

China launches satellite navigation positioning system

China on Saturday launched a national satellite navigation and positioning system. It is the largest in the country and boasts the widest coverage.

Li Weisen, deputy director of the National Administration of Surveying, Mapping and Geoinformation, said that the system consists of 2,700 base stations, a national database center and 30 provincial level database centers.

The system, featuring faster speed, higher accuracy and wider coverage, will be compatible with other satellite navigation systems, such as the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System and Global Position System (GPS), Li said.

According to the administration, the system is able to provide positioning service to transportation, emergency medical rescue and city planning and management.

Greens warn Tory attack on democracy can only be stopped if other parties work together to stop power grab



Green Party

28 May 2017

***Deputy leader Amelia Womack: “Progressive parties have a responsibility to the public to work together to protect democracy”**

Green Party deputy leader, Amelia Womack, will today (May 28) use a high profile panel at Hay Festival to warn Labour and the Lib Dems that they urgently need to come together in an attempt to stop what she will describe as an “attack on democracy” by the Conservative Party.

Womack will point to pledges made in the Conservative manifesto to change the voting rules for mayoral and assembly elections in England and Wales in ways that will favour them [1]. The Conservatives want these elections to be conducted using first past the post, a system which usually favour larger parties.

Womack will appear on a panel with Guardian columnist Zoe Williams, author David Boyle and Andrew Simms of the New Weather Institute to discuss 'The Alternative – Is it time for a new progressive politics to arise in Britain?' [2].

Speaking ahead of the festival, Womack said:

"There's no denying our voting system is broken but the Tories are trying to overhaul it for the worse. Their push to spread the first past the post system to mayoral and assembly elections is an attempt to gain control at all levels and a direct attack on fairness within our democracy.

"Other progressive parties need to wake up to what's happening. In particular Greens, Labour and the Lib Dems have a responsibility to stand up for every member of the public's right to a vote that counts, to democracy. We should work together to stop this power grab and advocate for proportional representation, which is widely supported [3] and would result in fairer representation in the age of multi-party politics.

"The Labour leadership's refusal to even have a conversation about electoral alliances during the election campaign [4] is dangerously neglectful of the people they claim to represent. The Lib Dems were at least prepared to talk but, sadly, were not able to agree any reciprocal agreements in key constituencies. Despite the obvious challenges around forming electoral alliances during a snap general election campaign, we have seen significant and growing grassroots support for doing politics differently, with widespread recognition that our broken electoral system is denying too many people a voice. It will be deeply disappointing if the other progressive parties continue to be complicit in this after June 8.

"This is the most important election in a generation and the outcome will affect us for years to come – but it is not the end of the road and we must consider how to work together to build a positive future for the next five, 10, 50 years.

"When I've been on the doorstep talking to voters across the country the appetite for grown up politics is there, we just need the political will to make it work. I hope that progressive parties will be able to get round the table, look at the state of the political system and agree that it needs root and branch reform."

Ends

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Notes:

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/june2017/2017/05/are-conservatives-trying-change-rules-politics-so-they-never-lose-again>

<https://www.hayfestival.com/p-12259-zoe-williams-amelia-womack-david-boyle-andrew-simms.aspx>

<https://www.change.org/p/make-this-the-last-general-election-to-use-our-broken-voting-system>

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/05/09/lucas-labour-and-lib-dems-have-betrayed-the-people-they-represent/>

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Thousands more frontline police and security staff to make our communities safer

Labour today announces a plan to make Britain's communities safer, by putting thousands more frontline staff into critical public services, including police, fire, prison, intelligence and border agencies.

In the wake of large-scale Tory cuts to police and security resulting in 37,000 fewer staff, Labour will recruit:

- 10,000 more police officers
- 3,000 more firefighters
- 3,000 more prison officers
- 1,000 more security and intelligence agency staff
- 500 more border guards

Labour's plans to reverse staff cuts in these agencies will return staffing levels closer to those when Labour left office.

Jeremy Corbyn, Leader of the Labour Party, said:

"Ensuring the safety of our communities demands properly resourced action across many fronts. It means upholding and enforcing our individual rights, promoting community relations, supporting our

emergency

services, tackling and preventing crime and protecting us from danger, including threats of terror and violence.

“Only a Labour government will meet these challenges.

As we set out in our manifesto earlier this month, Labour will recruit additional police officers, additional firefighters, additional prison officers and additional border guards.

“We will also legislate to ensure safe staffing levels in the NHS, including for our ambulance services. Today, I am announcing that Labour will also increase staffing levels at the security and intelligence agencies – GCHQ, SIS and MI5 – in order to better ensure our collective safety.

