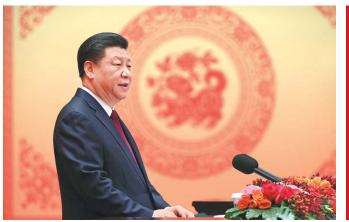
HAPPY SPRING FESTIVAL

CHINA DAILY WISHES ITS READERS A PROSPEROUS YEAR OF THE DOG WE WILL BE BACK ON FEB 20. SCAN THE CODE FOR NEWS UPDATES.







NATIONAL REJUVENATION **AIMS TO BRING PEOPLE JOY**



Top: President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, gives a speech at the 2018 Spring Festival reception of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Wednesday. **Above:** President Xi and top CPC and State leaders gather with guests at the reception. JU PENG AND LI TAO / XINHUA

BV AN BAIJIE

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President Xi Jinping called on Wednesday for diligence and hard work by people across the country to achieve national rejuvenation.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, extended Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese at a reception in Beijing on behalf of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council.

By CHEN WEIHUA

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China's top diplomat to the

United States called for the two

countries to continue working

together to keep their relation-

in Washington

ship on track.

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

Addressing the event, Xi spoke highly of the country's progress in 2017 in such areas as improving people's lives, advancing the rule of law, strict governance of the CPC and reducing poverty.

"Time is the most objective witness," Xi said while lauding achievements made last year. Those advances were obtained through the diligence and hard work of all Chinese people, he said.

The president highlighted the importance of diligence and hard work to complete the creation of a moderately pros-perous society in all respects.

Those who bring happiness to the majority are the happiest, Xi quoted Karl Marx as saying, adding that the CPC will continue in its goal of bringing happiness to all Chinese people.

The 19th CPC National Congress held last year has set the direction for the country's development in the new era, Xi said, adding that this year is the first to implement the spirit of the congress and coincides with the 40th anniversary of reform and opening-up.

Xi called on everyone in the Party, the military and nation to unite around the CPC Central Committee and implement the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress. The Party's policies and decisions should be translated into real benefits to the people, he said.

In his speech, Xi stressed the importance of the more than 400 million families in the country and their role in building a strong nation.

The Chinese people have always valued family, Xi said, adding that the country's prosperity is related to the happiness of every family.

Xi called on the country's more than 1.3 billion people to integrate their love of family and nation, thus to forge great forces to assist in the nation's rejuvenation.

Mentioning that the Year of Dog is always deemed auspicious, Xi extended his wishes that the country's well-being will become better and better every year.

Xi: Now is time to win poverty war

HOLIDAY EDITION

chinadaily.com.cn

RMB **¥2**

President sets goal of assisting 30 million people within 3 years

By ZHANG YUNBI zhangyunbi@ chinadailu.com.cn

President Xi Jinping has called on boosting the quality of poverty relief efforts as the country targets 30 million more people it plans to lift out of poverty in the coming three years.

The pressure on and diffi-culty of conducting relief missions are intense, as are the unsettled die-hard challenges they will face, Xi said at a symposium on Monday about poverty alleviation in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province in Southwest China.

At the symposium, held during his just concluded inspection tour in the province, Xi listened to briefings on poverty relief by officials at various levels, according to an official release of the symposium issued on Wednesday.

The symposium studied policies in the fight against poverty to be implemented during the next three years.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, sent Spring Festival greetings to the public and officials working at the forefront of poverty alleviation. Steps should be taken to

boost preparedness for vari-

ous potential challenges at a

time when problems such as bureaucracy and corruption still exist. Xi said.

See Poverty, page 2

Inside

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Central bank to rein in risky State businesses

By CHEN JIA chenjia@chinadaily.com.cn

China's monetary authority set up its multitasking goals this year to better balance economic growth, financial deleveraging and risk prevention while maintain-

The central bank plans to include interbank financing using negotiable certificates of deposit and green financing in the enhanced regulato-

ry framework this year. The central bank also will monitor a potential global inflation rebound and the



when they met at Trump's Mar-

Cui Tiankai, the Chinese ambassador to the US, made the remarks on Tuesday evening at a Chinese Lunar New

Cui said China is looking forward to new progress in rela-"Indeed, China-US tions. relations are at another important juncture now," he said.

Ambassador to US voices hope

lawmakers

Tensions have increased in recent months as the Trump administration singled out China as its major strategic competitor in its national security and national defense strategies. The US also has imposed

He said President Xi Jinping and US President Donald Trump have maintained strategic communication, which gives clear guidance to the relationship. The two leaders launched four dialogue mechanisms

> a-Lago resort in Palm Beach, Florida, in April. "Going forward for the months and years ahead, let's work together to keep this



fying and resolving demanding issues, Xi said. Efforts to fight poverty must be maintained and the quality of poverty relief mis-sions should be improved even as their aim targets the

poorest areas to ensure substantial progress is made, Xi said. The president put forward

eight detailed requirements on the relief missions. Officials, particularly high-ranking local leaders, should

A clear mind is needed to understand the difficulties

ahead to win the war against poverty. One also is needed to

realize the urgency in identi-

enhance poverty relief efforts and departments involved at the central level should research and formulate an action plan for the poverty fight, map out the timeline and roadmap for the fight over the coming three years and offer effective guidance, Xi said.

Goals and standards should be fulfilled to ensure all people living in poverty gain a better living standard by 2020, effectively eliminated poverty from all poor

counties, Xi said. The system for managing nationwide poverty relief missions should be reinforced

Year celebration at the Chinese embassy, attended by more than 700 people, including US Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and several other senior US administration officials and

number of protectionist measures on Chinese trade and investment.

Cui spoke highly of the important progress in the relationship during the past year. important relationship on the right track, on the basis of mutual respect and maybe

See Festival, page 2



Ambassador Cui Tiankai displays a New Year's drawing with an embassy guest. Spring Festival falls on Friday. ZHAO HUANXIN / CHINA DAILY

Self-service libraries now in Beijing



sure because mother-in-law Ceoming from Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, to spend Spring Festival with Su and her husband for the first time. The 29-year-old Beijing resident had called six restaurants

to book a table for dinner on

TRADITIONAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT FOR LUNAR NEW YEAR'S EVE DINNER

Catering companies are offering new stress-free ways of enjoying the most important meal of the year, as **Wang Keju** reports.

a Qin was on the edge of losing her compoher was

Lunar New Year's Eve, but with no luck. While that would not have been a problem last year, before Su got married, it is

unacceptable now. "I cannot afford to mess up the first family reunion dinner

with my mother-in-law after my wedding. I want her to feel at home and have a perfect fes-

tival after traveling so far," she said.

The Lunar New Year's Eve dinner, also known as the Family Reunion Dinner, is the most important annual tradition in China. Irrespective of distance, family members travel home to be together for the event, whose significance is similar to Christmas Day in

the West.

There is no way that Su - "a kitchen disaster", as she calls herself - could magically turn an empty table into a feast. That is despite the fact that she enjoys a sideline as an amateur magician.

Her seventh call was to a res

See Feast, page 6

ing a tough regulatory stance. People's Bank of China, the central bank, kept the 2018

withdrawal of major econd mies' quantitative easing policies

monetary policy tone as "pru-Liu Ligang, chief China economist with Citigroup, dent and neutral" in its monesaid regulatory overhauls and tary policy report released on Wednesday, pledging to conthe so-called macro prudentrol the total money supply tial assessment implementation will keep China's and maintain reasonable credit growth while keeping its eye monetary policy relatively on the liquidity situation. tight in 2018, but the room for

With the leveraging level high and the debt burden even higher for State-owned enterprises, the key task is to further enhance regulations on shadow banking activities and real estate financing, the central bank said, adding it also must regulate local governments' credit risks.

Considering China's current economic situation, "an easing monetary policy may lead to asset bubbles, financial fragility and polarization between the rich and the poor, while a slower growth of money supply could still support high-quality development of the real economy", it said.

tighter monetary policy will be limited. "The PBOC may delicately manage interbank liquidity to avoid spikes in interbank rates against a backdrop of tighter liquidity conditions due to financial deleveraging and expected rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve," said Zhao Yang, chief economist in China with Nomura Securities.

The country's vuan-denominated new loans surged to a record 2.9 trillion yuan (\$460 billion) in January, climbing fivefold from 584.4 billion yuan in December, according to the central bank's data released on Monday.

2 HOLIDAY | News

FROM THE GRASSROOTS

Delivery companies dial down service

Many workers have returned to their hometowns for Spring Festival

By JIANG CHENGLONG jiangchenglong@ chinadaily.com.cn

Several logistics companies have shut some of their sort-ing stations during the Spring Festival, putting more pressure on those companies that are still providing services.

A number of service stations in Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing for delivery companies such as ZTO Express, STO Express and YTO Express said they have stopped all kinds of express delivery services and will resume services on Feb 23, the second day after the

HIGH-TECH

the high-tech industry has been fueled by the national

strategy to push innovation-

driven development and entre-

Wang Endong, chief scientist

at Inspur Group, one of the

country's largest server mak-

ers, said earlier that China has

grown from a follower into a

The country will pioneer

next-frontier innovation such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing and big data appli-

cations, Wang said in October

on the sidelines of the 19th

National Congress of the Com-

munist Party of China.

leader in terms of innovation.

Spring Festival holiday. Meanwhile, SF Express and China Post are still providing service during the holiday, and their offline service stations are still open for accepting express waybills. Zou Fuli, director of SF Express' Beijing area, said the daily express waybill volume during the week before the holiday was a lot more than usual, though the majority of deliveries in Beijing will be intracity express items.

Mid-air greetings

Zhu Menghai, a courier at SF Express's Deshengmen service station in Beijing, said, "because other logistics companies stopped service, our company's everyday express waybills these days were twice the normal amount".

Nearly 4,000 workers will stay on the job in Beijing dur-ing the Spring Festival holiday, Zou estimated, aiming to satisfy service needs before and during the holiday, including

sending festival gifts.

Jing Qingzhi, 25, another worker at the station who is responsible for returning items, has worked at the company for five years. He will stay in Beijing during the holiday due to his busy job. "Our work is quite hard

indeed, and it's improper to have several of my colleagues who just got married stay here for work, so I have to 'sacrifice," Jing said with smile. "This is my second time not to return

home for Spring Festival?

According to Jing, their sala-ry during Spring Festival holiday will be twice higher than normal. In addition, SF Express also prepared some food including dumplings, dishes and rice, for couriers working outside for a long time. "I will get married on

said.

March 22, and to be honest, I really want to go home," he "I miss my family so much and I just want to wish them a happy new year.'

Tianjin aims high with new technology

systems.

preneurship.

By JING SHUIYU jingshuiyu@chinadaIly.com.cn

The northern port city of Tianjin has introduced a slew of policies aimed at boosting the value of its high-tech industry to "hundreds of billions of yuan", a senior official has said.

Clean energy, new-energy vehicles and next-generation information technology are among the sectors the city hopes to push as it accelerates industrial upgrading, accord-ing to Ni Xiangyu, Party chief of the Tianjin Binhai High-tech Industrial Development Area. The area has released

improved policies and incentives to spur development and strengthen support for private companies, he said Measures introduced very

recently removed all barriers to private investment in the area, according to the area's website. There are neither visible

nor invisible restrictions (on such investment), unless stipulated in national laws or regulations," it said. "Public-private partnerships, equity invest-ment and commissioning operations are encouraged."

The Binhai zone, which is a national demonstration area for innovation, is attracting more investment in high-tech sectors. National New Energy Vehicle Co started production in the

area in December. The installed



Air hostesses of China Southern Airlines give festival presents to passengers on Feb 13. Flight CZ6727 from Haikou, Hainan province, to Shenyang, Liaoning province, was decorated with Chinese knots and the Chinese character fu by the flight attendants three days before Spring Festival. CHU HONGYU/ XINHUA

Police probe threats against pro-Brexit MPs

By EARLE GALE in London earle@mail.chinadailyuk.com

Police in the UK are investigating allegations that someone has issued death threats against prominent Brexit supporters, including the senior Conservative Party politician and Leader of the House of Commons, Andrea

Leadsom The threats were sent anonymously by an individual or group that signed itself "the real 48 percent". The Times newspaper reported the typed letters had been addressed by hand.

"The real 48 percent" alludes to the referendum

Britain has been divided since the referendum 19 months ago and the debate vote should have been held, whether the decision was the right one, and whether the UK should completely sever its ties with the EU, or main-

have been passed to police, two on Friday and two on Monday. The Evening Standard newspaper added that the recipients were all MPs who strongly supported the Brexit campaign. The identi-ties of the other MPs have not

Additionally, the Guido Fawkes website reported last week that six prominent donors who financially sup-ported the campaign to leave the EU had received similar letters.

The Sun newspaper said identify targets.

Leadsom posted a photo-graph on Twitter of the letter she received.

It included the sentences: You have taken lives on our side. Now we will take lives on yours. We are coming for you." She said on Twitter the sender was a coward for writing anonymously and described the act as "pretty

despicable". Sky News said the Metropolitan Police had confirmed that officers are probing the alleged death threats. Last week, British Prime

Minister Theresa May said abuse in public life was a major problem that threatened democracy.

Festival: Ambassador cites Confucius during embassy event in US

From page 1

CHEN JIANLI / XINHUA

better mutual understanding," Cui said. The ambassador acknowl-

"Neither of us will have to give up anything it holds dear." thinking the belief for some people that "some political or cultural genetic engineering

Two workers examine the parts of a new energy vehicle in the

welding workshop in Binhai Zone of Tianiin in December.

