

Golog Zhoujie was born in a hunter family and the 46-year-old is now Khenpo of Qinghai’s Palyul Monastery. In 2010, he was given a new name, “Snow Leopard Lama”.

“My hobby used to be taking photos of plants and trees, but in

2010 George Schaller, an American zoologist, said something that inspired me. He hoped that I can try to take pictures of snow leopards and protect them,” said Golog.

In order to take pictures of the snow leopard, Golog and a few

others stationed themselves on Mt. Nyanpo Yutse, and on Oct. 25, 2010, the snow leopard appeared.

Nowadays, Golog ventures out for more than 20 days every quarter. He takes a GPS, a camera and a snow leopard monitoring manual. While inspecting the snow leopard monitoring line, he also visits local herdsman.

“Golog Zhoujie is against herders hunting snow leopards, because he believes they are weaker when compared to human beings; but when snow leopards hunt livestock, he drives off the snow leopard, because in this instance the livestock are weaker,” said director Geng Dong, who has made a documentary named “Snow Leopard” about this Lama protecting the snow leopard.

“We don’t have a special statement about protecting the snow leopard. All we can do is using religious, scientific, legendary and other means to persuade herdsman not to harm snow leopards,” said



Golog.

“Herdsman are gradually beginning to understand the snow leopard (its food, habits etc.) and will no longer drive away their own sheep, won’t throw rubbish freely and pollute the water, because these are an important part of the ecosystem.”

In 2011, after observing the conflicting relationship between the snow leopard and the herdsman, Golog filmed a documentary called “Sori and the snow leopard”.

The documentary won the 19th China Television Documentary “Top Ten Short Film Award”.

Data shows that China has the largest distribution of snow leopards in the world, with a population of 2000 to 2500, among which about 1000 of them are living in the Sanjiangyuan region (the source region of the Yangtze River, the Yellow River and the Lancang River) in Qinghai province, and most of their habitat overlaps with human activity.



SIXTEEN TABOOS IN TRAVELLING TO TIBET

(From:China Tibet Online)



1. In Tibetan-inhabited areas you will occasionally see red, yellow, and green cloth tied to cows and sheep. Remember, do not chase them.

They are sacrificial offerings of Tibetan people.

Do not aim a shotgun at an eagle, for eagles are Tibetan people's sacred bird.

2. Do not enter a monastery without permission. If permitted for entry, do not touch the Buddha images and scriptures and do not

take photographs without permission.

Do keep quiet in a monastery, especially during a religious ceremony.

Please watch out that in some areas you are not supposed to walk in a counter-clockwise direction, and women are prohibited from entering some monasteries.

3. No smoking in monasteries for lamas are prohibited from smoking.

However, in rural areas there are some women and even young girls who smoke. When you are asking help or drinking tea, cigarettes can be offered as a matter of courtesy.

4. Do not step on the threshold when entering a Tibetan's tent or house.

Do not spit in front of other people.

5. Attention! Tibetans stick out their tongues to show respect, not to ridicule; hands clasped together is a gesture of etiquette.



6. Do not touch a Tibetan's head. In traditional Tibetan culture, only high lamas and elders are allowed to do this.

7. You'd better postpone your visit to Tibet if you are sick with a cold because it is harder to recover on plateau. What's more, the high altitude might cause serious pulmonary edema and other complications. Prepare some cold and gastrointestinal medicine in advance.

8. You'd better take some external nasal ointment and throat lubrication tablets when entering Tibet.

The climate on the Plateau is dry, with lower level of oxygen and air pressure. The medicine can help relieve nose and throat discomfort caused by dryness.

9. A sun hat, sunglasses and sunscreens are essential due to

strong ultraviolet rays on the Plateau.

10. Please conduct yourself in a respectful manner if you come across a sky burial practice.

The Tibetan people do not want outsiders to watch this ceremony for their relatives, and the local governments as well as travel agencies do not encourage travelers to watch this purposively.

11. Do not buy the fur of wild animals, horns of wild Tibetan antelopes, or skulls of wild yaks, etc. If you do this, you are a supporter of wildlife poaching.

12. Do not pay locals to take their photograph, and do not force them if they do not wish to be photographed.

13. When addressing Tibetan friends, you can use the term "la" at the end of their names.

"La" is an honorific signifying respect in Tibetan, especially if you are meeting someone for the first time. Do not address someone without using an honorific, as this is very impolite.

14. When visiting a Tibetan in his home, please sit cross-legged with your back upright, do not orient the soles of your feet towards another person, and do not glance around, either.

And remember, men sit to the left while women sit to the right.

15. If you see a pile of fire burning in front of a doorway or twigs inserted into the doorway with a red cloth tied above, do not drop in for there must be a sick person in the family.

16. Do not use paper imprinted with Tibetan script to wipe things.

VISITING POTALA PALACE IN WINTER



Situated on an altitude of 3,700 meters above the sea level on the top of Marpo Ri (red hill) in the center of Lhasa city, Potala Palace, with its long history and unique national characteristics architecture as well as its special value for study social history, culture, religion of Tibet, has been a world-famous attraction.

Hailed as “bright pearl on the roof of the world”, Potala Palace was selected as UNESCO World Heritage List in 1994. It is always a must-visited place for tourists who come to Tibet.