“As well as full funding for our frontline and first response services, Labour will properly resource the partner agencies in other frontline public services, including schools and colleges, and local authorities. These agencies are charged with a duty to identify those individuals vulnerable to violent extremism but under the current government they have been held back and barely been able to provide their own core services. Only Labour is serious about properly resourcing our security and frontline services.”

Labour’s pledge to increase the resources of state security and emergency services is matched by a renewed commitment to uphold the individual rights and civil liberties of the people in communities served.

Diane Abbott, Shadow Home Secretary said:

“One of the great myths of British politics is that the Tories are the party of law and order. The reality is very different. Serious crime is up since the Tories came to office in 2010, and they have cut police numbers by over 20,000 in that time. Theresa May broke her pledge to protect the police budgets.

“Labour will protect our communities. We will focus on rebuilding community policing, and the ties between communities and the forces that serve them for good reason. It works. Unlike many other countries where the police have long been a quasi-military force standing outside the community, we have a history of policing by consent. We need to rebuild the trust between communities and the police which has been eroded by a combination of police cuts and rising crime.

“Part of rebuilding trust will a review of the Prevent

strategy and the Channel programme. Nobody disputes the need to engage communities in the fight against violent extremism but we must be mindful of the warning issued by David Anderson QC, the independent reviewer of terrorism

legislation, who said: "There is a strong feeling in Muslim communities that I

visit that Prevent is, if not a spying programme, then is at least a programme

that is targeted on them."

Richard Burgon, Shadow Justice Secretary, said

"Labour will uphold the rights which make our communities safer, including a pledge to maintain the Human Rights Act and to strengthen judicial oversight over the powers of intelligence services. We will

back up our legal protections with adequate resourcing across our security and justice systems.

"In stark contrast, the Tories have cut the staffing levels at the security and intelligence services, they have cut fire and rescue budgets by more than 30%, they have taken 20,000 police officers and 6,000 Police and Community Supports Officers out of service, they have dangerously reduced the number of staff in our increasingly overcrowded prisons and they have weakened our Border Force."

Editor's Notes:

SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

1. Staffing levels at GCHQ, SIS and MI5 were cut by 5% in 2010 and despite planned increases have not yet returned to the levels inherited from the last Labour government.

2. The Conservatives have cut more than 37,000 roles to public service agencies since 2010:

- 20,000 fewer police officers
- 10,000 fewer firefighters
- 6,000 fewer prison officers
- 31 fewer staff in the security and intelligence agencies
- 1,000 fewer border guards

POLICE AND CRIME

3. Since 2010, police officer numbers have been reduced by 20,000 and police community support officer numbers have been reduced by 6,000.

4. Police budgets have been cut by £2.3bn and the government has already broken its promise to protect police funding over this last Parliament. cutting budgets by £330 million in real terms in the last two years alone.

5. Latest figures show rises in some of the most serious criminal offences, including homicide, gun and knife crime.

FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES

6. Since 2010, firefighter numbers have been reduced by 10,000.

7. Since 2010, more than 40 fire stations have been closed and more than 130 fire engines lost, including 10 stations and 13 engines in London alone.

8. Fire and rescue service budgets were cut by 30% from 2010-2015, with a further 20% cut planned from 2015-2020.

9. The average response time to the most critical incidents has increased by more than 30 seconds since 2010.

AMBULANCE SERVICES

10. The 8 minute target for Red Call 1 ambulance response times have not been since May 2015: Red Call 1 is the category of calls representing the most critical life-threatening emergencies.

BORDER FORCE

11. Since 2010 more than 1,000 border guard jobs were lost

12. Since 2011 Border Force budgets were cut by 12%

13. Since 2011 there has been an 11% increase in the people entering the UK

14. Since 2011 there has been a cut of more than 25% to the amount on money spent for every person who crosses passport control into Britain, from £5.80 spent in 2011 to £4.43 spent in 2015

15. The cuts to Border Force have contributed to low staff morale at UK Border Force, with one

in three staff planning to leave within 12 months

PRISONS

16. Prison officer numbers have reduced by more than 6,000 since 2010

17. There were 5,423 assaults on prison staff in the year to March 2017 – a rise of 40% on the previous year

18. 68 per cent of all prisons are overcrowded, holding more inmates than their usable 'certified normal accommodation' (CNA), with some holding more than 50 per cent over the recommended levels

19. Self-inflicted prisoner deaths rose by 28% in the year to June 2016.

20. 65 prisoners were released in error in 2015-16 – the highest total for six years.

DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS

21. Devolved administrations would receive consequential financial settlements for those services which are devolved.

22. The Welsh Government would determine policies and priorities for devolved services as well as those services to be devolved following the election of a UK Labour Government.

23. This is as outlined in Welsh Labour's 2017 manifesto, "Standing Up For Wales" and the UK Labour manifesto.

[China commemorates 20th anniv. of HKSAR Basic Law](#)



Zhang Dejiang (R, front), chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), attends a high-ranking symposium commemorating the 20th anniversary of implementing the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, May 27, 2017. [Xinhua/Li Tao]

China held a high-ranking symposium on Saturday to commemorate the 20th anniversary of implementing the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR).

Addressing the symposium, which was held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, top legislator Zhang Dejiang called for comprehensive and precise implementation of the principle of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law.

Zhang, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), called the HKSAR Basic Law "a product of ingenuity of a great era," which fully embodies the shared desire of all Chinese including Hong Kong compatriots and has demonstrated great vitality.

SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

Enacted in accordance with China's Constitution, the Basic Law specifies the guidelines of "one country, two systems", and "Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" with a high degree of autonomy.

The Basic Law is a good law which accords the actual conditions of the nation and the HKSAR and is able to provide a fundamental guarantee for the great cause of "one country, two systems" and withstand the test of practice, Zhang said.

The practice of the Basic Law over the past 20 years shows that the fundamental purposes of safeguarding national sovereignty, security and development interests as well as maintaining Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability must be adhered to in order to advance the cause of "one country, two systems," Zhang noted.

BEST ARRANGEMENTS

HKSAR Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying said at the symposium that the principle of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law are the best constitutional arrangements for both the HKSAR and the country.

With the combined advantages of "one country, two systems", Hong Kong can participate in the country's major development strategies including the national 13th Five-Year Plan and the Belt and Road Initiative, while serving as a "super-connector" between the mainland and the rest of the world at the same time, Leung said.

The coordinated and joint development of the HKSAR and the mainland would not only improve their overall competitiveness, but provide the world new experiences of cooperation between regions of different systems, thus enriching "one country, two systems," he said.

Elsie Leung, deputy director of the Commission for the HKSAR Basic Law of the NPC Standing Committee, said the implementation of the Basic Law has helped realize the "one country, two systems" concept, stabilize the relationship between the central government and Hong Kong, and clarify the legal status of the HKSAR.

As the Basic Law was well received by Hong Kong citizens, a seamless and stable transition has been achieved with Hong Kong's capitalist system and life styles unchanged, its legal system improved, judicial independence ensured, democracy developing step by step, and external affairs in sound shape, she said.

TO CORRECT MISINTERPRETATIONS

Noting that some people have developed misunderstanding of the policy of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law, Zhang called for efforts in raising public awareness and correcting deliberate misinterpretation of the Basic Law.

"We should resolutely oppose statements and deeds that distort, challenge or even violate the Basic Law to uphold its unshakable authority," said Zhang.

Zhang also stressed that power exercised by the HKSAR is delegated by but not separated from the central government and under no circumstances should anyone be allowed to challenge the power of the central government in the name of a high degree of autonomy.

The political system of the HKSAR is neither one of separation of powers nor a legislative-led or judiciary-led system, but an executive-led system with the chief executive at its core, Zhang explained.

Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability can only be based on accurate understanding and strict and full implementation of the Basic Law, according to Song Zhe, deputy head of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council.

DEFENDING THE CONSTITUTION

National identity based on the Constitution is the core value for making and enforcing the Basic Law, said Han Dayuan, a law professor of Renmin University of China, urging efforts to promote the Constitution and make it a powerful guarantee for the prosperity, stability and sustainable development of Hong Kong.

Zhang also called for special attention on strengthening education of the young people in Hong Kong about the country's national conditions and the rule of law to instill in them a strong sense of national identity, of being Chinese and the rule of law.

[Statement on the clashes in Tripoli, Libya](#)

The fighting in Tripoli on recent days has broken a hard-wrought ceasefire that had been in place since March. The renewed violence puts at risk the promising start to a dialogue aimed at fostering reconciliation in Libya.

We expect the warring factions to restore the ceasefire. There is no military solution to Libya's political crisis.

The EU calls on Libya's political leaders from all sides to come together to resolve the conflict through negotiation and compromise, in a Libya-led process under the aegis of the UN.

The people of Libya desire peace and are hoping for the chance to rebuild their lives in a stable, secure and prosperous country. The EU, working together in the Libya Quartet with the African Union, the League of Arab States and the UN, continues to support this.

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