

How I am a good European

One of my main arguments for the UK to leave the EU was to allow the rest of the members to complete their union free from the UK seeking to hold them back. Anyone looking at the state of the Eurozone can see that the poorer parts of the zone need larger financial transfers from the richer parts. The way the system works at the moment is through the so called Target 2 balances. The latest figures show that Germany now has a huge deposit of Euro 796 billion with the European Central Bank. This is lent out interest free for as long as it is needed to the large deficit countries. Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal are the main beneficiaries. In a normal currency Union the equivalent region to Germany would simply send more grants to the parts of the Union needing more money. These balances may well become an important part of the German election debate over how much money Germany should share with the rest of the Union, and how that should be organised.

David Cameron felt he had to keep the UK out of the Fiscal treaty that wanted to start to address this issue. The UK always made clear as a member it did not wish to see a bigger EU budget and did not wish to send more of its cash to the poorer high unemployment regions of the south of the Eurozone. The rest of the EU with the possible exception of a few richer Northern countries did want a growing budget with more solidarity recognised in higher transfer payments. It was increasingly difficult to be in the EU but not be in the Euro, the central feature of the EU. The UK was also reluctant to work on a European defence identity or common armed forces, was out of the Schengen common borders and an opponent of the planned political Union with an EU Treasury and more common taxation. The UK public had always been told the EU was just a glorified free trade area which should be good for our exports. In practice it was a customs Union with many and growing features of a full economic, monetary and political union, which was better for their exports to us. It stopped us having free trade agreements with many other parts of the world.

One of the strange things about the UK debate since the decision to leave is the wish of some to argue both that the UK will lose out badly from leaving, and that we have to be punished to make sure we do lose out. The Commission and some in other member states who keep on saying they need to demonstrate we will lose from departure argue a contradiction. If, as they say, belonging is such good news, leaving is punishment enough. If, as they imply, belonging is such bad news, then of course they need to replicate as many of the undesirable features of belonging as they can on the departing state to stop it doing better! It makes it a highly negative approach. Pessimism rules, and a few suggest revenge is their favourite dish. They will of course discover revenge is a boomerang. They cannot hurt us because we are shaking off their controls but they can hurt themselves by imposing high tariffs on their agricultural exports to us and higher taxes to make up for our lost contributions. They should also remember that their own Treaty makes it clear they have a legal obligation to get on well with a neighbouring state and to trade with it.

I find the delay in the EU acknowledging that all UK citizens legally settled in the rest of the EU can stay there is shocking. Surely these officials and politicians understand that no decent country expels legally settled law abiding citizens from its jurisdiction? The UK has no wish to expel EU citizens legally here in the UK. What is holding back the rest of the EU saying the same? This should not be a negotiation. This is not something the UK wants and has to pay for. This is just basic decency, and international law.

[Museum, park to be constructed on ruins of ancient capital](#)



The the archaeological site of the capital of the Xia Dynasty (c. 21st century-16th century BC) in Erlitou in Henan Province in central China. [lyrb.com]

A museum and a park will be built on the ruins of the capital of the Xia Dynasty (c. 21st century-16th century BC), China's earliest dynasty, local

cultural heritage authorities said on Thursday.

“Construction of the project will start in the first half of the year near the village of Erlitou in the city of Luoyang where more than 40,000 square meters of the ruins have been excavated since 1959,” said Yu Jie, head of the city’s cultural heritage bureau.

Citing a plan passed by the provincial government, Yu said that the museum, with a planned building area of 30,000 square meters, will showcase about 40,000 items, such as excavated antiques, text and graphic documents related to the early dynasties, including the Xia and Shang (c. 16th century-11th century BC).

The most famous piece unearthed there is a 70-centimeter-long dragon formed from more than 2,000 pieces of turquoise. Chinese archaeologists dubbed the artifact the “Dragon of China”, saying it was the earliest evidence of Chinese infatuation with dragons.

A cultural ruins park covering 41 hectares will also be built. It will protect and display the sites of the ancient city walls, palace and roads, as well as handicraft workshops of bronze casting and turquoise, and the sacrifice venue of the ruins.

“The park will also simulate scenes from more than 3,000 years ago by landscaping and building workshops based on the discoveries,” Yu said.

[China open, active in technology cooperation](#)

China will continue to be open and active in its technological cooperation on the world stage, the Ministry of Science and Technology said on Thursday.

In June, Beijing will host the Eighth Clean Energy Ministerial, followed by the Fifth BRICS Science and Innovation Ministerial in July, said Ye Dongbai, the ministry’s director of international cooperation.

In addition, dialogue on innovation and technology will be held with Russia, Germany, France, Italy, Israel and other countries this year to facilitate practical cooperation, Ye said.

“International cooperation in science and technology can increase China’s global influence, promote breakthroughs in scientific and industrial bottlenecks, and create a friendly environment to facilitate economic reform,” he said.

Beijing has established cooperative ties in science and technology with 158

countries and regions, inking 111 intergovernmental agreements, he added.

