

## China gets new social security cards

Distribution of third-generation social security cards began in China on Friday, with the new cards supporting direct settlement of trans-provincial medical expenses.

The new cards have more functions, are more secure and better support direct settlement of medical expenses, said Huang Huabo, deputy director of Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security social security center in Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei province.

The cards will replace the old cards as a national reimbursement network for inpatient services is built. The network will allow any patient enrolled in the public medical insurance system to be reimbursed for inpatient expenses, no matter where they are treated, said the ministry.

The first group of ten cards were handed out at Zhongnan Hospital, Wuhan University.

Before the network was set up, inpatients had to return to the locality where they were enrolled to be reimbursed. Currently, 1.34 billion Chinese people are enrolled in various public medical insurance systems, 98.8 percent of the population.

In 2016, the government spent 1.3 trillion yuan on medical and health care, a 10-percent increase from 2015.

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## Chinese Muslims celebrate annual Corban festival

At around 8:30 a.m. on Friday, hundreds of Muslims performed a prayer ritual at a mosque in Yinchuan, capital of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, to observe Eid al-Adha, known in China as Corban Festival, one of Islam's most important holidays.

They shook hands and wished each other well. After the prayers, some rushed to home to prepare the feast, while others visited markets around the mosque, buying deserts and fruit.

Corban Festival is a feast of sacrifice during which people slay livestock to share with their family or visit relatives and friends to send best wishes.

In Ningxia, Ma Tiangui, 65, an ethnic Hui, purchased a lamb a few days ago.

"My children and grandchildren return home for the festival, so I must

prepare various delicacies for them,” said Ma.

In the city of Kashgar, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Guzelnir Memet received lamb from the residential community and made stewed mutton.

In order to help poor families celebrate the festival, the local government has allocated more than 3 million yuan (around 460,000 U.S. dollars) to provide each of the city’s 18,025 households living below the poverty line with 3 kg of lamb.

The festival is also celebrated by Muslims in other northwestern provinces such as Gansu, Qinghai and Shaanxi. China has more than 20 million Muslims, mainly Uygur, Hui, Kazakh, Uzbek and Tajik ethnic minorities, living in various regions.

Muslims in Ningxia, Xinjiang and Gansu enjoy a five-day holiday for the festival.

During the holiday, vehicles with seven or less seats are exempt from highway tolls in Ningxia.

Ma Xiaolong, a resident of Zhangjiachuan Hui Autonomous County in Gansu, slaughtered a lamb and offered it to poor elderly neighbours.

“I plan to travel with my family to Beijing by high speed train this year,” said Ma. “They had never taken this new form of transport.”

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## [China increases environmental inspections](#)

A new round of central environmental inspections primarily aimed at improving air quality, began in cities around Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Friday.

The on-site inspections until March 29, 2018, will root out problems with emissions and pollution control equipment, according to a press briefing by the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) on Friday.

“Local officials will be held accountable if cities fail to meet environmental protection targets”, said Liu Changgen, a senior MEP official.

The MEP released a plan last week for 28 northern cities to lower a major air pollution this coming winter. Between October and March 2018, the level of PM 2.5 pollution must be reduced by at least 15 percent in cities around the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.

The ministry will increase air quality monitoring and deal with unauthorized operations or those which fail to meet emission standards, while controlling

coal consumption in the region.

A coordination body will be set up to oversee inspections in the region before the end of September.

Density of PM2.5 nationwide dropped 6.9 percent year on year in July, while Beijing reported an average PM2.5 density of 64 micrograms per cubic meter in the first seven months of 2017, down 34.7 percent from the same period in 2013.

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## [China makes progress in workplace safety](#)

The State Administration of Work Safety said Friday that inspectors found local authorities in 18 provinces and municipalities had made progress in workplace safety.

From Aug. 13 – 25, an inspection targeted businesses such as coal mines, fireworks factories and chemical companies, according to the administration.

Inspectors sent by the Work Safety Committee of the State Council found problems including formalism and lax supervision by local authorities. Local governments are required to submit formal feedback on the inspection results to the committee in September.

The teams went to Anhui, Chongqing, Gansu, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, Henan, Hunan, Jiangxi, Jilin, Liaoning, Ningxia, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Shandong, Shanghai, Sichuan and Yunnan.

Despite regular demands for more focus on work safety, frequent tragedies still occur. A lack of safety awareness, poor regulation and lax implementation of safety measures are among the factors leading to accidents.

In a recent “extremely severe” accident, at least 36 people were killed and 13 others injured on an expressway in northwest China’s Shaanxi Province this month. “Extremely severe” refers to accidents that cause more than 30 deaths, leave more than 100 severely injured or result in more than 100 million yuan (about 15 million U.S. dollars) of direct economic losses.

The number of workplace safety accidents fell 24.7 percent year on year in the January-July period, while related fatalities fell 16.8 percent.

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## Senior CPC official stresses improvement in political ability

Liu Yunshan, a senior Communist Party of China (CPC) official, said Friday the CPC cadres must improve their political ability.

Liu, president of the Party School of the CPC Central Committee and member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, made the remarks at the opening ceremony of the school's autumn semester.

"Political ability is the primary criterion to assess an official," Liu said.

In selecting officials, Party committees must first determine whether the candidate is sober and firm politically, namely, to gauge their political ability, he explained.

The importance attached by the CPC Central Committee to ideological and political construction is behind the achievements made since the 18th CPC National Congress, Liu said.

Only a large number of officials with strong political ability can advance the country's development, cope with multiple risks and challenges, consolidate the Party's ruling status and realize its historical missions, he noted.

Liu asked officials to learn from speeches of Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, and conform to the CPC Central Committee with Xi at the core in thought, politics and action.