Cui dismissed as wishful

ring to the latest US national strategies unveiled by the Trump administration. He said the key to a successful relationship lies in win-win

for confrontation, clearly refershould be characterized by overall cooperation, but added that while friendly cooperation is necessary, there should be no confrontation.

He said the relationship tions between countries," he said.

Stuart Holliday, president and chief executive of the nonprofit Meridian Interna-

and in our relationship, diplo matically, economically, cul-turally," he said, ahead of a performance by artists from Chengdu, Sichuan province, who enchanted the audience

Poverty: Preventing abuse key

From page 1

and the assessment and evaluation procedures should constantly be improved in accordance with the progressing relief missions, Xi said.

Precision by the missions should be further improved and the management of funds should be perfected to make the relief missions transparent and clean, Xi said.

Discipline and supervision should be stepped up to tackle demanding issues such as irregular use of funds. Officials involved at various levels should be trained to master the ways to eradicate poverty and improve their capabilities in handling challenges during the poverty fight, Xi said.

Also, efforts should be geared up to better inspire the impoverished population and motivate and encourage them to fight poverty, Xi said.

In his review of the country's poverty relief missions, Xi said the fight against poverty enjoys unprecedented strength, scale and influence. He said it has achieved decisive progress. Systems have been built

regarding areas such as responsibilities, policies, funds and experts, supervision and assessment, Xi said.

A system of Chinese characteristics for eliminating poverty has been established to offer effective institutional guaran-tees for poverty relief and to offer Chinese wisdom and solutions for global relief efforts, Xi said

The major experiences China has acquired include upholding the leadership by the CPC, ensuring precision, increasing investment, involving social participation, conducting stringent checks and motivating the poor residents, Xi said.

Such experiences should be further updated and developed in the long run, Xi said.

Briefly

GERMANY Schultz resigns as SPD chairman

German Social Democrat leader Martin Schulz announced on Tuesday he would resign with immediate effect as SPD chairman, according to local media Focus online. The SPD presidium has nominated the SPD parliamentary group leader Andrea Nahles as the new Party leader, a decision pending approval. The elec-tion will take place on April 22 at a Party conference in Wiesbaden, Schulz said in Berlin.

ISRAEL PM rejects new corruption claims

Israeli police on Tuesday recommended that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu be indicted on bribery and breach of trust charges in a pair of corruption cases. Netanyahu angrily rejected the allegations, which included accept-

vote held in the United Kingdom in June 2016 in which 51.9 percent of those who voted indicated they wanted the UK to leave the European Union. The Guardian news-

paper said the sender appears to be someone who wants the UK to remain within the EU.

has raged about whether the

been confirmed by police.

the people who sent them are believed to have used an online list of Brexit donors to

that four death-threat letters

tain a close relationship. The Guardian reported

edged differences, disagree-ments and problems that continue to exist in the relationship, but he said cooperation and dialogue are far more important.

'Constructive cooperation will enhance both of us and even enrich the world," he said.

could be done to change China's DNA. And it is certainly paranoid that a China that follows its own path of development will be confrontational to the United States," he said. Cui warned that it is danger-

cooperation and mutual bene fit.

"Harmony but not sameness, diversity but not confrontation - these values are deeprooted in the Chinese culture." Cui said, citing words by Confucius

In wishing his guests a happy and prosperous Year of the Dog, Cui described dogs as loyal, sincere and trusting companions in both Chinese and Western cultures.

"And I believe such virtues are equally essential for relational Center, a think tank that co-sponsored the celebration on Tuesday with the Chinese embassy, said he was happy to be told that the number eight in the year 2018 is a lucky number to Chinese.

We hope this will lead to a positive year in our dialogue,

with Sichuan Opera face changing, acrobatic and dance programs. In a hallway, artists dis-

played the traditional Chinese

art of paper-cutting, New

Year's pictures and colorful

paper umbrellas.

ing nearly \$300,000 in gifts from a pair of billionaires. He accused police of being on a witch hunt and vowed to remain in office and even seek re-election. The investigation is likely to take several months

UNITED STATES Man shot along parade route dies

New Orleans police said a man has died after a shooting along the Mardi Gras parade route. That brings shooting deaths on Tuesday in the US city to three, with five other people wounded. Police said one man died at a hospital hours after an afternoon argument along the traditional Mardi Gras parade route, and two were killed and three wounded in a shooting outside a party on Tuesday night. Police did not immediately identify any of the victims.

XINHUA-AP

Human error suspected in Russia plane crash

MOSCOW - Human error may be to blame for the Russian plane crash that killed 71 people, Russian investigators said on Tuesday, noting that said on Tuesday, noting that the plane's pilots failed to turn on the heating unit for its measuring equipment, result-ing in flawed speed data.

After studying the An-148's that Sunday's crash near Mos-cow occurred after the pilots saw conflicting data on the plane's two air speed indicators. The flawed readings came because the pilots failed to

turn on the heating unit for the plane's pressure measurement equipment prior to takeoff, the committee said.

ous to advocate any strategy

The pilots had placed the An-148 on autopilot after taking off from Moscow's Domodedovo Airport but took its manual controls back when After studying the An-1488 they heard alarm signals flight data recorder, the inter-state Aviation Committee said data. One indicator showed the plane's speed at zero, investigators said.

tually took the plane into a

dive at 30-35 degrees. It plum-

meted into a snowy field outside of Moscow six minutes after takeoff, killing all 65 pasengers and six crew onboard.

The committee said it is continuing its investigation, but noted that "erroneous data on the pilots' speed indicators may have been a factor that triggered the special flight situation".

The pilots then performed a Iced-over speed instruments were previously named series of maneuvers and even-

as the likely reason behind the

crash of the Air France 447

The IAC said it still had to analyse the black box which recorded cockpit conversations.

flight into the Atlantic in 2009, killing 228 people on board. Emergency workers have been combing through the deep snow at the site of Sunday's accident. On Tuesday, the emergency ministry said they recovered 1,400 body parts and 500 plane fragments.

Authorities were taking DNA samples from relatives of the victims in order to complete identification. The Emergency Ministry added that it would soon lift the main plane debris from the site.

AP-AFP

Canine king



A Bichon Frise called Flynn and his handler Bill McFadden pose for pictures after winning Best in Show at the Westminster Kennel Club 142nd Annual Dog Show in Madison Square Garden in New York, on Wednesday. TIMOTHY A. CLARY / AFP



President Xi cooks fried pork at a restaurant in Yingxiu, Wenchuan county, on Monday during his inspection tour in Sichuan province.



President Xi learns about how the development of the tea industry has benefited people in Yingxiu, Wenchuan county, Sichuan province, on Monday. JU PENG / XINHUA



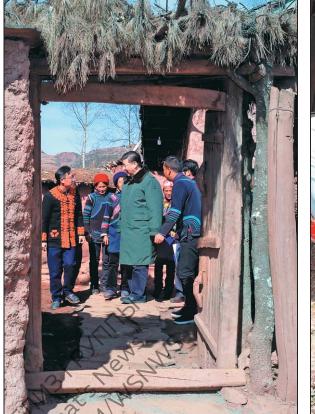
President Xi communicates with residents who welcome him warmly in Zhanqi village, Chengdu, Sichuan province, on Monday.



President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, extends Spring Festival greetings with the Chinese character *fu*, or good fortune, in Zhanqi village, Chengdu, Sichuan province, on Monday. Xi made an inspection tour in Sichuan and extended greetings ahead of Spring Festival, which falls on Friday. XIE HUANCHI / XINHUA

President listens, learns and shares ideas

During his inspection tour of Sichuan province before Spring Festival, he lends a hand to help improve circumstances

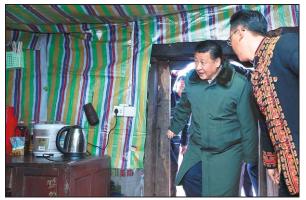






President Xi talks with residents in Sanhe village, Liangshan Yi autonomous prefecture, Sichuan province, on Sunday. XIE HUANCHI / XINHUA

President Xi listens to the planning of a relocation site for residents from impoverished areas as he visits Sanhe village, Liangshan Yi autonomous prefecture, Sichuan province, on Sunday. JU PENG / XINHUA



 $\label{eq:president Xi makes} \mbox{ buttered tea with local people of the Yi ethnic group in Yingxiu, Wenchuan county, Sichuan province, on Monday. Ju PENG / XINHUA$

President Xi visits the home of impoverished people in Sanhe Village, Liangshan Yi autonomous prefecture, on Sunday. JU PENG / XINHUA

4 HOLIDAY | Read



Pupils taking part in the Mandarin Excellence Program participate in a classroom activity at UCL Institute of Education in London on July 14 PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

ENCOURAGING WORDS

With a program to make 5,000 UK teenagers fluent in Mandarin by 2020, students are learning the language, reports Wang Mingjie in London.

t is Wednesday evening and Sarah Evans' friends are enjoying a drink at a pub but the 25-year-old, who works for a hedge fund company in the City of London, does not join them because she is at her weekly Mandarin class.

"I think to be able to speak Mandarin fluently is very important to me as it can undoubtedly give me an edge at my job," said Evans, who is already able to make good conversation in Chinese.

Her story is one example of the growing interest in Britain in learning Mandarin. As relations between China and the United Kingdom have improved during the last 45 years, learning Mandarin has become increasingly popular.

According to the British Council, the number of people taking Mandarin exams at the General Certificate of Secondary Education level increased by 92 percent over the past five years to 4,044 students in 2016.

There are about 130,000 British students of all age groups studying Mandarin at the moment, according to figures from the Chinese embassy

Wang Yongli, minister counselor for education at the Chinese embassy in London, said Mandarin was of little interest to British people decades ago, but the expansion of the Confucius Institutes and the smaller Confucius Classrooms, with support from local governments and universities, has played an important role in the rise of Mandarin in the country.

"They are seen as centers of excellence to provide great support to teachers and schools in Mandarin teaching through a wide network. To date, there are 29 Confucius Institutes and 135 Confucius Classrooms in the UK," Wang said.

His view was echoed by the UK's Minister of State for School Standards, Nick Gibb, who believes that a high level of fluency in Mandarin will become increasingly important in the competitive global economy.

"As part of our drive to extend opportunity, we want to give young people the opportunity to study the language and to acquire fluency in both spoken and written Manda-



School pupils take part in a Talking Treasure Hunt around the UCL campus in London on July 14.

In 2016, the British government launched its 10-million-pound (\$13 million) Mandarin Excellence Program, which aims to get 5,000 students on the way to fluency in the language by 2020.

The program is being run by UCL's Institute of Education and the British Council. On average, the students study Mandarin for eight hours a week.

Progress test results in October indicated that the first cohort of almost 400 pupils from 14 schools across England are excelling when it comes to learning Mandarin Chinese. The majority of pupils achieved marks of 80 percent or higher across specially created tests in reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Katharine Carruthers, director of the UCL Institute of Education Confucius Institute, said: "This program provides a real boost and unique opportunity for more motivated pupils to be on track toward fluency in Mandarin, and intensive learning is an important part of that. All of the pupils who attended this innovative teaching day are clearly bene-fiting from being part of the program."

Chijioke Davies, 12, from Dartford Grammar School in Kent, joined the program because he wanted to have a bigger challenge than regular Chinese lessons.

The best thing about being part of the (program) is that I have something to be proud of and I can say that I am good at a language," he said, adding "if anyone is thinking about joining the program, I would say that they should join because it is an amazing experience."

Speaking about her experience of the program, 12-year-old Carla Turbides from the Anglo European School said: "The best thing about the Mandarin Excellence Program is learning about another language and culture, and doing it together with your friends. It's a great program that offers

amazing opportunities for the future." In 2013, the British Council introduced its Generation UK campaign, which aims to increase the number of British students and interns with placements in China to 80,000 by 2020

Carma Elliot, director of the British Council in China, said there are now some 7,500 young British people gaining experience in China. This number has grown by around 40 percent in the last three years.

British students' ambition to excel in Mandarin follows strong interest among Chinese students to learn English, which began in the late 1970s. As a result, China now boasts the largest English-learning population in the world, with an estimated 200 million students. In China, most students take their first English lesson during the first or third year of primary school.

While there has been a surge in the number of Britons learning Mandarin, the number of Chinese students studying at British universities has also continued to rise during the past four decades, making Britain the most popular destination in the Europe an Union.

More than 90,000 Chinese students were enrolled at UK colleges and universities in 2015-16, which was up 94 percent on the number from a decade ago (46,960).

Contact the writer at wangmingjie@

Children make early start on China classes as schools launch lessons

By WANG MINGJIE

In a bright new classroom on the second floor of a West London building, Christie counts to 10 confidently and then identifies parts of the body when prompted by her teacher.

Not bad for a 3-year-old, but Christie is carrying out the tasks in Mandarin rather than English.

She didn't speak a word of Chinese until eight weeks ago, when her parents enrolled her at Kensington Wade in London, the first prep school in the United Kingdom to offer English and Chinese education to pupils aged 3 to 11.

Jo Wallace, the headmistress, said she hopes her students will be able to live and work comfortably with Chinese people.

"What we aim to give our students is not only just a bilingual brain but also the ability to speak Chinese and understand Chinese culture," she said.

The school opened in September, with 16 pupils, half of whom are from families from the UK, the United States, Russia, South America and elsewhere in Europe. Half of the class comprises children with some kind of Chinese background.

