

10 great reasons to vote Liberal Democrat today

China punishes 122 officials over substandard subway cables

China's State Council has vowed to strictly punish those responsible for problematic subway cables in Xi'an, capital of northwest China's Shaanxi Province.

Earlier this year, a story posted online claimed subway Line 3 in Xi'an used substandard cables and posed safety risks.

An investigation team has found that the company involved in the case has severely violated the law by producing and selling substandard products, while some individuals and institutions were found to have colluded in the purchase and use of those cables, according to an official statement.

Related local government departments have been found to be at fault for a lack of supervision and negligence of duty, and some officials have violated the discipline on integrity, the statement said.

Eight suspects from the cable manufacturer will be arrested, while 122 government officials responsible will be held accountable, according to the statement.

All authentication certificates of the cable manufacturer will be revoked. The company's business license and production permit will also be rescinded.

Projects involved should be checked thoroughly for risks while all substandard cables should be removed and replaced as soon as possible, the statement said.

In the meantime, the Shaanxi Provincial government should prepare a written statement reflecting on the issue to the State Council.

Officials should learn from the lesson and strengthen supervision on product quality, the statement said.

China to open space station to scientists worldwide

China will open its space station to scientists worldwide after the station is completed around 2022, according to a Chinese space expert.

Wei Chuanfeng, a researcher at the Institute of Manned Space System Engineering under the China Academy of Space Technology, said the China Manned Space Engineering Office has drafted a strategic framework with United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs to offer opportunities on the application of Chinese space station to members of United Nations.

Wei made the remarks on Thursday at the 2017 Global Space Exploration Conference, which was held in Beijing.

Under the framework, China will open its experimental resources on the Chinese space station to serve payloads from other countries. UN members, especially developing countries, could conduct scientific and technological experiment on Chinese space station, Wei said.

China's first astronaut Yang Liwei, who is also deputy director of China Manned Space Engineering Office, said the nation would launch the first core module of the space station in 2019, followed by two experiment modules. The space station will enable astronauts to stay in space for up to six months.

At the conference, the designers behind the Chinese space station proposed possible technical approaches that could help scientists from other countries utilize and perform experiments on the space station. China will also help astronauts and payloads specialists from developing countries to enter into space, Wei said.

The Chinese space station will be composed of three modules, including a core module and two experiment modules. The space station will have three docking sites, enabling the dock and berth of the "Shenzhou" manned spacecraft, the "Tianzhou" cargo spacecraft and other vehicles, according to Wei.

Elderly panda dies in SW China

The oldest female giant panda in a breeding base in southwest China's Sichuan Province has died at the age of 34, the base announced Thursday.

Su Su passed away on Friday from multiple organ failure after a drop in activity and appetite since late May, according to staff with the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding.

Her age at death was equivalent to about 100 human years. A group of five of her descendants living in a Japanese zoo is the largest panda family outside of China.

The panda had developed old-age ailments in recent years, including high blood pressure, declining liver function and heart failure. Doctors had been treating her to alleviate her symptoms.

She was found to be missing an eye when she was rescued from the wild in 1986. In the following year, she went into shock for a day due to an anaesthesia-related incident during a physical check-up.

The average lifespan of wild pandas is normally 20 years, but those in captivity usually live longer.

Statement by the Spokesperson on the reported detention of the h

We have learned with concern from media reports and from Amnesty International that the Head of Amnesty International in Turkey, lawyer and human rights defender Taner Kılıç, was detained on recently. We call on the Turkish authorities to clarify the charges swiftly, in line with the standards of the European Convention on Human Rights and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights. In particular, it is important to fully respect the presumption of innocence. Amnesty International is an internationally highly respected member of civil society which is a key pillar of democracy.

The European Union is monitoring the on-going procedure closely.