

Shenzhen opens first tram line

The south China city of Shenzhen opened its first tram line over the weekend to help ease traffic pressure.

Stretching 11.7 km, the tram line has 20 stops and passes through Shenzhen's most populated areas such as Longhua Trade Zone. Each tramcar can carry a maximum of 350 passengers, about two to three times that of a bus, according to a source of the Shenzhen Xiandai Tramcar Company, the service provider.

The zero-emission tramcar, with an average speed of 23-25 kilometers per hour, is equipped with ultracapacitors, which allow it to recharge within 30 seconds while passengers are boarding.

Passengers can pay for tickets with cash, transit pass, or WeChat and Alipay electronic payment. Shenzhen, a boomtown facing Hong Kong across a river, falls under jurisdiction of Guangdong Province. It has a population of more than 10 million.

China eyes rural tourism for poverty alleviation

China wants to develop tourism in rural areas to help lift more people out of poverty as the government has identified poverty eradication as the key task in the building of a moderately prosperous society by 2020.

China aims to lift 12 million people out of poverty through tourism from 2016 to 2020, according to the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA).

In southwest China's Guizhou Province, authorities have identified thousands of tourism resources and supported 14 impoverished counties to build tourist areas.

The projects have helped 70,000 villagers raise their incomes to above the provincial poverty line, according to the CNTA.

Across the country, local governments have mobilized efforts and pumped funding into improving infrastructure and services in rural areas to facilitate the development of tourism.

China has set 2020 as the target to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society, which requires the eradication of poverty.

As of the end of 2016, there were 43.35 million Chinese living below the national poverty line.

[Air quality in Beijing, Tianjin worsens this year](#)

China's Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei area saw air quality worsen in the first three quarters as the level of key pollutants PM2.5 and PM10 rose, official data showed Saturday.

The 13 cities monitored in the area reported "good" air quality on 52.6 percent of days during the January-September period, down 8.7 percentage points from the ratio in the same period last year, according to Liu Zhiquan, head of environmental monitoring at the Ministry of Environmental Protection

The density of PM2.5 in those cities went up 10.3 percent percent from a year ago, and the density of PM10 climbed 10.7 percent.

In September, Beijing had "good" air quality on 53.3 percent of the days, down 13.4 percentage points from the share in the same period last year.

Density of PM10 surged by a staggering 53.8 percent in the capital.

Nationwide, the 338 cities monitored by the MEP reported good or excellent air quality on 79.4 percent of the days in the first three quarters, slight down from the same period last year.

Air quality usually worsens in winter in northern China where cold weather conditions and the burning of coal for heating combine to exacerbate the situation.

To improve air quality in the season, the MEP has started rounds of on-site environmental inspections in cities around the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei area.

The government has also encouraged use of cleaner fuel for heating.

[Mainland to continue promoting cross-Strait relations](#)

The Chinese mainland will continue to promote peaceful development of cross-Strait relations and take solid steps to promote peaceful reunification, said the mainland's Taiwan affairs chief Saturday.

Zhang Zhijun, head of both the Taiwan Work Office of the Communist Party of

China Central Committee and the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, made the comments at a seminar themed review and prospects of 30 years of cross-Strait relations in Shanghai.

Zhang said that fruitful achievements have been made since the two sides ended years of estrangement in 1987, with the number of people travelling across the Strait reached over 120 million and more than one million people from Taiwan study and work in the mainland.

“The one-China principle is the political foundation of cross-Straits relations,” said Zhang, “Only by recognizing the historical fact of the 1992 Consensus and that the two sides both belong to one China can the cross-Strait relations break the deadlock and no political party or group in Taiwan will have any difficulty conducting exchanges with the mainland.”

Zhang said that new policies will be developed to ensure people from Taiwan will enjoy the same treatment as local people when they pursue their studies, start businesses, seek jobs, or live on the mainland.

The seminar was jointly organized by the institute of east Asian studies, Shanghai and Want Daily from Taiwan, drawing more than 100 scholars from the two sides.

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