"The common factor with all these families is that most of them are international and have an international understanding about China," Wallace said. "Most of them speak two languages and they know the importance of being bilingual and how great it is."

The school charges fees of 17,000 pounds (\$22,435) a year and aims to blend the rigor and efficiency of the Chinese teaching style with the creativity and imagination of the British system. Pupils move between an English and a Mandarin

classroom throughout the day. Kensington Wade was the brainchild of Hugo de Burgh, a Chinese media specialist, who named the school after Sir Thomas Wade, a 19th century diplomat who wrote the first Chinese-English textbook,

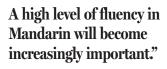
which was published in the 1860s. De Burgh said: "The desire to open a school of this kind has been founded on the belief that future generations of British opinion formers and decision-makers will benefit greatly from learning Chinese at an early age

He said being able to speak the language will give them an edge because China has become influential.

"China now is the biggest trading part-ner for 124 countries, while the United States is the biggest trading partner for 58 countries, and parents see the growing influence of China economically and culturally," he said.

Michael Pritchett, the father of 3-yearold Kasper, said being bilingual expands the learning capacity of the brain and studying Mandarin, the most spoken language in the world, could open up all sorts of possibilities for further cultural study, secondary school and university.

Pritchett said he was delighted when his



Nick Gibb, Minister of State for School Standards

son started talking to a waitress in China-town in Chinese, and he likes to hear his son singing in Chinese while playing with

"The immersion thing is obviously kept up at home," he said.

The Pritchett family chose Kensington Wade so their son could learn a second language but Stephanie Tsang, another parent, decided to send her son Harry to the school because of his Chinese roots.

Tsang's family just moved back to London from Beijing, and she said that, while China is perceived as the future by many people, she also wants it to be the present.

"We want to have it as a now thing, because I want him to understand Chinese, and be able to talk to his grandma and grandpa," she said.

'Confident and capable'

For parents who want their children to learn Mandarin even earlier, there is Hatching Dragons, the UK's first Chinese-English nursery school in central London. Its founder, Cennydd John, set up the nurserv because he wanted his son to learn the language.

John said he hopes to get children to break down prejudices and understand that there is much more that joins them than divides them. He read modern Chinese studies at the University of Edinburgh and went on to work as a China consultant.

"I want to help children be globally confident and capable in a changing world," he said, "We cannot deny the fact that there are 1.37 billion people in China who will be globally integrating in some way

John's concept seems to be working. This year, he launched a second nursery, in Southwest London's Twickenham, two years after the Barbican branch opened. He is planning to open a third, in Westminster, next year.

The interest in learning Mandarin in the UK aligns with UK government policy. In 2015, the government launched its 10-million-pound Mandarin Excellence Pro-gram, which aims to get 5,000 students on he way to fluency in the language by 2020. Nick Gibb, Minister of State for School Standards, said: "A high level of fluency in Mandarin will become increasingly important in our globally competitive economy."



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It's a rap: Teacher finds method in music

By WANG MINGJIE

Mandarin can be a massive challenge for people trying to pick it up as a second language, but a London teacher has introduced a novel way to teach it – by rapping in Chinese to make classes memorable and fun.

Adam Moorman, a teacher at Fortismere School in North London, said rapping makes things easy to remember, and Chinese has a good rhythm, so it is natural to combine them.

combine them. "As Chinese words are monosyllabic, and there's a very limited number of sounds in Chinese, many words rhyme with each other. If you discount tones, there are about 400 sounds in Chinese, compared with more than 10,000 in English, soft's easier to come up with rhymes in Chinese than in English," he said. Moorman first got his class to rap in Man-darin as a way to prepare students for their speaking exams. He said rap made it easier to memorize longer pieces of text. Writing

and performing rap gives students motiva-tion to find new ideas, learn new words and express their meaning. Rapping requires students to be creative and independent, all of which helps fluency.

Tamzin Sherzad, a sixth-form student at Fortismere, likes the new way of learning.

"Through the process of creating rap lyrics, I have familiarized myself with so many new, popular phrases and I feel that I have really extended my vocabulary of the modern lan-guage Chinese young people use," she said.

As a result, Sherzad feels more confident chatting with her Chinese friends and feels better prepared and excited about her gap year in China.

Moorman said that introducing rap to sixth-form students improves their fluency "by combining rhythm, rhymes and repetition in an enjoyable and memorable way that shifts the focus from painstaking bookbased learning, but achieves the rewards of independent research, drafting and practicing".

Keisha Asare, another student who has studied Mandarin for five years, said: "In order to write the rap I had to learn and search for new vocabulary that I otherwise would not have known. The raps are also very catchy and this makes it easier to remember the new phrases and vocabulary that I learned."

Asare believes rapping and listening to raps in Mandarin can benefit students who are learning Mandarin, "because whilst creating the raps, students can expand their vocabulary and better their tone as I did".

So far, Moorman has been able to compile an album of 12 original tracks, all featuring raps on varied topics such as healthy lifes-tyle, social media and the environment.

With the funding he recently won from the London Teacher Innovation Fund, which is financed by the Mayor of London and run by education charity Shine, Moorman launched the Mandarin Rap Podcast to help students learn Chinese with rap.



Staff help children with their artwork at Hatching Dragons, the UK's first Chinese-English nursery school.



Children play with traditional Chinese shadow puppets at Hatching Dragons. A third nursery is planned for next year in Westminster, London

Panamanian politician blazes a trail for China ties

By ZHOU JIN zhoujin@chinadaily.com.cn

A Chinese-born Panamanian politician, who acted as a key intermediary for the China-Panama diplomatic relationship, is in many ways blazing a trail for that relationship.

Chen Guoji, advisor to Pan-amanian President Juan Carlos Varela, is a Panamanian official who still cares deeply for his country of birth.

During two years working at the Panama-China Trade Development Office, Chen devoted himself to promoting friendship between the two countries

According to Chen, the two countries began negotiations on establishing diplomatic relations in 1994, and Varela expressed his wish to establish diplomatic ties with China about 10 years ago. Finally in June 13, 2017, the two countries established diplomatic relations.

Chen witnessed the entire process of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Panama, and accompanied the Panamani-an foreign minister to sign the diplomatic memorandum with Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Beijing.

"Seeing the two countries establishing diplomatic relations is seeing years of hard work and hope finally come true", Chen said during a ceremony in January in Beijing honoring his work. "When I look back at the

moment when the two foreign ministers signed the memorandum and seeing the flags of the two countries rise together, I felt excited", he added.

Chen accompanied the Panamanian president during his visit to China in November.

China and Panama signed 19 cooperation agreements during Varela's visit, and the two countries' trade ministers said in December that they will begin negotiations in June to sign a free-trade deal, consolidating a relationship that has strengthened after the Central American nation ditched ties with Taiwan.

Air China will open the first direct flights to Panama in March.

"Opening direct flights will make it convenient for those ethnic Chinese in Panama to come back to China and visit their families", Chen said, adding that trade cooperation between the two countries will boost their businesses in Panama. Panama could take advan-

tage of its abundant resources, geographical position and experiences in shipping, logistics and finance to cooperate with China and the two countries are highly complementary in industry, he said. "More and more Chinese enterprises will invest in

Panama, and exchanges and

Since then. Chen has been dedicated to championing the interests and status of ethnic Chinese. In 2016, as a member of

Panama's National Ethnic Chinese Council, Chen and other ethnic Chinese members lobbied the government to issue a special administrative order, to provide longterm legal residency for Chinese citizens who stayed in the country illegally for



Diagnosing the health benefits of nature's bounty

Scientist's journey of discovery takes her into the lush highlands and lowlands of Yunnan to uncover the medical secrets of ethnic groups and share them with the world

By HU YONGQI and LI YINGQING

For more than three decades, Zhu Zhaoyun has been studying herbs, plants and the bounty of nature, to promote the medicine and medical knowledge of ethnic groups in Southwest China's Yunnan province.

Both far-flung mountains and labs are the battlefield for the 64-year-old senior engineer, who is now the director of the Yunnan Institute of Materia Medica and the research and development director of the listed pharmaceutical company Yunnan Bai Yao Group.

For her outstanding contribution to this field of medicine, Zhu was rewarded 3 million yuan (\$476,190) by the provincial government of Yunnan in 2015. Before that, she also received first prize at the National Science and Technology Progress Awards and won a national model worker award in 2012.

In June 1982, Zhu became a member of the Communist Party of China when she was studying at the Yunnan University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. After graduation, she completed a survey of TCM resources in the Dali Bai autonomous prefecture where she worked as a technician at the Dali pharmaceutical factory.

In 1999, the Yunnan Institute of Materia Medica was set to be overhauled into a self-financed Stateowned enterprise from a public institute previously funded by the gov-ernment. Zhu, then 45, was appointed the institute's director, a decision that changed her life.



Zhu Zhaoyun checks samples at the Yunnan Institute of Materia Medica in 2015. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

ment for the 2012 National Science and Technology Progress Award.

Based on the surveys, the institute accelerated the industrialization of ethnic medicines. Zhu and her team compared thousands of prescriptions and trialed medicinal materials to make a slew of Yi-ethnic-group medicines. Five of them were approved and patents were granted to six medicines.

Over the decades, the institute's researchers have left their footprints all over the province as they visited ethnic doctors and translated medical books. The efforts resulted in three databases to record more than 4,000 medicines.

"My team has found how to develop ethnic medicine mainly in three key steps; resource surveys, standardized research and then industrialization," she said.

Recognition and confidence

In 2012, the Yunnan Institute of Materia Medica was merged into the Yunnan Bai Yao Group, a listed company that had 2.6 billion yuan in net profit in the third quarter last year, an increase of 10 percent compared with the same period in 2016. For Zhu, the merger will provide her team with better support in technology and funds to produce more medicines.

The institute has 10 research departments, including one specifically for natural medicine research. A systematic chain of research and development has been built with world-leading hardware.

In January last year, Premier Li Ke-

fields will also become mor frequent", he said. Originally from South Chi-

na's Guangdong province, Chen's family immigrated to Panama when he was 16 years old. He has been living and

working in Panama for 36 years. Initially, he started working for the family business, and later began his own business career, engaging in retail, trade and real estate.

Although he is successful in business, he raised concerns about the local Chinese community in Panama over their lack of political involvement.

The ethnic Chinese community in Panama began to form in the latter half of the 19th century after a group of 705 Chinese workers arrived in Panama on the clipper Sea Witch in 1854.

They have had a presence in the country for more than 160 years, and about 200,000 live there now.

The Chinese who came to Panama in the early years worked as laborers, repaired railways and built the famous canal. Gradually, they started their own businesses.

Their dedication, hard work and ambition have seen many Panamanians of Chinese origin reach influential positions as successful entrepreneurs and professionals, and they have contributed greatly to the economic, cultural, social and technological development of Panama.

In 1996, the Panamanian government issued a set of postage stamps to mark the contribution of those with Chinese heritage. In 2004, the government set aside March 30 as an annual day of commemoration.

However, most ethnic Chinese, despite their commercial success, stay clear of political involvement.

"In many other countries, those of Chinese ethnicity are involved with politics", Chen said, adding that their lack of involvement may hinder their community's development.

With the intention of "making a voice for the Chinese community," Chen started his political career in 2005 and joined the Pana-

meñistas Party led by Varela. In the following years, he and Varela have been working together. in 2014, Varela won the presidential election and Chen became one of his key advisors.

Difficult start

The institute, one of the 22 research institutes to be overhauled and thereby receive no more fiscal support from the government in 2000, was in desperate need for new medicines, researchers and marketing professionals. Many employees lost hope in the institute's future. At this uncertain time, Zhu took the lead in shouldering the responsibility to revive the institute's fortunes.

Zhu still remembers what the institute was like when she first arrived. "Inside the building were intertwined spider webs and rats jumped out of a drawer when I opened one in the office," she said. "It was a difficult environment to conduct experiments, not to mention research."

Cui Tao, the institute's deputy director, described that year as "a state of poverty and blankness". "Everything was started from scratch and the insti-

was started non scratch and the insu-tute had been weighed down with too many negative things" he said Wang bingkun, executive deputy director of the institute, depicted Zhu as an example of being both pragmatic and hardworking. To get funds to restart research and the development of new medicines,



Zhu Zhaoyun asks local resdients about ethnic medicines in the Dali Bai autonomous prefecture in April 2010. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Zhu began asking for help from every department she could think of. On many occasions she was turned down but there was no time to linger on the embarrassment.

However, her persistence finally paid off when she was granted more than 1 million yuan to renovate the institute's labs. Her journey to produce new ethnic medicines could finally start

Survey and industrialization

Yunnan is known for its biodiversity with its mountains, rising more than

5,000 meters, and lush plains. Mountainous areas account for 94 bercent of Yunnan's land. If we can develop new medicines, herb planting in rural areas can be strengthened. In this sense, the local economy can get a boost when our medicines are sold all over the world," Zhu said.

However, ethnic medicines are not well-known in the outside world. But the knowledge and expertise behind

them are deeply rooted in local culture and should be cherished as unique and precious resources, Zhu said in one of her books The Innovative Development for Ethnical Medicines.

"Many fine medicines created by China's ethnic groups have not been developed and my responsibility is to promote them," she said. "We also want to bring them to the global market as well."

Innovation has been one of her priorities since she led a team, for the first time, to complete a wide-ranging survey on Yunnan's natural medicines.

Zhu's team collected more than 80,000 samples for more than 10,000 medicinal substances. About 160,000 pictures were taken to record original conditions.

