

Chinese vessel takes foreign trainees on expedition



Chinese ocean scientific research vessel Haiyang-6 set out Monday on a 240-day expedition in the Pacific Ocean. [File Photo/China.org.cn]

Chinese ocean scientific research vessel Haiyang-6 set out Monday on a 240-day expedition in the Pacific Ocean, with five foreign trainees on board.

The five young scientists from Burkina Faso, the Cook Islands, Ghana, Mexico and Papua New Guinea will work together with Chinese scientists and be trained on the job, said He Gaowen, chief scientist of the expedition.

The vessel departed from China's southern province of Guangdong, heading for the Western Pacific to conduct deep-sea geological surveys for climate change, biological and environmental research.

The surveys will help China in international efforts to utilize seabed resources and test the latest deep-sea technology.

The vessel has on board a remote-control underwater vehicle "Haima," (sea horse) to sample cobalt-rich seabed crusts and other materials.

Beijing ranks 1st in energy efficiency

Beijing's energy efficiency ranks first across China and the city has made significant achievement in reducing air pollution.

The Chinese capital's energy consumption per 10,000 yuan of GDP stood at 0.338 ton of coal equivalent in 2015, a reduction of 19.5 percent from 2011 and an annual reduction of 5.3 percent in four years.

According to the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Statistics, the total energy consumption reached 68.526 million tons of coal equivalent in 2015, registering an annual increase of 1.7 percent from 2011. This is 3 percentage points lower than that of the "11th Five-Year Plan period" (2006-2010).

The sharp reduction of industrial energy consumption plays a main role in slashing energy consumption in the entire city. As Beijing keeps shedding its non-capital functions, high energy-consuming industries and manufacturing enterprises have been relocated or closed down. Meanwhile, as Beijing prevents a list of industries from being newly launched, industries that are involved in the list reduce their production, and hence the reduction of their energy consumption.

Additionally, as Beijing implements the "Clean Air Action Plan," major coal-fired power plants have changed their energy source from coal to gas. The city's industrial enterprises see their energy consumption decrease by 3.2 percent annually, taking 1.2 percentage points off the city's annual energy consumption.

[HK to 'grasp opportunities'](#)



Chinese President Xi Jinping (L, front), accompanied by Leung Chun-ying (R, front), chief executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, visits an exhibition profiling the achievements made in Hong Kong since its return to the motherland in 1997 in Beijing, capital of China, June 26, 2017.
[Photo/Xinhua]

President Xi Jinping called on compatriots in Hong Kong on Monday to join hands with the whole nation to “grasp the opportunities of the country’s development” and further implement the one country, two systems principle.

Xi commented while visiting an exhibition at the National Museum of China in Beijing on achievements since the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997.

Concerted efforts are expected in exploration and innovation, with the goal being to maintain the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and to ensure a better future there, he said.

Multimedia presentations at the museum featured memorable moments in Hong Kong, including its return, and its reinforced role as an international financial center and rising star in the building of the Belt and Road.

Speaking of the past 20 years, Xi said the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, with the strong support of the central government and the mainland, has witnessed comprehensive development in a variety of fields and has made achievements recognized by the world.

The great vitality of one country, two systems has been demonstrated, Xi added.

Experience during the two decades has proved that one country, two systems is not only the best solution to the Hong Kong issue, but also the best institutional arrangement for long-term prosperity and stability after the return of Hong Kong, Xi said.

The nation should further implement one country, two systems in an unswerving, all-out and accurate manner, and act in strict accordance with the country’s Constitution and the Basic Law of the HKSAR to better promote Hong Kong’s development, Xi said.

From Thursday to Sunday, Xi will be in Hong Kong to attend a ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return.

During his stay in Hong Kong, Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, will also witness the inauguration of the fifth administration of the HKSAR.

As he toured the exhibition on Monday, he shook hands with both Leung Chun-ying, vice-chairman of the 12th National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference and chief executive of HKSAR, and Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, the incoming chief executive.

Other Chinese leaders including Premier Li Keqiang also toured the exhibition on Monday.

Major new investment in Victorian roads and rail

The Turnbull Government has announced a new \$1.52 billion investment in Victorian infrastructure to ease congestion and provide better rail services right across the state.

People deserve better public transport no matter where they live. That is why the Coalition is unlocking funding for major upgrades to rail in regional Victoria, creating over 1,000 new jobs.

The Turnbull Government will provide majority funding for these works, investing \$1.42 billion to improve services on most regional lines in the state. Victoria has offered to provide \$150 million towards these works.

This investment will see new services added, travel times slashed and stations upgraded, and include:

- \$555.6 million – Ballarat Line
- \$435 million – Gippsland Line
- \$140 million – North East Line
- \$110 million – Surf Coast rail including Waurin Ponds duplication
- \$114 million – Warrnambool Line
- \$91 million – Bendigo and Echuca Line
- \$95 million – Avon River Bridge upgrade
- \$20.2 million – Murray Basin freight rail, taking the total Commonwealth commitment to the project to \$240 million
- \$10 million – Shepparton Line

The Commonwealth will also provide \$30 million towards a Melbourne Airport rail link, as announced in the recent Budget. We ask the Andrews Government to constructively partner with us on the completion of the business plan, providing access to information and officials so that we can get on with this long-overdue project.

The Premier made the disappointing decision to cancel the East West Link, wasting over \$1 billion. While Victorians have been left without a road, the Victorian Government is holding approximately \$70 million in interest earned from the Commonwealth's \$1.5 billion prepayment for the East West Link.

This \$70 million could be immediately deployed to upgrade suburban roads and congestion points. We look forward to working with the Andrews Government to agree priority projects for investment.

We remain committed to the East West Link, and will provide \$3 billion to any Victorian Government to deliver this vital project.

These commitments take the total amount of Commonwealth funding available for Victorian projects to \$4.5 billion, a significant investment to cut travel times, create jobs and make life better for more Victorians. Over 19 per cent of total current Commonwealth infrastructure funding is available to Victoria.

Further funding is available for metro and regional rail in Victoria under the \$10 billion transformational National Rail Program announced in the recent Federal Budget. Victoria will also significantly benefit from the once in a generation \$8.4 billion Inland Rail project between Brisbane and Melbourne.

We are building the roads and rail to ensure that Victoria has the top quality infrastructure it deserves, particularly to grow the regions and improve the liveability of Melbourne.

Today's announcement provides an additional \$509 million on top of our \$1 billion commitment to Victorian infrastructure announced in the Budget, and builds on the Commonwealth's existing investments in Victoria. This includes \$500 million for the Western Highway, \$200 million for the Tullamarine Freeway Widening, and the \$1.5 billion infrastructure package announced in November 2016 incorporating:

- \$500 million to upgrade the Monash Freeway;
- \$350 million to complete the M80 Ring Road upgrades;
- \$220 million for Murray Basin freight Rail;
- \$345 million for a Rural and Regional Roads Package; and
- \$85 million for an Urban Congestion Package.

The Turnbull Government is determined to deliver the road and rail projects to set the state up for future decades.

Victorians deserve quality roads and rail projects. My Government will deliver them.

[Tory-DUP deal: what it means for Scotland](#)

The Tories and the DUP have today signed a deal to allow Theresa May to cling to power.

Here's what you need to know about the backroom Tory-DUP deal.