[Six officials sacked after gas disaster](#)

A trapped miner is lifted from the shaft at the Jilinqiao colliery in Huangfengqiao Township, Youxian County, central China's Hunan Province, May 8, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

Six officials, including a deputy county chief, were sacked Monday after 18 miners died in a poisonous gas leak in a coal mine in central China's Hunan Province.

Rescuers confirmed the death toll Monday, after saving another 37 miners.

The accident happened on Sunday morning at the Jilinqiao Colliery in Youxian County.

Cai Yongheng, rescue team director, said rescuers had to carry oxygen tanks during the search.

Investigators are testing the makeup of the poisonous gas. Police have detained those allegedly responsible for the accident.

A miner who declined to be named said that after the mine manager was informed of the gas leak, he asked workers to enter the mine to rescue their colleagues.

Some of the rescue team, including the manager himself, were among those miners killed.

Another employee said a discontinued mine near the Jilinqiao Colliery had been discharging chemical waste gas, which may have triggered the fatal gas leak.

Local authorities placed responsibility for the accident on six officials, including the deputy county chief Wang Zhuowen, who were removed from their posts.

[New drug price markups show positive results](#)

A patient is given her physical checkup results at a community medical service center in Beijing in April, after a comprehensive medical reform started in the capital. [Photo/China Daily]

A move to scrap drug price markups has shown early signs of success in optimizing medical resources□particularly the work of specialists□and in lowering the costs of medicine for most patients, according to the Beijing health authority.

As part of the general healthcare reform, measures introduced on April 8 aimed at ending the markup on drugs prescribed at public hospitals and modifying the prices for registration, consultation and treatments.

The average drug cost for each outpatient visit during the past month has

decreased by 9.6 percent compared with March, the Beijing Health and Family Planning Commission said.

For inpatient care, the average drug cost for each hospitalization has fallen by nearly 18 percent, while the entire cost dropped by 4.1 percent compared with March.

Fang Laiying, head of the commission, said the latest measures worked well to provide better and more rational treatment at more affordable prices.

Under a hierarchical medical system, he said, patients with minor diseases visit community clinics. Only the seriously ill go to large hospitals for specialist care.

But with no price difference, patients tend to swarm into already crowded large hospitals, even those suffering from a common cold, experts said. Meanwhile, community clinics are underused, resulting in a waste of medical resources.

After modifying the prices for registration, consultation and treatment in the latest reform, more residents, particularly those suffering chronic diseases, began to visit community clinics, Fang said.

Total outpatient visits in community clinics increased by 3.4 percent during the past month over March, according to official data, while visits at large top-level hospitals dropped by 15 percent.

All 3,600 medical institutions in the city, under the new reform, were required to purchase drugs directly from pharmaceutical manufacturers through an open public bidding platform to further reduce prices, he added.

That has helped the capital save 420 million yuan ($60.8 million) in the past month, according to the latest figures available.

Starting in the 1950s, a system to add an average 15 percent to drug prices was implemented at all public hospitals in China to help subsidize hospital operations.

But that led to hospitals prescribing too many medications, and more expensive ones, which contributed to soaring healthcare costs.

[Li highlights craftsmanship, innovation in vocational education](#)

Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong (C front) launches the 2017 National Vocational Students Skills Competition in north China's Tianjin Municipality, May 8, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang had called for craftsmanship and innovation in developing vocational education.

Vocational schools should cultivate craftsmanship and encourage students to start businesses, said Li in a written instruction delivered to a competition of vocational students which started on Monday.

Vocational education is crucial to the transformation and upgrading of the real economy, in terms of strengthening the country's advantages in human resources, the premier said.

Vice Premier Liu Yandong, at the opening ceremony in Tianjin, called for vocational education to play a greater role in poverty reduction and offering more opportunities for youth.

Liu suggested vocational schools cover socialist core values throughout their curriculum.

The National Vocational Students Skills Competition has been held annually since 2008.

[Shanghai's rail mileage now ranks first in the world](#)

Shanghai subway [File Photo]

The length of Shanghai metro system is now the longest in the world, surpassing the size of networks in other world cities, including New York and Paris.

Shanghai Party Secretary Han Zheng said on Monday that infrastructure transportation within the city is now an important part of the development between urban and rural areas of Shanghai.

Han added that Shanghai strengthened its position as global port city, with the transport of containers leading the world the past 7 years. Freight transport out of Shanghai's main airports ranks the third in the world. Air passenger volumes have reached 100 million, which tops China.

In the next five years, more efforts will be made in the transportation integration of Yangtze River Delta, with plans to make every city within the Yangtze River Delta region reachable within 90 minutes of one another.

Additionally, Shanghai will work on increasing its so-called 'last one kilometer' transportation, and make public transport the most convenient way of transportation for citizens. 'Last kilometer' transportation refers to modes of transport which don't involve buses or trains, but get you to your final destination, such as bike sharing.

Green Party reacts with anger to latest BBC breach of duty of impartiality

8 May 2017

*Co-leader Jonathan Bartley: "This is getting beyond a joke. The BBC's love affair with UKIP is getting embarrassing"

The Green Party has reacted with anger to an announcement today (May 8) that the BBC will feature the leader of UKIP in two dedicated election programmes but will not extend the same invitation to the Green Party.

Today's announcement came just days after the BBC breached its own guidelines [1] by giving disproportionate coverage to UKIP when reporting the results of local elections last Thursday. The Green Party has already lodged a formal complaint over the BBC's failure to give the Green Party coverage "proportionate to the larger parties" and "more than those parties with less evidence of past or current electoral support or fewer candidates".

Today the BBC announced [3] that Paul Nuttall will be interviewed by Andrew Neil in one of a series of prime time programmes each evening at 7pm throughout the week of 22 May. In addition Mr Nuttall will also be the subject of an 'Election Questions' programme on BBC1 on 4 June.

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"This is getting beyond a joke. The BBC's love affair with UKIP is getting embarrassing" and it is time it recognised that the Green Party is entitled to a fair hearing in its election programming."

"As the local election results, in which 150,000 people voted Green compared with less than 100,000 for UKIP [3], demonstrated, when people see what we stand for, they support the Green Party. It's time the BBC recognised the strength of the Green movement and the widespread support for our positive vision for Britain as a confident and caring country. It is time to stop giving so much air time to UKIP."

Notes:

1. http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/pdfs/2017localelectionguidelines.pdf

2. http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2017/general-election?ns_mchannel=social&ns_campaign=bbc_press_office&ns_source=twitter&ns_linkname=corporate

3. http://britainelects.com/results/may2017/

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