She also chaired the compilation of the nine-chapter Illustration on Yunnan's Natural Medicines and other two books on medicine, to support the protection, research and development of such medicines. As the first author, Zhu was picked by the central govern-

giang visited the Yunnan Bai Yao Group in the provincial capital Kunming. As the company's chief scientist, Zhu was the one to introduce The Illus tration on Yunnan's Natural Medicines to the premier.

"The premier told us that natural medicines belong to ethnic groups and the world, so the healthcare industry should be promoted to be bigger and stronger. Originating in China, natural medicines should go globally," Zhu recalled. "I will make more concerted efforts in study and research to formulate higher-quality medicines and bring Yunnan's indigenous medicine to the rest of the world."

In October, Zhu attended the 19th CPC National Congress as a member of the Yunnan delegation, a recognition of her achievements in the field of ethnic medicine and this gave her confidence to continue her course.

"As a Party congress delegate, I also want to make contributions to local economic development by integrating my research with the poverty alleviation campaign," Zhu added.

Contact the writers at huyongqi@chinadaily.com.cn cooperation in bilateral trade, culture and other various reasons



Chen Guoii, advisor to the Panamanian president, has been at the forefront of China-Panama ties. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

6 HOLIDAY | Cover

isoel international internatio BELIN

SHAANXI Willet Cake

Stewed chicken with mushro

TIBET AUTONOMOUS Kasai (fried paskty)

Stewed Dies In or

HUBEI stewed spare ribs with lotus og



Red braised port ben

SHANGHA,



On New Year's Eve, people around the country enjoy the Spring Festival Eve dinner with their families. It is considered the most important meal of the year, and every region and province has its own distinctive dish that is deemed indispensable at this time of the year.



From page 1

taurant called The Jade Garden, a popular eatery for Huaiyang cui-- one of the four classic styles of Chinese cookery – but unsur-prisingly it was fully booked months ago.

A silver lining However, the silver lining for Su is that she can order a partially prepared festival dinner of restaurant quality, most of which only needs to be cooked in the microwave for a few minutes

She said the partially prepared dinner is an ingenious invention for a poor cook such as herself. The meat dishes are already fully cooked, while the vegetable dishes are all sliced and neatly packaged with the appropriate condiments.

As Lunar New Year becomes increasingly recognized across the world, expats who spend the traditional festival in China are discovering a wide range of enjoyable pursuits

Bolled salt duct JIANGSU

> Huda Mohammed, a doctoral student at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing, is looking forward to spending her third Spring Festival in China.

"My favorite part of Lunar New Year is the fireworks," the Yemen national said. "I went out with my friends to the street at 11pm on New Year's Eve in 2016 to see the fireworks. It was so nice?

She said her friends even searched online to check locations People can give and receive digital red envelopes, or hongbao, containing real money, on their phones. We just kept receiving and giving

Expats find new ways to enjoy the holiday period

Poon choi (Chinese casser) GUANGDONG

red envelopes, which was really fun, she said. For Huda, the best thing about spending Spring Festival in Beijing is the lack of passengers on public transportation, which she called

"super good". According to data from the city's department of statistics, as many as 8 million people of Beijing's popula tion of 21 million are from other parts of China, which means that about 40 percent of the city's residents may return to their home-

Spring Festival. Many people leave the city and it's really easy to get around," said Bill Siggins, 60, an editor from Canada.

Siggins' wife hails from Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi province. He said he goes to *Miaohui* – a type of fair held during Spring Festival — where people can enjoy tradi-tional food and cultural shows in public parks.

"I'll eat some weird traditional Beijing food - duck intestines or some other organ - and buy a Chinese New Year symbol to hang on the door," he said.

He often travels to his wife's hometown to spend the festival with her family.

Newcomers always have a good time during Spring Festival. Gopolang Molale, a 24-year-old master's student at UIBE, will be celebrating his first Spring Festival in

Stewed chicken with spirate

GUANGT

China. 'I'm excited that I'm going to experience this festival in China and be part of it," the South African national said. "I know some of the traditions about this festival such as people going back home and getting together. I wonder if it's like Christmas for Westerners? The Beijing municipal government has invited us to a traditional concert. I'm very much looking forward to it."

He also plans to travel to Shang-



MULANG UYGG

With the biggest problem of the New Year's **Eve dinner** having been solved, I now have nothing to worry about but worry itself."

Su Qin, Beijing resident

They only need to be fried quickly in a wok.

"This way, we can satisfy our appetites while enjoying the warmth and coziness of our own home at the same time, which will add a more traditional atmosphere to the dinner," she added.

The New Year's Eve dinner is at the heart of a proper Chinese New Year celebration, and like Su, many people are looking for new ways of preparing the family reunion dinner ahead of the special day.

For example, partially prepared dinners, like the one Su has chosen, have become increasingly popular.

More than 300 stores, including chain restaurants such as Shanghai Min and Meizhou Dongpo, are selling semi-fin-ished products on Paobao, an e-commerce platform owned by Alibaba, ranging in price from less than 100 yuan to more than 3,000 yuan (\$15.80 to \$477). According to taosj.com, a Taobao targeted data platform, between Ian I and 15, the volume

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where fireworks could be seen, and we visited them to enjoy the displays

After the stunning fireworks, we returned to the campus and had some dumplings made by my Chinese friends," she said.

She also had fun with the online red envelope games on WeChat.

of trade for partially prepared meals on Taobao reached 1.46 million yuan, a rise of 230.55 percent on a quarter-on-quarter basis.

Liu Guiliang, manager of a branch of the Xinghuacun restaurant in Shanghai, said the out-let offers four different partially prepared festival dinner sets for varying numbers of diners, the cheapest of which consists of six dishes plus rice, and costs 598 yuan.

"More customers are choosing to have the New Year's Eve dinner at restaurants, and some booked more than six months ago. With a towns to spend the traditional festival with their families.

In addition, a large number of people choose to travel abroad during the holiday, meaning traffic congestion is not an issue during the festival period.

For expats who stay in the capital, it's a good time to travel around and enjoy the city. "I like Beijing during

"It's always good to see my mother- and father-in-law, and we always have a great time on New Year's Eve. We eat way too much food, have too much fun watching the TV gala and then get way too crazy with fireworks at midnight," he said. This year, he plans to drive to Xi'an for the coming holiday.

hai during the holiday and visit the Disneyland resort there, the sixth in the world, which opened in 2016. According to the theme park, cartoon characters will dress in traditional Chinese costumes during the holiday period.

- DU JUAN

5,888 yuan

The peak price of a chef cooking in person at a customer's home on New Year's Eve

limited number of tables, more people — especially those from the post-80s and post-90s generations - have turned to our partially prepared festival dinners this year. We have sold 130 sets in the past month," he said.

Cultural content

Qin Yu, professor of hospitality management at Beijing International Studies University, said the New Year's Eve dinner is considered one of the most important family banquets, and eating it anywhere outside of the family home means losing the inherent cultural content

and values.

"However, frankly speaking, restaurants do provide betterquality cuisine and save people a lot of trouble. So partially prepared products combine many advantages and enable customers to enjoy the traditional festival in a tasty way," he said.

The high demand in the catering market also spurs many restaurants to sign up for online food ordering platforms, such as Eleme and Meituan-Dianping, to provide delivery and takeout services for partially prepared dinners for New Year's Eve Song Yi, manager in the South

Memory restaurant in Beijing, said the festival dinner delivery market is seeing more opportunities as takeout food gradually becomes a mainstream way of dining in large cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, and as many families retain the tradition of eating at home.

"We have to consider the lack of staff members because many delivery drivers have also headed home, but we promise that our partially prepared festival dinners will be delivered one day ahead of New Year's Eve to ensure that customers will enjoy them on time," he said. For those who do not want to dine out and have no faith in either partially prepared festival dinners or their own cooking abilities, many chefs are offering their services online, offering to cook in person at a customer's home on New Year's Eve. The lowest price online is about 2,888 yuan, rising to 5,888 yuan for the most expensive

"With the biggest problem of the New Year's Eve dinner having been solved, I now have nothing to worry about but worry itself," Su said.

Contact the writer at wangkeju@chinadaily.com.cn

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READING FOR THE MASSES

Self-service libraries pop up around Beijing's Chaoyang district

Liangyue self-service library in Langyuan Vintage residential community in Chaoyang district of Beijing is open to the public 24/7. PHOTOS BY WANG JING / CHINA DAILY

he government of Beijing's Chaoyang district had opened eight self-service libraries by the end of last year, forming the largest group of such public libraries in the capital city. The eight libraries, which are mainly located in Chaoyang's commercial and cultural zones, have entered Beijing's public library service system. Readers can borrow books from and read books in these libraries for free. They are able to return their borrowed books at any of the eight libraries, as well as other public libraries in the district.

The libraries cover a combined area of more than 40,000 square meters and provide a total of 30,000 books, as well as simple reading areas.

One of them is in the Beijing Children's Hospital East Branch, the first public library to open in a hospital in China. Another at Zuojiazhuang is equipped with special facilities for visually impaired people.

Li Kai, curator of Chaoyang Library, said the self-service facilities allow people to take part in running them, and make it easier to borrow and return books.

"The city is lacking in public reading spaces. The purpose of building these libraries is to not only inspire but also gather the people," he said.

Li said that Chaoyang district will build more of these libraries and stock books according to readers' needs.



A reader chooses an e-book at Menggongfang self-service library in Xibahe on Jan 3.





A reader selects a book at Liangyue self-service library in the central business district in Chaoyang on Jan 3.



Two readers talk about a book at Chenbing self-service library in Dongdaqiao on Jan 5.

1x



A pediatrician from the Beijing Children's Hospital East Branch reads a story book to a child patient at the self-service library located in the hospital in Chaoyang on Jan 3.



People read books at a self-service library in Sanlitun on Jan 3.

GUANGZHOU SEES FLOWER MARKETS FLOURISH

Tradition of buying plants ahead of Spring Festival gets a boost from rising living standards

By LI WENFANG in Guangzhou liwenfang@chinadaily.com.cn

Xiao Aiting, a doctor in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, buys a potted kumquat tree and flowers such as rhododendrons, chrysanthemums, narcissi and orchids before Spring Festival every year to create a festive floral corner in her home.

The word for kumquat in Cantonese sounds like the word for luck and Xiao sticks a red envelope on the pot of the tree to wish for abundant luck in the coming year.

She spends 400 yuan to 600 yuan (\$63-95) on her floral decorations, depending on the price of flowers each year.

To Lu Shaoqin, 25, who works in an internet company in Guangzhou, shopping for flowers in a nearby flower market has been an important family tradition since her childhood, without which Lunar New Year celebrations would be incomplete.

A kumquat tree and chrysanthemums, which also symbolize luck; *Pachira macrocarpa*, also known as the money tree; *Dracaena sanderiana*, or lucky bamboo; and *Solanum mammosum*, which is called five generations living under the same roof, are the blooms favored by Lu's family.

A mini peach blossom tree, signifying good luck in relations with the opposite sex, is also a must.

Other flowers popular at Lunar New Year in the city are cockscomb, dahlia, gladiolus and lily.

Ruan Lin, dean of the Guangzhou Institute of Forestry and Landscape Architecture, said most families in Guangzhou, buy flowers for Spring Festival.

The love of flowers by the people of Guangzhou, which is known as the "City of Flowers", was recorded in ancient writings as early as in the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 24).

Su Lisi, chairwoman of the Guangdong Floral Culture Club of the World Flower Council, said there is no official definition of the meanings of festival flowers, but rather customary understanding of local people.

All flowers are beautiful and offer hope for the future. But, positive connotations are sought during



A flower grower at Datian village in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, waters roses on sale in her shop. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Guangzhou citizens purchase flowers at a market before Spring Festival.

Spring Festival and so some flowers have become popular, Su said.

Peach blossom is a favorite of Su's family because it means love and prosperity. This is also why businesspeople prefer the flower, she said.

The tradition of shopping in the city's flower markets is due to its warm weather and great selection of flowers available, Su said. Ye Chunsheng, a retired professor from the Sun Yat-sen University and a folk culture expert, said Guangzhou's flower trade can be traced back more than 1,000 years to the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms (907-960), when farmers sold flowers in what is now Zhuangtou village in Haizhu district to the south of the Pearl River.

Flower markets assumed their current form gradually between the 1860s and 1920s when visiting them



Customers choose flowers at Guangzhou's Xihulu Flower Market.

became a Lunar New Year custom in the provincial capital, with bamboo frames built to display and sell flowers as well as arts and crafts in designated streets closed temporarily in the few days before Spring Festival, he said.

Abraham Morse, a doctor from the United States working at Guangzhou Women and Children's Medical Center, visited the flower market in Liwan district with his wife last year.

"It was busy and crowded with lots of activity and people of all ages. There was definitely a festive atmosphere. The entire wide avenue was closed off for a distance of about 1 kilometer.

"In the middle of the avenue were stalls mainly selling plants, flowers, pots, and other arts and crafts. Also some snack foods. The stores along the sidewalks of the street were also The flower markets in Guangzhou will surely become larger in the future, because living standards are higher and people's expectations have risen."

Su Lisi, chairwoman of the Guangdong Floral Culture Club of the World Flower Council

busy," Morse said.

The couple bought flowers, potted plants and decorative pots as well as snack foods.

"It is not hard to spend your money if you have a place to put what you can buy. We were primarily buying things to decorate the entrance to our apartment and in our apartment as well as the balcony. A few things were for gifts," Morse said.

