

China cracks down on marriage fraud

Chinese authorities have vowed to take steps to more closely monitor the country's matchmaking industry, according to a guideline released on Monday.

This is going to include real-name registrations on dating websites, as well as a crackdown on marriage fraud, an increase of marital counseling services and the promotion of sexual health education.

The guidelines have been drafted by the Communist Youth League, as well as the National Health and Family Planning Commission and the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

Plans include an increase in matchmaking events, both online and offline.

Authorities say they do intend to defend young people's legitimate rights and interests in the context of marriage and reproduction.

This follows the suicide of a prominent app developer earlier this month. The man's family claims he took his own life after his wife of just one-month divorced him, then allegedly demanded a massive payout.

The couple met on a Chinese dating website.

Xi stresses prevention, control of major risks

President Xi Jinping on Tuesday stressed the importance of preventing and controlling major risks through the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Xi, also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, made the remarks while meeting representatives from the public security.

Xi said those working in the sector should improve their political awareness and maintain the authority and unified leadership of the CPC Central Committee.

They should be sober-minded about the difficulties and challenges facing them, and deal with major risks, he said.

Xi stressed that better social governance would better solve various social problems. He told the representatives to make social governance more systematic, rational, intelligent and in accordance with rule of law. Social governance should be improved through advanced theory, a scientific attitude,

professional methods and appropriate standards.

He demanded better coordination and ability to predict and prevent risks, and improve the precision and efficiency of social governance.

Xi noted that development and stability were the absolute principles, so both should be dealt with by strong hands.

“We should continue with social governance through socialism with Chinese characteristics, and become adept in converting the leadership of the Party and the advantages of our socialist system into advantages of social governance,” he stressed.

Xi asked for more efforts to improve social governance by socialism with Chinese characteristics to ensure that the people lead prosperous lives, society stays in order and the country enjoys long-term peace and stability.

Over the past five years, officials in the sector have come up with new ideas, mechanisms and methods, solving a number of major problems, improving the sense of security and satisfaction of the people, and contributing to a stable environment for reform and development, the president noted.

Premier Li Keqiang and Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli also attended the meeting. After the meeting, model individuals and units were recognized for their contributions to public security and social governance.

Surveys show that the public’s sense of security has improved in the past few years with their satisfaction index rising to 91.99 percent in 2016 from 87.55 percent in 2012.

Police nationwide held campaigns against terrorism, telecom fraud, underground banks, personal information infringement and crimes related to guns and drugs, among others.

China has also made use of Internet technology in its social governance.

The Ministry of Public Security has helped find 1,274 missing children with the help of a system called “Tuanyuan,” or reunion, a pop-up platform on which information on 1,317 missing children has been shared since its launch in 2016.

Xi stresses social governance

Chinese President Xi Jinping Tuesday stressed in Beijing that strengthening and innovating social governance would better solve various social problems.

He told representatives from the comprehensive management of public securities sector across the country to make social governance more

systematic, scientific, intelligent, and in accordance with rule of law.

China moves to improve use of anti-poverty funds

China on Tuesday released a new system to assess the way local governments manage poverty relief funds, which will give with more weighting to the effectiveness of the funds.

The effectiveness appraisal accounts for 62 points in a 100-point system, followed by supervision with 20 points, fund allocation with 10 points and capital input with eight points, according to a Ministry of Finance (MOF) document.

Compared with the previous system published ten years ago, the new one puts more emphasis on the results of poverty relief measures, with indices on the reduction of poor people and precise fund use, said Wu Qixiu, an MOF official.

Governments with 90 points or more will be ranked “excellent,” while those under 60 will fail the assessment. The results will be included in government performance evaluations and will influence future fund allocation.

The new system will take effect at the end of September.

Erhai Lake vs. garlic: A war between environment and wealth?

In August, the sky was as crystal clear as usual over Erhai Lake of Yunnan Province in southwest China. Yet, the scenic spot once teeming with tourists was far less crowded than before.



When an agricultural product that has made local people rich is found to cause damage to the environment, is there any way to have the best of both worlds?

The highland lake has long suffered from pollution, with several major green algae outbreaks.

The local government has realized the problem and is determined to fix it. According to the Ministry of Finance in Beijing, seven large projects with a total investment of around 13 billion yuan (US\$1.98 billion) have been launched to treat pollutants.

Despite the heavy investment, however, the local government failed to face the crux of the problem, which lies in the abuse of chemical pesticides and fertilizers in rural areas.

Among the seven projects, there was no effective solution to the dominant rural pollution. Local farmers are used to the traditional farming methods relying heavily on agrochemicals. Without any check on the use of fertilizers and pesticides, it made people wonder if the expensive projects can achieve any real effect.

However, anything involving farmers usually sees local officials shying away from taking harsh actions, because besides treating pollution, poverty reduction is also their major task.

According to statistics, Yunnan Province is home to the largest number of the

poorest counties in the country, and most of the 73 counties involved are located around Erhai Lake.

The farmers around the lake have been making money by growing garlic. To raise the yield, they tend to use as many fertilizers as they can, which inevitably causes great damage to the environment.

It seemed the local government was trapped between a rock and a hard place, having to make a difficult choice between the lake and the garlic, which represent the two extremes of environment and wealth.

Yet, is there really no third option?

Japan has offered a positive example in this regard. The city of Toyooka is a major rice production center. Local farmers used to raise rice yield at the expense of the environment, causing the extinction of local white storks.

They then spent 30 years to repair the ecological system. When the environment turned better, they found to their surprise that their income didn't drop, because although the rice yield was lower, the rice quality improved and could be sold at a higher price.

To help farmers around Erhai Lake to learn from this example and choose the third option, Beijing Goldenway Bio-tech rented 51 mu (1 mu= 0.067 hectares) of farm land to carry out experiments.

They adopted two programs to make a comparison with local farmers' current production method. In Program A, the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides was reduced by 30 percent, and organic fertilizers and physical protection approaches were adopted. In Program B, the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides was totally abandoned.

The experiment found that both Program A and B could achieve the target yield amount. Moreover, the amount of garlicin, a nutritious material in the garlic, was raised by 33 percent and 13 percent respectively in Program B and Program A.

In Program B, the discharge of nitrogen and phosphorus was reduced by 78 percent and 74 percent annually, while in Program A, the discharge of the two materials was reduced by 55 percent and 53 percent annually.

The experiment has given hope to Chinese authorities and farmers who want to make money while doing no harm to the ecological system. Maybe there can be a third option besides wealth and environment alone, and green can turn to gold, too.