The Potala Palace charges 100 yuan for the ticket prices in low seasons, which starts from annual November 1 to April 30. Students (including undergraduate), disabled people, soldiers, teachers, and

people aged above 60 can enjoy half-price discount by showing their relevant certification. In addition,

tickets for children under 1.2 meters tall are available free of charge.



DEVOTEES PERFORM RELIGIOUS CEREMONY IN LHASA



Devotees hang prayer flags to a pole near the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, capital of southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, Feb. 8, 2017. As the Tibetan New Year draws near, prayer flags tied on the five poles surrounding the Jokhang Temple have been replaced by new ones in accordance with Tibetan tradition. (Xinhua/Chogo)



Monks perform religious ceremony at a pole near the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, capital of southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, Feb. 8, 2017. As the Tibetan New Year draws near, prayer flags tied on the five poles surrounding the Jokhang Temple have been replaced by new ones in accordance with Tibetan tradition. (Xinhua/Purbu Zhaxi)



Monks perform religious ceremony at a pole near the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, capital of southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, Feb. 8, 2017. As the Tibetan New Year draws near, prayer flags tied on the five poles surrounding the Jokhang Temple have been replaced by new ones in accordance with Tibetan tradition. (Xinhua/Chogo)

BOOK REVIEW

Traditional Chinese Medicine

In ancient Chinese civilization, astronomy, mathematics, agriculture and medicine were the four advanced sciences. Among them, medicine is the only one that had never been replaced by Western science and still plays an important role in protecting the health of Chinese people.

How traditional Chinese medicine, a classic system of medicine without any connection with modern science, can still exist in spite of the fact that modern medicine can basically meet the need of healthcare? Is traditional Chinese medicine a science or just a collection of experience? Does it still have the possibility and space to further develop itself along its own orbit? Is there any possibility that it may be replaced by modern medicine? These are the questions frequently being asked.

We hope you will find this book useful.

Please email us first to reserve the book providing the serial No. Hope to hear from you in the coming future. Your comments and suggestions on NFC are also greatly welcome.

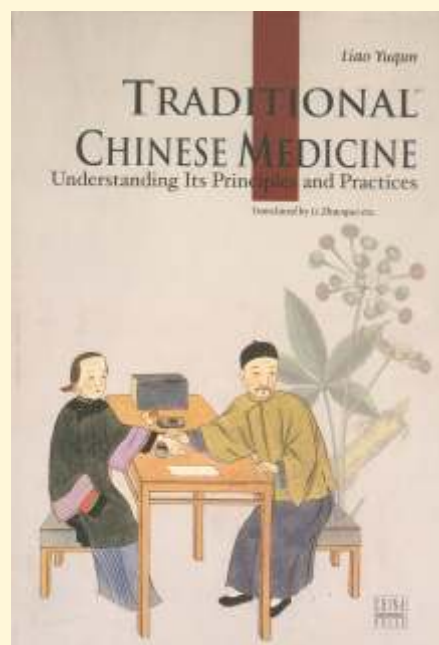
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Amazing Beijing

Fragrant Hills Park

Rating: AAAA

Different scenic spots can be seen in different seasons: flowers in Spring, green trees in Summer, red leaves in Autumn and snow in Winter.

Key Words: Theme Park Landscape Tibetan buddhist temple Mountain scenery Impressive pagodas Peaceful lake

Description

Fragrant Hills, located at the east foot of Xishan Mountain of Beijing, is so named because the huge stones within the mountain look like the censer. The Yong'an Temple was built here by the emperor of the Jin Dynasty in 1186, with temporary palaces built aside. The temple was expanded by later generations. To the tenth year of Emperor Qianlong's reign (1745), it was expanded to be a temple with 28 spots, and was renamed Jingyi Garden.



Jingshan Park

Rating: AAAA

Jingshan Park is the best place in downtown Beijing to have a panoramic view of Beijing and the Forbidden City.

Key Words: Theme Park Landscape Place of historic interest Picturesque pavilions Beijing top park Great views

Description

Jingshan Park, occupying an area of about 23 hectares, is located right on the north-south central

axial line of Beijing. It is connected to the Shenwu Gate of the Forbidden City to the south, and faces the Drum and Bell Towers to the north and is adjacent to Beihai Park to the west. Jingshan Hill is 45.7 meters high, and is the best place in downtown Beijing to have a panoramic view of Beijing and the Forbidden City.

Zhongshan Park

Rating: AAAA

Built in 1421 by the Ming Yongle Emperor, Zhongshan Park was where the emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties made offerings to the gods of earth and agriculture and became a public park in 1911.

Key Words: Spring Outing Theme Park Sanctuary inside the city Beautiful views Great for a stroll Picturesque with trees and bamboo.

Description

Elegantly formal, with ancient cypress trees, bamboo groves and covered walkways, Zhongshan Park offers a poetic escape from the bustling city. Situated to the west of Tian'anmen Tower, Zhongshan Park was originally part of an extended Forbidden City. Built in 1421 by the Ming Yongle Emperor, this was where the emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties made offerings to the gods of earth and agriculture. It became a public park in 1911 and was renamed Sun Yat-Sen after the man considered by many to be the 'Father of modern China'.



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Dragon Dance Performed Amid Rape Flowers in SW China's Guizhou

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