"It would be a great place to visit to see many beautiful local products and get some sense of the culture of Chinese New Year."

Ye's family moved to Guangzhou when he was 16 and at that time jasmine was widely available in the flower markets.

Over the past 40 years, the varieties of flowers on offer have increased vastly and so have the prices, with balloons and toys also occupying the stalls now, Ye said.

"Folk culture comes from life and develops with life. The content has changed but the meaning of bidding farewell to the old and ushering in the new by walking in the flower markets remains," Ye said.

With higher living standards, people now have more aesthetic demands with many families now pursuing artistic shapes and forms, Su said. "The flower markets in Guangzhou will surely become larger in the future, because living standards are higher and people's expectations have risen, hence the increased spending on festive flowers," Su said.

Official statistics indicate the flower markets in the 11 districts in Guangzhou drew 5.35 million visitors and generated revenue of 120 million yuan last year.

The flower markets marking the coming Year of the Dog started on Feb 12 in Guangzhou, with New Year's Eve falling on Feb 15.

Sheng Wuhan contributed to this story.





From left: Colorful flowers adorn a public park on Ersha Island in Guangzhou, Guangdong province. Flower beds bring color to a walkway beside the Pearl River. Visitors look at plants on display at the Guangzhou International Floral Art Exhibition held last year in Guangzhou. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Floral landscaping brings a riot of color to city's streets

By LI WENFANG in Guangzhou liwenfang@chinadaily.com.cn

Drivers and pedestrians crossing overpasses and footbridges in Guangzhou in November could expect to see *Bougatmoillea glabra* in full bloom against the backdrop of an azure autumn sky. The flowers, which can range in

The flowers, which can range in color from purple, red and purk to white and yellow, cover the sides of 353, overpasses, and footbridges measuring 330 kilometers in length in Guangzhou, bringing a riot of color to the cityscape. Thirteen species have been selected out of a total of 150 to decorate the bridges together with some other plants. Careful management, means there are flowers in bloom all year round, up from two seasons in 2003 when the work began to beautify the bridges, said Ruan Lin, dean of the Guangzhou Institute of Forestry and Landscape Architecture.

As well as looking attractive, the flowers also bring marked ecological benefits in terms of improvements to air quality and mitigation of urban heat island effect – where a

metropolitan area is warmer than surrounding rural areas due to human activity.

Guangzhou has applied for a national habitat award for the project after winning the Guangdong provincial award last year, Ruan said, adding that the city's experts have helped a number of other cities on the southeast coast garnish their bridges.

The floral bridges are only part of authorities' efforts to enable the city live up to its nickname of the "city of flowers".

Last year, the city's forestry and

gardening administration implemented a five-year floral landscape plan, Ruan said.

Through careful selection and placement of species and thanks to the warm climate, significant blooms are available year round. Kapok, peach blossom and pink *Baultinia* adorn the city in spring; *Delonix regia*, or flame tree, and *Lagerstroemia indica*, also known as crepe myrtle, in summer; *Ceiba speciosa*, or silk floss tree, and red *Baultinia* in autumn; and plum blossom in winter. Flower sightseeing tips are posted on the

administration's website to allow residents to appreciate the displays.

Floral spots across the city have been upgraded since last year to show more aesthetic sense and efforts are being made to promote the love of flowers in Cantonese culture through activities such as floral exhibitions, promotion of floral science and support for the decoration of residents' balconies.

In September last year, as a highlight of the city's floral affairs, the Guangzhou International Floral Art Exhibition was held along with the annual conference of the World Flower Council in Guangzhou.

Floral artists from more than 32 countries and regions participated in the events, and over 400 international flower art works were displayed in the city.

In addition, experts from Guangzhou led a team with members from across the country in formulating a national standard on floral decoration along overpasses and footbridges, which has been approved, Ruan said.

K.

Pricey parkas make inroads in chilly China

Younger, trendy consumers buy leading Canadian and other brands

By LIU YUKUN liuyukun@chinadaily.com.cn

Wearing a \$900 parka with real coyote fur and Canadian Hutterite goose down, originally designed for expeditions to the South Pole, on her three-minute walk to work, sounds perfectly fine to Amber Zhang who makes less

than \$800 a month. "It's all worth the price considering Canada Goose coats are the warmest I can find in the market," said Beijingbased Zhang.

Sales of winter jackets rose sharply as the unusually cold wind forced people to buy protective garments that could shield them from harsh winter. Compared with function and design, the price tag seems less important for Chinese middle-income consumers.

"Female consumers now focus more on how the clothes make them look when making decisions, compared with the past when they looked at sales prices," said Neil Wang, president of the Chinese operations of consulting firm Frost & Sullivan Inc.

"Chinese consumers in general want jackets that are light in weight, good in quality and trendy in design," Wang added. In demand more than ever before, the latest high-end

iacket brands coming to the market meet most consumers' needs According to a report from consulting firm Bain & Co Inc,

the market in China for highend brands in general is now fueled mostly by younger generations, especially millennials. The Bain report also noted that China represented 32 percent of the global luxury market in 2017 and emerged with the biggest market share.

Italian luxury outerwear brand Moncler SpA, whose prices range from \$1,000 to \$2,000, for instance, has continued its global sales growth,



Tourists wear thick down jackets walking on Chang'an Street in Beijing. DU JIA / FOR CHINA DAILY

Female consumers now focus more on how the clothes

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nese operations of consulting

firm Frost & Sullivan Inc

powered in part by China. In the full year to March 31, total revenue climbed 16 percent to \$292.7 million compared with \$261 million in 2016. Asia accounted for around 40 percent of its global reve-

nue, while the combined total for the Chinese and South Korean markets posted a 23 percent rise.

Another example of the fast-growing appetite for lux-ury down jackets in China is the Canadian extreme weathpared with the past er outerwear brand Canada Goose.

Compared with recent years, when consumers would balk at \$500 to over \$1,000 price tags, customers now fall Neil Wang, president of the Chiover themselves to buy them. According to a quarterly report released by Canada Goose, the company's total

revenue to end-Sept was \$211 million, up 27.2 percent yearon-year. Its gross margins were 63.6 percent, up from 57.5 percent for the same period the previous year.

Its shares on the Toronto Stock Exchange and New York Stock Exchange, surged from its Initial Public Offering price of \$12.78 on March 16 last year to a peak of \$38.25 a share.

According to a sales representative who is unwilling to reveal her name, Chinese consumers have contributed greatly to its growth.

Although the brand shows little official presence in China as yet, its products are becoming noticeably more visible on the streets of major cities there as many consumers utilize cross-border e-commerce

platforms, go to fashion by crews in such productions buyer stores in China or as Game of Thrones and The employ personal overseas Danish Girl. shopping agents or *daigou*.

Daigou agents offer overseas products that are usually missing in Chinese markets with prices 30 to 40 percent lower than in Chinese stores - by avoiding customs duties. Some of those agents are

students who study abroad, and some are professionals with marketing and distribution lines in China.

"We are working on a China strategy," CEO Dani Reiss told the Canadian business newspaper the Financial Post. "China is a huge potential market for us."

Originally designed for extreme weather expeditions, Canada Goose got a higher public profile after being used online e-commerce retailer Taobao, the Alibaba unit.

As high-end brands like Moncler and Canada Goose enjoy a growing customer base, down coat brands with good quality but affordable prices enjoy a major customer base

According to China top e-commerce platform Tmall, sister company to Taobao and subsidiary of Alibaba, the top five brands for menswear and womens wear with the largest sales volumes during Singles Day were priced between \$150 and \$200 for their down jackets.

During the Singles Day (an annual online shopping day for sale which falls on Nov 11) sales, clothes brand HLA, known as the "Chinese Zara," was number one in menswear on Tmall, bringing in over 400 million yuan (\$64 million) in sales. HLA's down jackets outsold all other categories. More than 220,000 were sold, for over 100 million yuan.

Uniqlo Co Ltd, a Japanese brand specializing in casual wear, ranked second in menswear sales and came in top for women's sales

During the Singles Day sales, the brand sold more than 100 million items within 1 minute.

According to Uniqlo China, down jackets are among the best sellers this winter, with "light" and "trendy" the key search words used the most.

"Customers now want a connected with its marketing down jacket not just as cold weather gear, but also some-Neil Wang said. The brand has benefited thing that is light, chic, and cool," Uniqlo China said. from celebrity endorsement

"Its success is also closely

and promotional strategies,

in its promotion in China.

Jack Ma, the founder of Aliba-

ba Group and one of the coun-

try's richest men, was spotted

wearing a Canada Goose

woman's parka at a number

of international forums and during a meeting with US

President Donald Trump. Social media tags with "Jack Ma" and "Canada Goose"

leaped to the top of key search

words the next day, and Cana-

da Goose, or similar looking

products, became one of the

top choices for purchases using

According to Uniqlo China, 75 percent of consumers ranked "quality" as their primary concern when making purchase decisions, while 70 percent ranked "light" when choosing down jackets.

"Of course I also buy down jackets from Uniqlo, and other brands as long as the jackets can keep me warm and make me look pretty," Amber Zhang said

"After all, quality and fashion matter the most for down jackets, and then comes the

Canuck firm goes for gold in market

By WANG ZHUOQIONG wangzhuoqiong@ chinadaily.com.cn

Canadian athletic apparel retailer Lululemon Athletica Inc said it expects to cash in on China fast-growing passion for sports and keepingfit by opening more brickand-mortar stores in major cities, as well as expanding its

reach online. So far the yoga-inspired



Visitors shop at a Lululemon store in Beijing ROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Lululemon said its strategy is to start with tier-one cities and initially populate them with six or seven stores, before branching out, and to date it has achieved average

Research and development and technology has also played its part in boosting sales. The company launched its "Enlight Bra" last May after two years of research in

Colder weather perks up winter sales By WANG ZHUOQIONG wangzhuoqiong@ chinadaily.com.cn

This winter's colder weather and strong snow have contributed to the strong Chinese sales of UGG boots, boosting its parent company's financial results.

According to financial results for the third fiscal quarter ended Dec 31, 2017, of Deckers Brands, which designs, markets and distributes footwear, apparel and accessories, sales increased to \$810.5 million. up 6.6 percent from the \$760.3 million for the same period last year.

Operating income was



to create some buzz in the men's category.

For Deckers, the United States remains its No 1 market and China accounts for 10 per-cent of its global sales revenue. "I'm expecting it to increase to 25 percent in the near future," Lorans said.

Powers said last year that the group has made efforts in preserving the UGG Classic's franchise with a focus on core brand positioning, reaching a younger consumer with existing and new distribution, growing the men's business with an improved and focused product line, and creating compelling and segmented

year-round offerings. "The third quarter is an

brand for men and women, started in Canada in 1998, has established 10 stores in China while globally Lululemon had 425 stores in operation by the end of last year. According to the company it has achieved its highest level of brand awareness in Canada, at 80-85 percent of the market, while in the US its brand awareness is 45-50 percent and in China it is about 12 percent.

The company, however, considers its brand awareness in China actually to be quite high, especially in cities like Shanghai and Beijing At said it will continue to build a significant and sustainable business in the country, starting with a presence in local communities, hooking up with gyms and sports studios, and understanding where people get together to work out – rather than making a major push with heaving marketing or in television commercials.

growth in the Chinese mar ket of about 350 percent annually.

Last year the brand expanded its presence to Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Chengdu as well as expanding its digital footprint on WeChat and Tmall. The company said its Tmall business in 2017 surged by 175 percent, fueled by a more-than-doubling of online traffic.

Lululemon says yoga fashion is a \$10 billion market in China and its stores there achieved profitability of \$15,000 per square meter in 2017, much higher than its stores in North America. The Canadian group says it is in a high-end market, driven by innovation, and has a vertical business structure. This means it has directly-operated stores – rather than the wholesale model many sportswear brands have adopted in China - which

has been key to its successful

performance in China

collaboration with several universities, as well as working with a number of athletes

which was the most expensive bra it had ever sold. Although priced at \$98, however, two weeks after its launch it had become the company's top-selling bra.

The men's category is also a key driver in China and will continue to be so, Lululemon said.

Lululemon's global revenue by 2020 is expected to hit \$4 billion. The company said of that, \$1 billion would come from its international operations, \$1 billion from digital sales and \$1 billion from menswear.

According to the company women and life partners are the largest buyers of its menswear products.

The company estimates that internationally, 80 per-cent of its revenue comes from women's products. In China, however, the bulk of its sales is in menswear.

\$193.2 million compared to \$53.3 million for the same period last year.

UGG brand net sales for the third quarter increased 4.3 percent to \$734.7 million compared to \$704 million for the same period last year.

"We saw success in China due to increases in brand awareness and growing consumer demand following our first holiday season with our brand influencer, youth icon Angelababy Yang," a Chinese celebrity model and actress, said Dave Powers, president and chief executive officer.

Revenue in China increased 10 percent from October to December, and the company's overall performance and growth are very positive, according to Olivier Lorans, Deckers China's vice-president and general manager.

But Lorans does not consider cold weather as the key reason for the growth. He primarily credits the compaUGG China credits its sale growth this winter to better communications with younger consumers, such as inviting Chinese actress Angelababy to be its brand influencer. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

> ates 150 outlets, opened its first concept store on Sept 23 at a signature shopping center in Beijing; the unit plans to open 45 more concept stores in the future. That kind of ambitious strategy stems from fast growth -15 percent last year — in the country.

"We expect (growth) to reach 20 percent this year," Lorans said of 2018.

