

## **China: No environmental impact from DPRK nuclear test**

China has ended an emergency radiation monitoring after detecting no environmental impact from a nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The monitoring, conducted at the northeastern border areas after the DPRK nuclear test on Sept. 3, was ended at 6 p.m. Sunday, according to a statement from the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP).

No abnormal results were showed after eight days of monitoring, the MEP said.

"A comprehensive assessment has concluded that this DPRK nuclear test has caused no environmental impact on China, and conditions for a termination [of the emergency monitoring] have been met," it said.

All monitoring stations in the border areas and surrounding regions, including the provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning and Shandong, recorded normal radiation levels as of 6 p.m. Sunday, according to the MEP.

The ministry said it would switch to routine monitoring after the emergency response ended, conducting automatic radiation monitoring and regular sampling analysis at key border areas.

Real-time radiation levels recorded at automatic monitoring stations in and near the northeastern border areas will continue to be made public to address people's concerns, the MEP said.

The China Earthquake Administration reported that a magnitude 6.3 earthquake struck the DPRK at 11:30 a.m. on Sept. 3 with an epicenter depth of zero km, saying that it might have been caused by explosion.

The DPRK's Korea Central Television announced on the same day that the country had successfully detonated an H-bomb, a hydrogen bomb that can be carried by an intercontinental ballistic missile.

China's Foreign Ministry has expressed firm opposition to and strong condemnation of the test.

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## **Central Military Commission finishes**

# inspection

China's Central Military Commission (CMC) said it has completed an eight-month inspection work on military reform.

The commission issued a notice for the whole military to learn lessons from the 65 typical cases of discipline violations and corruption discovered during the inspection.

Inspectors visited almost 1,000 military entities above regimental level, including theater commands, branches of military services, and military educational institutions.

Inspectors surveyed over 50,000 officers and soldiers and handled over 1,400 petitions and tip-offs, according to the commission.

Major military structural reform began at the end of 2015.

The following month, the four general departments – staff, politics, logistics and armaments – were reorganized into 15 agencies. Five theater commands replaced the seven military area commands on Feb. 1, 2016.

A key feature of the reform is a smaller ground force.

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# Parts of south China to see heavy rain

Some regions in south China are forecast to experience heavy rain from Sunday evening to Monday evening, China's meteorological authorities said Sunday.

Some areas in Anhui, Guangxi, Hunan, Jiangxi, Yunnan and Zhejiang as well as parts of northeast China will see heavy rainfall overnight and tomorrow, said the National Meteorological Center (NMC).

Rainfall in some regions could exceed 60 centimeters. Some parts of Jiangxi and Zhejiang could see hail from Sunday to Monday evening, it said.

From Monday evening to Wednesday evening, parts of Guangxi, Guangdong and Fujian will see "severe convective weather," which refers to gales, hail, heavy rain and thunderstorms, the NMC said.

People in affected areas should take precautions against possible mountain torrents, mud-rock flows and urban water logging, the NMC warned.

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# Fortress house opens its doors to the world

Lin Rigeng brims with pride every time he tells visitors the story of his house.

“I never get tired of it. Actually, I enjoy it,” he said.

The four-story clay building that Lin, 66, shares with 77 others covers an area of 5,000 square meters, or nearly three quarters of a soccer field. It was built in 1912 by his grandfather’s brothers.

These buildings are known as tulou, which means “building made of earth” in Chinese. In July 2008, they were added to the UNESCO World Heritage list as examples of unique residential architecture in Fujian province.

Lin’s house in Hongkeng was among the 46 representative structures presented to the World Heritage Committee.

“My house belongs to the world. I want everyone to learn about it,” Lin said.

Tulou can take many forms, including rings, triangles, squares, rectangles, and pentagons. Lin’s home is one of the most common ring-shaped buildings.

It is believed that the first tulou were built in the 11th century by people escaping war in central China. This is one explanation for why they have an extremely thick outer wall. The wall around Lin’s home is 1.3 meters thick. The buildings functioned as fortresses to protect residents from invaders and wild animals.