It has also joined more than 200 intergovernmental organizations dedicated to boosting such cooperation, as well as sending 146 technology diplomats to 71 Chinese embassies and consulates abroad.

China has become a major global research and development player, accounting for 20.4 percent of the world's total R&D spending last year, according to the Industrial Research Institute, a US nonprofit think tank for industrial management and innovation.

Last year, the country broke into the world's top-25 innovative economies, becoming the first middle-income country to do so, according to a report by the United Nation's World Intellectual Property Organization, INSEAD Business School and Cornell University.

"China should actively propose new ideas, new initiatives and new plans on the world stage, so that we can play a leading role in facilitating cooperation in global production and equipment manufacturing," Ye said.

[Zoo denies viral video reveals abused tiger](#)



Videos showing a keeper sitting on a tiger and pulling his tail at a private zoo in Guizhou province has gone viral. [Photo: cctv.com]

A private zoo on Thursday dismissed allegations that a tiger shown in a video that went viral was abused.

Videos showing a keeper pulling a tiger's tail and sitting on him at an animal park in Xiuwen county, about 30 kilometers from the provincial capital of Guiyang, Guizhou province, have been reposted by media outlets and individuals on Sina Weibo and WeChat.

One of the videos starts with a keeper pulling a tiger's tail. The keeper then walks behind the animal several times around a small artificial hill. The keeper was also shown sitting on the tiger's back and pulling its ears.

A red line on the body of one tiger later aroused suspicion that the tiger was injured by the keeper. Some netizens also said they saw no teeth in the tiger's mouth.

"The video is clipped from a live-streaming video done three months ago. They were in a training session," said Wang Shulin, manager of the zoo. "It didn't receive much attention when the live streaming was being done. I don't know why it suddenly went viral."

The zoo, which was established in 2006, has 30 tigers.

Yao Shiming, the keeper seen in the video, has been with the 2-year-old tiger since it was a cub and "it's common that they play in that way", Wang said, adding that they "didn't interfere with the live streaming" done by employees.

"I spent at least one hour and, at most, four hours a day with the tiger for more than two years. It sometimes bites me for fun, but never injures me," Yao said. "It just considers me a tiger and we have a very good relationship.

"I asked my colleague to take the video and I only wanted to share that in my WeChat. Others are afraid of the animal, but I can play with it."

Ren Yuewu, director of Xiuwen's ecological civilization department, said an investigation by police found no evidence that the keeper had abused the animal.

"The red line on the tiger was not blood, but red paint, and there is no problem with the tiger's teeth," Ren said.

However, supervision of the zoo will be strengthened, while keepers' behavior will be regulated to avoid future misunderstandings, he added.

[Powerful new satellite to be launched in April](#)



A Long March-3B carrier rocket carrying “Zhongxing-2C” satellite blasts off from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Xichang, southwest China’s Sichuan Province, Nov. 4, 2015. [Xinhua/Zhao Yingquan]

China will launch its most advanced communications satellite in April as it builds a large capacity network that will enable passengers on jetliners and high-speed trains to use the internet.

Shijian 13, developed by the China Academy of Space Technology, will be lifted on a Long March-3B carrier rocket from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Sichuan province.

The satellite, which weighs 4.6 metric tons, will stay for 15 years in a geostationary orbit about 36,000 kilometers above Earth, the academy said.

The satellite features a Ka-band broadband communications system capable of transmitting 20 gigabytes of data per second, making it the most powerful communications satellite the nation has developed.

Shijian 13 will use electric propulsion after it enters orbit, which will extensively reduce the chemical fuel the satellite carries. Moreover, it will conduct space-to-ground laser communications experiments, the academy said.

In June, the Shijian 18 communications satellite, the first developed based on China’s new-generation DFH 5 satellite platform, will be lifted by a Long March 5 rocket at the Wenchang Space Launch Center in Hainan province, according to the academy.

It said the transmission capacity of the satellite to be launched in June is double that of current Chinese communications satellites, allowing more

television channels and clearer programs to be transmitted. The new satellite will also improve internet connectivity and accessibility as well as reduce users' costs.

Wang Min, deputy head of the academy's Institute of Telecommunication Satellite, said China plans to establish a constellation of advanced communications satellites based on DFH 4 and DFH 5 platforms by 2025 and, after the plan is fulfilled, people will be able to use high-quality Wi-Fi service anywhere and anytime, including on bullet trains and planes.

Li Feng, chief designer at the institute, said many domestic users have said they look forward to the service of new-generation communications satellites, while some foreign satellite operators have also expressed interest.

The academy has made seven communications satellites for overseas users, including Pakistan, Venezuela and Laos, and is implementing export contracts for more than 10 such satellites, said Zhou Zhicheng, head of the Institute of Telecommunication Satellite.

However, he said the country still needs to catch up with the top developers of communications satellites in the United States and Europe, such as Boeing and Thales Alenia Space, when it comes to satellite technology and capacity.