Lorans plans to grow UGG into a four-season lifestyle brand through measures including rejuvenating the men's category and fast-track ing the children's range – particularly its mini-me collection — as well as leveragmini-me ing the fan base on social media. The company is look ing for a male celebrity as well

indication that those efforts are paying off as we successfully executed on delivering seasonal, relevant product from UGG with standout items. such as innovative winter and waterproof boots, slippers, the Classic Mini and the new men's styles," he said.

Powers said their "refined product strategies, enhanced consumer messaging and wholesale account optimization efforts resulted in much stronger full price selling for its brand portfolio during the key holiday season.

While more favorable weather also contributed to our year-over-year improvement, hard work by the entire organization enabled us to capitalize on additional upside opportunities," the CEO said.

Deckers now expects fiscal year 2018 results to produce net sales in the range of \$1.873 billion to \$1.878 billion. The gross margin is expected to be about 49 percent.

ny's storytelling abilities particularly its store displays and its efforts to communicate with younger consumers. Its new Pompom collection

launched in September, which

increase in sales is natural and

we are expecting higher growth in the future," he said.

The China unit, which oper-

"We believe that the

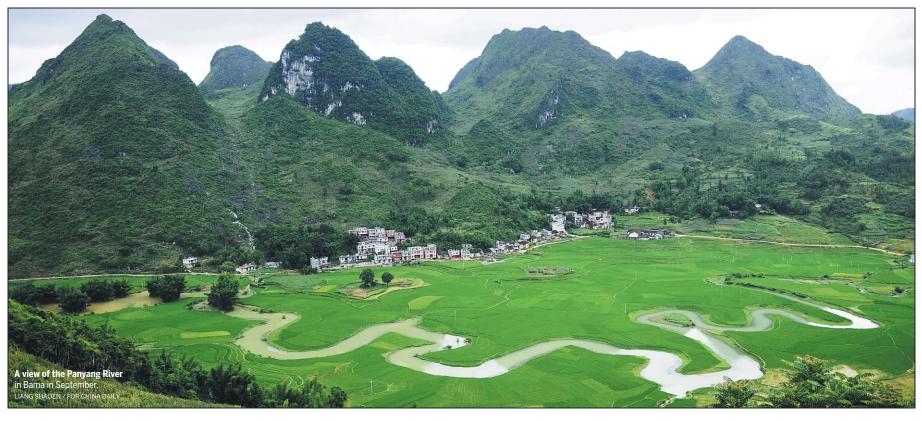
sold out quickly.

\$734.7

net sales of the UGG brand

in the third quarter in 2017

million



FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE

Bama county in the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region enjoys an enviable reputation as the home of longevity

By LI YANG liyang@chinadaily.com.cn

Ithough it has been questioned whether the Japanese health organization that bestowed on Bama the title of "The Hometown of Longevity" in 1991 actually had the legitimacy to do so, there is no denying the county in the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region has a high proportion of centenarians.

With 300,000 residents in total, the county has around 100 centenarians, nearly five times the United Nation's standard for a place of longevity, which is 7.5 per 100,000.

More important, the population in Bama over the age of 90 has been rising steadily, since the longevity of its residents first caught the attention of domestic researchers in the 1960s. According to the county government, by the end of last year, Bama had nearly 800 people over 90 years old.

Many organizations from home and abroad have conducted field researches in Bama since the 1990s, concluding the air is rich in negative oxygen ions, the soil and water contain healthy microelements and there is a strong geomagnetic field, all of which are good for health.

These inherent characteristics have turned Bama into a magnet for visiting senior citizens across the country. They flock to the county hoping to cure their high blood pressure, diabetes and asthma. There are even some with cancer for whom the magical powers of Bama are a last ray of hope.

The government counts these people, whom the locals address as "migratory bird people", as travelers although they usually live in Bama for months, even years. It is estimated more than 100,000 of these "migratory birds" live in the houses of local farmers or the houses they helped the local farmers build. In the morning and evening, hundreds of people dance and do exercises in front of Baimo Cave. a tourist spot that is believed to have the best air quality. Besides the cave is a deep valley through which the Panyang River flows where people line up to drink the



They enjoy singing folk songs, and have

no desire for money and the other material comforts. It is a mentality that is hard to develop in the modern world."

Zhang Yuan, a photographer who has shot pictures in Bama for years

water, which they believe to be the elixir of longevity.

Ten years ago, Bama received about 260,000 visitors. Last year, the number soared to about 5 million, and they accounted for more than half of the county's economy.

Concrete buildings dot the mountains. Almost all the families in the villages along the Panyang River, the core longevity region, manage homestays, eateries or specialty shops, selling local cereals, beans, corn and barbecued pork.

scued pork. Some villagers, who had gone However, for most of Bama's centenarians, most of whom are illiterate and have never left home, farming was their livelihood.

The centenarians have something in common that even the locals today can't share, said Zhang Yuan, a photographer who has shot photos of 120 centenarians in Bama over the years.

"Aside from their simple lives, they invariably have simple minds. For most of their lives, they have lived a hand-to-mouth, but self-sufficient life. They enjoy singing folk songs, and have no desire for money and the other material comforts," Zhang said.

"It is a mentality that is hard to develop in the modern world," he added.

Some centenarians sit in the halls of the homestays or shops their offspring operate, acting as a form of advertising and revenue, visitors are expected to give them red envelopes containing cash when taking a photo with them and seeking their blessings.

However, not all attribute the longevity of Bama's residents to the external conditions, there are some who think it is in the local people's genes. Sun Liang, a genetic researcher at the National Gerontology Center, said that among the factors contributing to long life, genes contribute about 20 to 30 percent, and the living habits and medical care conditions account for 70 to 80 percent.

"How many years people can live after they reach 90 is mostly decided by their genes. Bama's longevity is in the first place determined by local people's genes," said Sun.

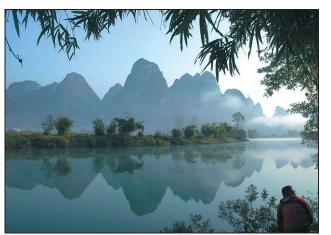
Studies by Yang Ze, deputy director of the Beijing Gerontology Institute, indicates that Bama people came from the Southeast



Villagers of the Yao ethnic group perform a traditional bronze drum dance in the Zhuzhu Festival celebrations in Dongshan, Bama, in June. HUANG DAYOU / FOR CHINA DAILY



Huang Miegui and her husband Huang Juanguang, and Huang Juanhui and his wife Yang Miehou (from left to right) pose for the camera in front of their home in Bama last year. The two men are twins, 106 years old, and their wives are both 103 years old. HE FUGAO / FOR CHINA DAILY



'Migratory birds' put an end to old ways

small fish that locals catch in the subterranean rivers is regarded as a delicacy after being fried in its own fat.

The price has increased more than 10 times since my first visit to Bama in 2013, because it has almost vanished now.

I have been to Bama three times, and it was noisier and more crowded on the second visit than it was on the first, and even more so on my third visit.

The coming of visitors, especially the "migratory birds", represents a stable source of revenue for the locals. But a big con-



But a big concern of the longevity villages, which

are concentrated in the valley along the Panyang River, is how to dispose of the sewage and solid waste, which have increased rapidly with the growing number of "migratory birds".

Although the county government arranges for trucks to carry the solid waste to a refuse processing plant in the town, some garbage is directly burned by local dustmen in the dustbins on the side of the road in the mountains. The pungent smoke is repulsive and can be smelled miles away from where it is being burned.

And some eateries and homestays directly discharge waste into the simple sewer system that goes directly into the Panyang River.

Although locals admit the environmental concerns must be addressed as soon as possible, the visitors have made it impossible for the locals to return to the old way of life in the county.

Now almost all families are

to work in neighboring Guangdong province, have returned to cater to the needs of tourists.

"The inflow of the travelers has changed the locals' lifestyle which had not changed for hundreds of years," says Liang Shaoen, a local civil servant.

Few young people work the land anymore, since running a small business catering to tourists makes them more money than farming. people came from the Southeast Asia thousands of years ago, and the genes of Bama people are much purer than the modern average.

"The difficult transport conditions made Bama an isolated island for genes. Except during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) when the genes of some new settlers from North China mingled with the genes of the local people," Yang said.

A photographer looks for a good location to shoot photos beside the Panyang River in Bama one morning in October. HUANG DAYOU / FOR CHINA DAILY

SUBTERRANEAN MARVELS

By LI YANG

The longevity of Bama people, to some extent, distracts the attention of visitors from its pictures use karst landscape, especially the caves. The most popular one is Batmo Cave on the Cave of a Hundred Devils. Although rather than being the abode of malevolent spirits, it was home to serpents bats and boars before it was discovered.

The cave is a sinkhole, a saucershaped surface depression produced when underlying limestone dissolves, or when caves collapse. It is 80 meters high and 70 meters wide on average, and the tourist route within the sinkhole is more than 4 kilometers long. The subterranean netherworld

The subterranean netherworld hosts dozens of types of karst formations, including crystalline stalagmites and stalactites, with the tallest standing nearly 40 meters high. The sands of time have fused some into hourglass-shaped pillars, and some are mirror images of each other. It's said water dripping from the ceiling adds one-fifth of a millimeter to the stalagmites' tips each year. Their surfaces undulate with the accumulations of sedimentary minerals collected over hundreds of millennia.

What constitutes the cave's ani-

ma is the jade-green subterranean water, which is the Panyang River, Bama's mother river, which meanders through a valley forming a huge Chinese character of *ming*, or life.

In the lower reaches of the river is Bainiaoyan Cave, or the Cave of Hundreds of Birds. The Panyang River flows into the cave and becomes a subterranean river again. The cave is more than 1,000 meters deep, 40 to 50 meters wide and about 16 meters high. The ceiling of the cave is like a dome above the river spiked with stalactites of

various shapes. There are some openings in the ceiling in the middle of the cave, like skylights.

Another cave not far from Baimo Cave is called Crystal Palace. The entrance to the cave is in the middle of the slope of a karst peak. The cave was not found until it was accidentally found by local residents in 2004.

The cave is more than 1,000 meters deep, 8 to 50 meters wide and 10 to 80 meters high. It boasts the largest group of crystal and translucent stalagmites and stalactites groups in China.

engaged in businesses related to tourism, which has seen their incomes increase over the past decade.

Bama's popularity has attracted more than 60 billion yuan (\$9.53 billion) in investments since 2016. Hopefully, some of that investment will be used for environmental protection.

The county government should set a ceiling on the number of visitors each year based on carrying capacity of the local environment. This will benefit Bama in the long run.

Also, the commercial exploitation of the mineral water in Bama must be planned, if not controlled, carefully.

There are already 13 bottled water companies in Bama, with an output of 1.23 billion yuan last year, up 10.8 percent year-on-year. Once the groundwater lowers to

Once the groundwater lowers to a certain level, it is very difficult to recover and will trigger a chain reaction in the local ecosystem.

Contact the writer at liyang@chinadaily.com.cn

Sports | HOLIDAY 11

BASKETBALL

Harden puts muzzle on Wolves

Houston captain scores 34 to lead Rockets over Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS - Whenever the Minnesota Timberwolves threatened on Tuesday night, the Houston Rockets had an answer.

And it usually came from long range. The Rockets drained 10

3-pointers in the fourth quar-ter to pull away for a 126-108 victory, extending their winning streak to nine.

"I knew we were making our shots, but that fourth quarter, that's what we're capable of," said Rockets guard James Harden.

"I think it was a four-point game when we went on a 12-0 run. That's how fast it was."

Harden had 34 points, 12 assists and six rebounds. Ryan Anderson scored 21 points off the bench as the Rockets (43-13) snapped Minnesota's 13-game home winning streak and pulled within a half-game of the Golden State Warriors for the best record in the NBA.

Karl-Anthony Towns had 35 points and 12 rebounds in Minnesota's first home loss since Dec 16 against Phoenix. Jeff Teague added 25 points and eight assists, and Jamal Crawford came off the bench to score 11 points after starting 0 for 6 from the floor.

Minnesota led by as many as 13 in the first quarter before Houston went on a run to take a four-point halftime lead.

Trailing by 11, the Rockets used a 15-3 run to take their first lead at 35-34.

Houston used 3-pointers to keep Minnesota at bay throughout the game and then to pull away late. Anderson scored 12 in the fourth quarter, all from 3-point range. "Ryan shoots it deep, so we

have to understand that," Timberwolves coach Tom Thibodeau said.

"He's probably three feet

SOCCER

beyond the 3, so you have to close and have an awareness of that."

Anderson hit a pair of 3-pointers early in the period to push Houston's lead back to double digits and hit two more later in the quarter.

Harden also connected three times from deep in the fourth as the Rockets connected on 10 of 16 from downtown in the final period.

"Tonight they played a big lineup so we wanted to take advantage of our switches and our mismatches, and we did that," Anderson said.

After turning the ball over four times in the first quarter, the Rockets had just two turnovers the rest of the way.

That allowed Houston to get its offense in a rhythm in the second half, when it outscored Minnesota 72-58.

The Timberwolves trailed just 95-91, but Houston hit four straight 3-pointers to take a 107-91 lead in a span of just over two minutes

Minnesota was just 6 of 23 from deep. Harden and Anderson each hit as many shots from behind the arc as the Wolves did as a team. "It's very hard to defend

when they shoot 3s like that,' Towns said.

"If they're hitting 3s and we're coming back with 2s, they get a one-point advantage and an up-and-down possession. When they're rolling like that, it's very hard to stop them."