There are more than 20,000 tulou in Yongding county, about a 2.5-hour drive from Xiamen, which recently hosted the Ninth BRICS Summit.

The oldest existing tulou in China was built 600 years ago. The largest has 384 rooms and can accommodate at least 800 people.

Lin’s house was dubbed Zhencheng Lou by his grandfather. It has 208 rooms arranged according to the bagua, an eight-point diagram that determines auspicious locations for various functions to balance the energy within the house.

Fifteen families live in the building; all are involved in tourism-related businesses, including working as tour guides, running home accommodations, selling farm produce (tea, mushrooms, dried vegetables and persimmons) and souvenirs.

“We are richer. Our life is better. So is our living environment,” said Lin, speaking of the changes tourists have brought to his family.

According to Yongding county records, a model of Zhencheng Lou has been

displayed since the 1980s at an international architectural model expo held periodically in Los Angeles.

Locals tell the story of fortress houses, especially the ring-shaped ones, being spotted by US satellites and mistaken for missile silos or nuclear devices during the Cold War.

“In my opinion, that tale originally helped attract international attention to tulou,” Lin said.

Lin, the son of a farmer, has a name that means “plowing every day”.

He was born in Zhencheng Lou, and is a hospitable host. Back in the 1980s, when few people knew about the buildings, he began voluntarily guiding visitors, treating them to homegrown tea, food and wine and telling them the history of the buildings.

“The moment they entered Zhencheng Lou, they were simultaneously shocked and excited. They could not imagine how people could build such a large house to accommodate a whole clan,” Lin said. “Only then did I realize my house was such a treasure.”

In 1991, Lin became the first tulou tour guide hired by Yongding County Tourism Administration.

He said he learned even more about his own home from early visitors, many of whom were architects or fans of historical buildings.

Despite having only a primary school education, Lin has written a book on tulou.

The recent BRICS summit is expected to bring more international visitors.

“I love to talk with international visitors from all walks of life,” Lin said. “I can learn about the outside world from inside my old house.”

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## **Diseased dead pigs from 2013 dug up**

The city government of Huzhou, Zhejiang province, confirmed on Sunday that investigators have dug out the remains of hundreds, and possibly thousands, of rotting carcasses of diseased pigs from three burial sites.

The public security bureau of Huzhou detained five people suspected of the illegal burial of the sick pigs in 2013, and will continue to investigate, according to a statement posted on the city’s micro blog account.

The city was told on Aug 30 by environmental inspectors from the central government that some dead pigs had been illegally buried in Santianmen

village. The inspectors had been evaluating Zhejiang province since Aug 11 and received reports about the pigs from members of the public.

The city's environment inspectors dug up the decomposed carcasses on Aug 30, and then continued digging in two other places identified by the suspects and by others who first tipped off the authorities, the statement said.

As of Friday, investigators had dug in three places and "finished the sorting process", which yielded "2.24 million metric tons" of material including decomposed pig carcasses and sludge, it said.

"All of them have been removed and burned to protect the biological safety of the environment," it added.

In addition, the city's environmental bureau tested the quality of soil and water both at the surface and underground, and health authorities took steps to decontaminate the site.

An initial investigation by the city's public security bureau found that Huzhou Industrial and Medical Waste Treatment Co had dumped and buried the pigs, which died of disease in 2013 and should have been burned to protect the environment.

Investigators said Shi Zheng, who was manager of the company at the time, ordered the workers to bury the pigs. Shi is currently serving a prison sentence for other crimes. Five other suspects in this case have been detained by the police.

China's eastern region is a major pig breeding area. Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces have issued rules to govern the disposal of dead ones.

The case that came to light on Sunday is not the first case involving diseased pigs. In March 2013, thousands of dead pigs were found floating in a section of Shanghai's Huangpu River. City authorities dragged 5,916 carcasses from the river and the municipality took emergency measure to protect water quality, according to a report by Caixin on Sunday.