Minnesota's Andrew Wiggins missed his first 12 field goal attempts after shooting 55.6 percent in his previous four games.

He finished just 2 for 14. The Rockets' jerseys had the team's name written in Chinese characters on the front to celebrate Lunar New Year.

denied a hat-trick by the dog-

goalkeeper Tomas Vaclik.

had Stadium on March 7.

League rivals.

opening goal.

Pep

Guardiola's

ASSOCIATED PRESS



Houston Rockets' James Harden drives past Minnesota Timberwolves defender Jimmy Butler in the first half of Tuesday's game in Minneapolis. The Rockets won 126-108. JESSE JOHNSON / USA TODAY SPORTS

LeBron set for lights, camera ... action!

LeBron James is going old school to make a new movie.

The Cavaliers star and business partner Maverick Carter are producing a new version of *House Party*, the comedy featuring hip-hop duo Kid 'N Play that debuted in 1990.

James' SpringHill Entertainment production company described the project as a "fresh reimagining" of the original. The new film is being written by Stephen Glover and Jamal Olori from the FX series Atlanta.

"It's an honor when I got the opportunity to produce it, reboot the whole movie," James said Tuesday in Oklahoma City. "When I was growing up as a youngster I was like, 'Man, I hope I get an opportunity to throw one of these house parties, where it's just a lot of fun, a lot of joking around, dancin', people just having a good time."

James noted some of his Cavs teammates weren't born when the original film came out and said he might make a cameo in the new film. On court on Tuesday, James scored 37 points as the new-look Cavaliers got a much different result against the Oklahoma City Thunder in a 120-112 victory.

It was Cleveland's second straight win since



LeBron James of the Cleveland Cavaliers dribbles in front of Oklahoma City's Alex Abrines during Tuesday's game in OKC, where the Cavs beat the Thunder 120-112. MARK D. SMITH / USA TODAY SPORTS

adding George Hill, Rodney Hood, Jordan Clarkson and Larry Nance in trades, and their fourth straight victory overall.

'It's a change of scenery and they're just trying to take advantage of it," James said. "For the guys that were here, we're just trying to make them as comfortable as possible. Make the transition as seamless as possible.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gundogan fires City to brink of CL quarters

BASEL, Switzerland Manchester City midfielder Ilkay Gundogan believes there is still more to come from his club after a "perfect" 4-0 rout of Basel left it on the verge of the Champions League quarterfinals.

The runaway Premier eague leader destroyed League Basel's morale with a threegoal burst after just 23 minutes of Tuesday's first leg last-16 mismatch.

City's first three goals came in a devastating nine-minute spell thanks to a header from Gundogan, a Bernardo Silva vollev and a long-range Sergio Aguero strike.

It was Aguero's 14th goal in 11 games in 2018. perfect and the ball was perfect from Kevin," said Gundo-Gundogan added a fourth gan

after the break and was only

ged determination of Basel The tie looks all but settled ahead of the return leg at Eti-Gundogan said City can do better and he threw down the gauntlet to its Champions "The result was maybe per-Ilkav Gundogan fect, but there are still plenty

of things to improve," said the 27-year-old German, who sinstarved Basel of the ball, gled out City playmaker Kevin

de Bruyne for his part in the enjoying 69 percent possession. "I had the opponent on my "To win 4-0 away in the last back so it was not really easy 16 is an amazing result, we are to head it, but the timing was almost in the quarterfinals, but I am not saying we are already there, out of respect

for Basel," said Guardiola. "We defended well and we City

were clinical - we had four chances and took them all. "If we get to the quarterfinals, that is already better than last season and that is the first step for us." The Spaniard heaped praise on Gundogan and his

midfield teammates, including David Silva, who made a return off the bench after injury.

"Ilkay is a guy with special quality, he is an amazing midfield player who has a sense for goal," said Guardiola.

"He was out for six or seven months last season and we missed him. He is an outstanding player who doesn't feel the pressure.

"Along with De Bruyne and David Silva, he gives us a fantastic midfield trio."

The victory was City's 34th in all competitions this season - one more than it managed all of last year.

City captain Vincent Kompany made his first Champions League appearance this season after recovering from a calf injury.

He urged his team to give themselves a rousing victory margin in the second leg. "If we have this game at Etihad and it's a 3-2 or a 2-2 draw, that won't give us a good feel-

ing to go to the next round," said Kompany. "We have showed we were the better team today and only for a lack of motivation or effort can we not do the

same at home.'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Digest

SOCCER Winning starts for Tianjin, Shanghai

Chinese Super League teams kicked off the AFC

Champions League last-32 group phase with vital victories on Tuesday.

Tianjin Quanjian, making a first appearance in the tournament in which 32 teams are divided into eight groups of four, defeated Kitchee of Hong Kong 3-0.

Former French U-21 international Anthony Modeste, signed for \$40 million last summer, opened the scoring in the first half as Tianjin, which finished third in the 2017 CSL, took control.

An own goal and a Sun Ke strike gave Tianiin the win despite the best efforts of Kitchee striker Diego Forlan, the 38-year-old who once starred for Manchester United and Inter Milan.

SIPG, semifinalist in 2017 after spending more than \$100 million on Brazilian stars Hulk and Oscar, defeated Kawasaki Frontale 1-0.

BADMINTON Lee denies role in viral sex video

Malaysian badminton ace Lee Chong Wei has denied appearing in a sex video that has gone viral and has lodged a police report over

what he described as "malicious" allegations

The world No 2, who is married with two children, slammed the video as an attempt to "slander, malign and defame my good name and character".

There has been speculation on social media in recent days that Lee appeared in the video, which shows a naked man and woman together.

"I categorically deny these malicious allegations and I state that I am not involved in any manner whatsoever with the said video," he said in a statement on his Facebook page on Tuesday.

"I have lodged a police report and the matter is being investigated."

Pair probed for match-fixing

Two Malaysian badminton players are being investigated for suspected match-fixing by the sport's governing body and could be banned for life if

found guilty, an official said on Wednesday. The Badminton World Fed-

eration is probing the pair over alleged fixing that happened about two years ago, said Norza Zakaria, president of the Badminton Association of Malaysia.

Zakaria refused to disclose the identities of the players under investigation, but The Star newspaper reported one of them used to be a top junior player and the other had taken part in the Thomas Cup, a prestigious international team event.

ATP to probe 'racial prejudice' claims The Association of Tennis

TENNIS

Professionals on Tuesday said it has launched an internal investigation after a firstround match between two American players at the New York Open boiled over on the court.

The ATP officials are reviewing "allegations of racial prejudice" after Ryan Harrison and Donald Young exchanged words in the first set and had to be separated by the chair umpire during a changeover in play on Mon-

day. "The ATP takes any allegations of racial prejudice extremely seriously," the organization said in a statement.

"A further review of all video and audio recording from the match will take place as this matter is investigated further

ICE HOCKEY Senators swap **Phaneuf to Kings**

The Los Angeles Kings acquired veteran defenseman Dion Phaneuf from the Ottawa Senators on Tuesday night. Phaneuf and forward Nate

Thompson were dealt to Los Angeles in exchange for forwards Marian Gaborik and Nick Shore.

The teams announced the trade after the Senators' 6-3 loss to the Pittsburgh Penguins. The deal gives the Kings more depth on the blueline as they assume the final three-plus years of Phaneuf's contract, though the Senators are retaining 25 percent of his salary and salary-cap

hit. The 32-year-old Phaneuf who was drafted ninth overall by the Calgary Flames in 2003 and is a former captain of the Toronto Maple Leafs, has 16 points in 52 games this season and 478 in 954 games during his 13-year NHL career.

BASKETBALL Surgery sidelines **Knicks' Porzingis**

New York Knicks All-Star center Kristaps Porzingis under-

went surgery in Manhattan on Tuesday to repair a torn anterior cruci-



ACL surgery. The surgery took place exactly one week after Porzingis' knee buckled as he landed after a dunk against the Milwaukee Bucks on Feb 6.

Porzingis was averaging 22.7 points, 6.6 rebounds and an NBA-best 2.4 blocks per game in his third NBA season and was an All-Star selection.

AGENCIES

Scoreboard

OLYMPICS

Results of finals at the Pyeongchang Olympic Alexie Sof mais a the second Alexie Software Software Software Alexie Software Softw

3. Arielle Gold (USA)

Women's luge singles: 1. Natalie Geisenberger (2. Dajana Eitberger (GER) 3. Alex Gough (CAN) (GER)

3. Alex Gough (CAN) Men's cross-country sprint: 1. Johannes Hoesflot Klaebo (NOR) 2. Federico Pellegrino (ITA) 3. Alexander Bolshunov (OAR)

Women's cross-country sprint: 1. Stina Nilsson (SWE) 2. Maiken Caspersen Falla (NOR 3. Yulia Belorukova (OAR)

n's speed skating 1500m:

 Men's speed skatting issue.
Kjeld Nuis (NED)
Z. Patrick Roset (NED)
Kim Min-seok (KOR)
Mixed curling:
L canada (Kaityn Lawes, John Morris,
Switzerland Uenny Perret, Martin Ri
Olympic Athletes from Wussiq (Anas
Sovietheinitckii) . Olympic Athletes from Russigi, alova, Aleksandr Krushelnitckii) **Jomen's Short track stating 500m:** Arianna Fontana (ITA) Yara yan Kerkhol (NED) Kim Boutin (CAN) SKETBALL

	National Basketball Association results on Tues- day (home team in CAPS): TORONTO 115 Miami 112 MILWAUKEE 97 Atlanta 92 Cleveland 120 OKLAHOMA CITY 112 Houston 126 MINNESOTA 108 Sacramento 114 DALLAS 109 DENVER 117 San Antonio 109						
	EASTERN CONFERENCE Atlantic Division						
		W	L	Pct	GB		
	Toronto	40	16	.714	-		
	Boston Philadelphia	40 29	18 25	.690 .537	1 10		
	New York	29	25 35	.537	10		
	Brooklyn	19	39	.328	22		
	Southeast	15	00	1020			
	Division						
	Washington	32	24	.571	_		
	Miami	30	27	.526	21/2		
	Charlotte	23	33	.411	9		
	Orlando	18 18	38	.321	14		
	Atlanta Central Division		40	.310	15		
	Cleveland	34	22	.607			
N	Milwaukee	32	24	.571	2		
-	Indiana	32	25	.561	21/2		
N .	Detroit	27	29	.482	7		
	Chicago	20	36	.357	14		
	WESTERN CONFERENCE Southwest Divi- sion						
	Houston	43	13	.768	-		
	San Antonio	35	24	.593	91⁄2		
	New Orleans	30	26	.536	13		

Memphis	18	37	.327	241/2
Dallas	18	40	.310	26
Northwest				
Division				
Minnesota	35	25	.583	-
Oklahoma City	32	26	.552	2
Denver	31	26	.544	21/2
Portland	31	26	.544	21/2
Utah	29	28	.509	41⁄2
Pacific Division				
Golden State	44	13	.772	_
LA Clippers	29	26	.527	14
LA Lakers	23	32	.418	20
Sacramento	18	38	.321	251/2
Phoenix	18	40	.310	261/2

Wodnosdaw's gan

Atlanta at Detroit at Orla Miami at Philadelphia Indiana at Brooklyn Washington at New York LA Clippers at Boston LA Lakers at New Orleans Oklahoma City at Memphis Oklahoma City at Merupuis Sacramento at Houston Toronto at Chicago Phoenix at Utah Golden State at Portland **Thursday's games** Denver at Milwaukee LA Lakers at Minnesota **Friday's gam** Team World vs Team USA at Los Angeles ICE HOCKEY National Hockey League results on Tuesday (home team in CAPS):

CAROLINA 7 Los Angeles olumbus 4 NY ISLANDERS 1 Columbus 4 NY ISLANDERS 1 PITTSBURGH 6 Ottawa 3 BUFFALO 5 Tampa Bay 3 BOSTON 5 Calgary 2 New Jersey 5 PHILADELPHIA 4 (SO) DETROIT 2 Anaheim 1 St. Louis at NASHVILLE WINNIPEG 4 Washington 3 MINNESGTA 3 NY Rangers 2 VEGAS5 Chicago 2 Arizona at SAN IOSE Arizona at SAN JOSE

SOCCER

UEFA Champions League Result on Tuesday: Last 16, first legs At Basel, Switzerland Basel (SUI) 0 Manchester City (ENG) 4 (Gundogan 14, 53, Bernardo Silva 18, Aguero 23) At Turin, Italy Juventus (ITA) 2 (Higuain 2,9) Tottenham (ENG) 2 (Kane 35, Eriksen 72)

AFC Champions League Results on Tuesday: Group A Al Jazira (UAE) 3 Al Gharafa (QAT) 2 Al Alnii (KSA) 1 Tractorsazi (IRI) 0 Group B Lokomotiv Tachi tiv Tashkent (UZB) 5 Al Wahda (UAF) 0 Al Duhail (QAT) 3 Zob Ahan (IRI) 1 Group C Persepolis (IRI) 3 Nasaf Qarshi (UZB) 0 Al-Sadd (QAT) 2 Al-Wasl (UAE) 1 Group D Al Hilal (KSA) 0, Al Ain (UAE) 0 Al Rayyan (QAT) 2 Esteghlal (IRI) 2

Group F

Shanghai SIPG (CHN) 1 Kawasaki Frontale (JPN) 0 Melbourne Victory (AUS) 3 Ulsan Horangi (KOR) 3 Tianjin Quanjian (CHN) 3 Kitchee (HKG) 0 Jeonbuk Motors (KOR) 3, Kashiwa Reysol (JPN) 2

TENNIS

ATP Rotterdam

sults on Tuesday (x denotes seeding):

First rd Philipp Kohlschreiber (GER) bt Karen Khachanov (RUS) 3-6, 7-6 (77), 7-6 (77); Viktor Troicki (SRB) bt Jan-Lennard Struff (GER) 1-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2; Daniil Medveder (RUS) bt Gilles Muller (UX x9) 6-4, 7-6 (11/9); David Gotfin (BEL x4) bt Nicolas Mahut (FRA) 6-1, 6-3; Tallou Griekspoor (NED) bt Stan Wawrinka (SUI x5) 4-6, 6-3, 6-2; Filip Krajino-vic (SRB) bt Felix Auger-Aliassime (CAN) 6-2, 3-6, 7-5.

ATP New York

sults on Tuesday: 1st round

Radu Albot (MDA) bt Bjorn Fratangelo (USA) 6-4, 6-3; Evgeny Donskoy (RUS) bt Vtor Estrella (DOM) 7-5, 6-1; Adri Mendez (ESP) bt Steve John-son (USA/N.7) 1-6, 6-3, 7-6 (9/7); Jy Chardy (FRA) bt Stefano Travaglia (ITA) 4-6, 7-6 (7/1), 6-4; Pete Gojowczyk (GER) to Blaz Kavici (SLO) 6-4,6-2; Kei Nishikori UPN x5) bt Noah Rubin (USA) 7-5,6-3; Mikhail Youzhny (RUS) bt Matthew Ebden (AUS) 3-6,6-3,6-4; Ernesto Escobed (USA) bt Macken-zie McDonald (USA) 4-6,6-3,7-6 (7/5).

ATP Buenos Aires Results on Tuesday:

Aljaz Bedene (SLO) bt Jiri Vesely (CZE) 6-0, 6-3; Leonardo Mayer (ARG) bit Rogerio Dutta Silva (BRA) 6-7 (4), 6-2, 6-4; Gael Monfils (FRA) bt Pablo Cuevas (URU X7) 6-1, 6-4; Fernando Verdasco (ESP x8) bt Thiago Monteiro (BRA) 6-2, 7-5; Hora-cio Zeballos (ARG) bt Marco Cecchinato (ITA) 6-1, 6-4; Gastao Elias (ARG) Di Mai do Cecchinato (TA) Baena (ESP) 6-2, 6-4; Diego Schwartzman (ARG x5) bt Andreas Haider-Mauer (GER) 6-4, 6-3.

WTA Qatar Open

Results on Tuesday: 2nd rd Caroline Garcia (FRA x7) bt Dominika Cibulkova (SVK) 6-3, 6-7 (3/7), 6-0; Garbine Muguruza (ESP x4) bt Duan Yingying (CHN) 6-3, 6-4

Carina Witthoeft (GER) bt Tatjana Maria (GER) 6-3,6-0; Magdalena Rybarikova (SVK x14) bt Fat-ma Al Nabhani (OMA) 6-3,6-1; Johanna Konta (GBR x10) bt Bernarda Pera (USA) 7-6 (7/5),6-1; Carla Suarez Navarro (ESP) bt Kateryna Bonda-renko (UKR) 3-6, 6-3, 6-3; Samantha Stosur (AUS) Tenko (UNO 3-6, 6-3, 6-3; Samani taobari AUS bir lina-Camelia Begu (ROM) 6-4, 6-2; Marketa Vondrousova (CZE) bir Vulia Putintseva (KA2) 6-3, 6-1; Petra Xivitova (CZE Lot Ib) bir Cagla Buyu-kakcay (TUR) 6-0, 6-3; Julia Goerges (GER x9) bi-Lucie Safarova (CZE) 6-1, 7-5; Barbora Strycova (CZE) bir Aleksandra Krunic (SRB) 6-4, 6-4; Kristina Mladenovic (FRA x11) bt Peng Shuai (CHN) 6-2, 6-4; Elise Mertens (BEL x15) bt Timea Babos 6-2, 6-4; Elise Mertens (BEL x15) bt Timea Babos (HUN) 2-6, 6-1, 6-1; Sorana Cirstea (ROM) bt Maria Sakkari (GRE) 6-2, 6-3; Alize Cornet (FRA) bt Anett Kontaveit (EST) 6-2, 6-1; Madison Keys (USA x16) bt Wang Qiang (CHN) 6-1, 6-4; Anastasija Sevas-tova (LAT x13) bt Donna Vekic (CRO) 6-3, 6-4.



Pyeongchang Winter Olympics

Perfectly poised



China's Sui Wenjing is held by partner Han Cong as they compete in figure skating's pairs short program at Gangneung Ice Arena in Gangneung, South Korea on Wednesday. Sui and Han skated a flawless, season-best routine to hold a slim lead over Evgenia Tarasova and Vladimir Morozovt of OAR (Olympic Athletes from Russia). JOHN SIBLEY / REUTERS

White gold has added value

PYEONGCHANG - The pressure was real. So were the tears of joy, relief and redemption.

This is why Shaun White keeps going. This is why the snowboarding American superstar returns to the Olympics again and again, a journey that's seen him evolve from teenage phenom to global icon.

Standing atop the halfpipe on a gray Wednesday morn-ing at slushy Phoenix Snow Park with his hopes for a third gold down to one final shot. White never wavered.

"I honestly knew I had it," he said. "I knew I had to put it flashed, more than two points down.' clear of Hirano and almost six clear of Australian bronze

The stakes left him little choice. Rising star and heir apparent Ayumu Hirano of Japan had snatched the lead out of White's hand during the halfpipe final, throwing a spectacular epic second run to vault into the lead and put a portion of White's Olympic legacy at risk.

Not that it mattered.

One deep breath, a halfdozen near flawless tricks including back-to-back 1440s, a trick he never landed in competition before these finals - and one seemingly interminable wait later, White's return to the top of

his sport was complete. When his score of 97.75



Shaun White of the US celebrates winning the halfpipe finals at the Winter Olympics on Wednesday. ISSEI KATO / REUTERS

medalist Scotty James, it all

long road back from disap-

pointment in Sochi four vears

ago, along with memories of

his painful recovery from a

crash in New Zealand last fall

that required emergency sur-

"He wears the weight of the

country on his shoulders for

this," said JJ Thomas, White's

longtime coach. "This is our Super Bowl — but bigger

because it's only once every

White's stomped third run

made him the first American

male to win gold at three sep-

four years."

White's victory erased the

seemed worth it.

arate Winter Olympics. Speed skater Bonnie Blair earned gold in the 1988, 1992 and 1994 Games

All four US golds at these Winter Games have been won by snowboarders. "What can I sav? I won the

Olympics," White said. "Three gold medals. I was just hoping they'd give it to me. I was pretty sure I put it down but it took a little while. Just trying not to make eye

contact with the judges. James, White and Hirano have eved this showdown on the world stage for months and Hirano - who edged James in the X Games last month, an event White opted to skip after locking down a

spot on the US Olympic team

shrugged when asked if he was concerned about the 98.50 White put up on Tuesday to earn the right to go last in the finals. "I know what he does and

he knows what I do," Ayumu said.

Namely, put on a show. White put together a dazzling first run, throwing a single 1440 early that scored a 94.25 to storm into the lead.

Hirano responded immediately, uncorking back-to-back 1440s. When the crowd exploded as his 95.25 posted, he simply shrugged his shoulders.

Hirano missed an opportunity to go even higher when he washed out on his final run. James put together an unspectacular last set, setting the stage for White.

He called the opportunity to go last his "good luck spot." And with good reason. He went last during his gold medal runs in Turin in 2006 and in Vancouver in 2010.

Yet White had the top of the podium locked up during his last sprint down the pipe on both occasions.

"He's an amazing athlete, an amazing rider and he's achieved a lot of great feats in his career and today he did so again," James said. "Yeah, it's really cool."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sliding headlong into big challenge

Former sprinters power Nigeria's bold bid to make bobsled history

By SUN XIAOCHEN

in Pyeongchang, South Korea sunxiaochen@chinadaily.com.cn

The arrival of Africa's first Olympic bobsled team - pilot Seun Adigun and brakers Ngozi Onwumere and Akuoma Omeoga, representing Nigeria has become a hot topic at the Winter Olympics for their groundbreaking qualification in the speedy sliding sport.

"She (Onwumere) hates it and she loves (Omeoga) it, while I am in the middle," Adigun said of their common interest in "relaxing" by riding roller coasters.

Onwumere further elaborated that racing in a bobsled doesn't feel quite so scary because they crouch in the cabin and don't feel the speed and gravity as much as when riding a coaster.

Omeoga cut in, adding: "Unfortunately".

The repartee between the three Nigerian-American former track and field athletes makes every interview fun, while the obstacles they have overcome en route to becoming winter Olympians could inspire a generation.

"This makes a very bold statement about what it means to be African," said Adigun, a former sprinter who represented Nigeria in the 100m hurdles at the 2012 London Summer Olympics. "The expectation was that

Africans would not be represented at the Winter Olympics due to the climate - but here we are, showing that anything is possible." Having seen her athletics

career approaching the end in 2014, Adigun drew inspiration from other cross-sport bobsledders competing at the Sochi Winter Olympics and soon realized she had what it took to make the transition. With the fire of another

Olvmpic dream burning, Adigun recruited fellow NCAA sprinters Onwumere and Omeoga to prepare for Pyeongchang. The lack of a frozen track in

their training base of Houston, Texas, was a challenge - as was acquiring a wooden sled, nicknamed Mayflower - to

practice pushing on dry land in preparation for competing in the World Cup series.

To facilitate their Olympic dream, the trio launched an online GoFundMe campaign to raise more than \$75,000 in 14 months.

That inspired effort attracted the attention of Visa. which signed on as a major sponsor.

"A lot of the skills we have as track and field athletes are transferable, so we were able to remain explosive, strong and fast," said the 25-year-old Omeoga, a graduate of the University of Minnesota.

Oneumere, 26, agreed, adding: "That's something we are confident about. That's our familiar territory?

The three will make their Olympic debut in the opening heats on Feb 20.

According to OlympStats, Nigeria has won 25 Summer Olympic medals, making it the third-most successful Summer Olympic nation competing in a Winter Games for the first time, behind Cuba and Indonesia

A total of 55 Africans from 13 nations have competed in the Winter Games, but none in bobsled.

BOAO FORUM FOR ASIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

博鳌亚洲论坛2018年年会 018年4月8-11日 中国海南博藝



Boutin's bronze triggers abuse

Canadian short-track speed skater Kim Boutin's dream of winning an Olympic medal has quickly turned into a nightmare, with her social media accounts inundated with abuse and threats from angry fans of South Korea after she won bronze on Tuesday.

The 23-year-old grabbed third place in the women's 500m final on Tuesday, but her joy was short-lived.

By Wednesday the disqualification of local Choi Min-je-ong, who had finished second, triggered a wave of verbal attacks targeting the Canadian, seen as benefiting from what wrote another online user seen as benefining from what some Koreans think was an unfair fuling of interference. "Congratulations on the dirty medal," one angry fan wrote, "Did you're papa teach you to cheat for the medal?"



Canada's Kim Boutin

"If I find you, you will die," before Boutin was forced to block her accounts.

Short-track speed skating is the host nation's favorite winter sport, with Koreans having won more medals in the event than in all other winter sports combined. "None of us can control

social media and the public has the right to say what they want, but we would ask anyone to respect the athletes and support their work," IOC spokesman Mark Adams said on Wednesday.

"We occasionally have these issues and it is something we don't approve of. Let's stick to supporting the athletes and some great performances."

Canada's Olympic Committee issued a brief statement saying all team members' safety was a top priority.

"We are working closely with Speed Skating Canada, our security personnel and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)," it said.

"We will not make further comment on this issue, so that Kim can focus on her upcoming events."

This is not the first time South Koreans have vented their anger at a foreign speed skater, with Britain's Elise Christie receiving similar on-line treatment at the Sochi 2014 Games after she collided with a South Korean skater.

US Olympic champion Apolo Ohno also felt South Korean wrath in Salt Lake City in 2002 after protesting against what he said was blocking by a South Korean skater who was then disqualified.

American The quickly became the most reviled man in the country, earning the nickname "king of fouls."

REUTERS

for a World of Greater Prosperity 开放创新的亚洲 繁荣发展的世界

On behalf of the Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), we sincerely wish you a happy Chinese New Year The BFA is dedicated to promoting Asian countries to achieve common development through further integration of regional economy. The purpose of the BFA is to promote and deepen the economic exchange, coordination, and cooperation within Asia and between Asia and other parts of the world. The BFA annual conference 2018 is to be held from April 8-11, in Boao, Hainan Province of China under the theme of "An Open and Innovative Asia for a World of Greater Prosperity" We look forward to welcoming you.

Initiated by 29 countries and inaugurated on February 27, 2001, the BFA is the premier forum for Asia and emerging markets. Each spring, the forum's annual conference brings together approximately 100 presidents and prime ministers, ministers and heads of internationa organizations, 50 economists, 150 Fortune 500 companies, 1,600 business delegates and 1,000 editors & journalists from Asia and around the world. Top leaders of the host country, China, preside over the opening each year





For Further Information, Please Contact BFA Secretariat. 详情语咨询博意亚洲论坛秘书处 电话 Tel: 86-10-6505 7377 传真 Fax: 86-10-6505 1833 Email; register@boaoforum.org www.boa