

China finds widespread violations of environment rules

The latest round of air pollution inspections in China have uncovered many violations of environmental rules among companies.

Some 23 inspection teams examined 319 businesses on Sunday and discovered that 251 companies, or 79 percent of the total, violated environmental standards in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and other nearby areas.

Excessive emissions, insufficient pollution-control equipment or failure to install pollution-control equipment were among the most common problems for the inspected businesses, the Ministry of Environmental Protection said Monday in a statement.

The ministry has asked local authorities to shut down businesses or halt production at companies that failed to meet the standards.

The ministry issued punishments in nearly 5,000 cases related to violations of environmental protection regulations and laws in Q1, up around 200 percent year on year.

Chinese father to drive daughter to school in US



Huang Haitao and his daughter Xinyi at Southeast University in Nanjing, East China's Jiangsu province, May 25, 2017. It's their first stop on an epic road trip to the US. [Photo/Chinanews.com]

It's not uncommon for parents of freshmen college students to drive their children to their new school as a way to say their last goodbyes as their children set off on their adult lives.

But one father in China is taking that 'goodbye' to a whole new level. Huang Haitao has managed to convince his daughter, Huang Xinyi, to allow him to drive her to her new school, in Seattle, Washington!

He says he decided to make his "crazy" decision after Xinyi was accepted at Seattle University.

While most young people might balk at the idea of spending so much time together with one of their parents in a vehicle, the experience will not be a new one for Huang Xinyi and her father.

The two have travelled over 120,000 kilometers together already in vehicles to promote the Youth Olympic Games, which took place in Nanjing in 2014.

Nanjing, capital of east China's Jiangsu province, is also going to be the starting point for their latest journey.

Huang Haitao and his daughter say they plan to travel across 52 countries as part of a 9-month journey to finally get her into class in Seattle. They both say their main goal is to help promote Chinese culture among the countries they visit along the way.

Railway rush to get there and back

A total of 44.6 million rail trips are expected to be made during this year's Dragon Boat Festival holiday, which started on Saturday, according to China Railway Corp, the national rail operator. This would represent a 10.5 percent growth on the figure last year, the company said.

On Saturday, the first day of the holiday rush, 10.35 million journeys were made, an increase of 6.4 percent over last year.

On Sunday, 12.1 million trips were made, and China Railway Corp expects this to be the peak during this year's four-day break. It predicted more than 9 million rail trips would be made on Monday.

Stations in Beijing, Shanghai, Xi'an and Qingdao were among the most crowded this year, based on ticket sales, according to the company.

Nearly half of the trips have been on tracks managed by the railway bureaus in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Liu Sufang is a native of Hebei province and lives in Beijing. Liu, along with her 5-year-old son, took the bullet train from Beijing to Shijiazhuang, to visit her parents in Hebei on Saturday.

"I usually do not buy train tickets ahead of my trip when I visit my parents on a regular weekend, as there are always some tickets available. But during the holiday, I bought tickets a month earlier to secure seats in advance," she said, adding that tickets are hard to get during the holidays, even to Hebei province, which neighbors Beijing.

A man from Beijing, who was heading to Tianjin with his wife for a day trip on Sunday, said they planned to leave early in the morning and buy tickets at the train station.

"But all the tickets before noon were already gone," Zhang said. "We had to go to a shopping center near the station to kill time and then catch a train to Tianjin around noon."

The bullet train takes about half an hour from Beijing to Tianjin and there are trains less than 10 minutes apart. "I did not expect such a high demand for tickets," he said.

Local railway authorities added 447 additional trains on Sunday to cope with the high demand nationwide. For example, Shenyang railway bureau added special tourist trains between Dandong city and Changbai Mountain.

Boost set for privacy on internet

Starting on Thursday, sale of users' personal information to be banned

A fundamental new cybersecurity law, which will take effect on Thursday and is intended to safeguard sovereignty in cyberspace, national security and the rights of citizens, bans online service providers from inappropriately collecting and selling users' personal information.

China has more than 730 million internet users—more than the population of the European Union—and nearly 700 million mobile phone users, according to government statistics.

President Xi Jinping called in April for better use of the internet to benefit the people and the country. Industry insiders interpreted this as indicating an integrated development of the internet and the economy.

According to a State Council five-year informatization plan, China will expand e-commerce transactions to more than 38 trillion yuan (\$5.5 trillion) by 2020, up by 16 trillion yuan over 2015.

However, internet-related scams and data theft began to abound as internet use made economic headway in China.

The new law, which was passed by the country's top legislature in November, makes it clear that no one can use the internet to conduct fraud or sell prohibited goods.

Those who violate the provisions and infringe on personal information will face hefty fines, it stipulates.

To protect individuals' privacy, internet service providers are forbidden by the new law from collecting user information that is irrelevant to the services provided, and they should handle the information they do collect in line with laws and agreements.

Moreover, users will have the right to ask service providers to delete their personal information if such information is abused, according to the law.

Additionally, the new law says, cybersecurity management staff members must also protect information that is obtained and are banned from leaking or selling the information, including privacy and commercial secrets, it said.

Shen Yi, deputy director of the Cyberspace Governance Study Center at Fudan University, said that the people's sense of benefit should be the evaluation criteria for cybersecurity and informatization, rather than simply technical indexes.

Last year, China conducted several internet-clearing campaigns that included

checks on websites, search engines and mobile apps, previous reports said. Some live-broadcast websites were shut down after they were found to be hosting or streaming illegal content, such as pornography.

In March, China issued its first international strategy for cyberspace cooperation to improve such cooperation worldwide.

Several other regulations will also take effect on Thursday. A regulation on online news requires government permission before releasing news on instant messaging apps or social websites. Additionally, civilian drones weighing more than 250 grams must be registered under real names to improve civil aviation safety, and the use of highly toxic pesticides on edible agricultural products is banned.

[Festival puts pressure on Chinese railways](#)

The Dragon Boat Festival holiday from Sunday to Tuesday is putting pressure on China's railway system, as more and more people choose to travel by train.

Some 12.1 million passenger trips were made Sunday, up 8.8 percent year on year, China Railway, a state-owned company, said Monday.

The company will add 253 trains Monday, when about 9.1 million passenger trips are expected.

It forecast that total railway passenger trips would reach 44.6 million between Saturday and Tuesday, up 10.5 percent year on year.

The Dragon Boat Festival, also called the Duanwu Festival, is traditionally celebrated on the fifth day of the fifth month on Chinese lunar calendar. It falls on Tuesday this year.

The festival commemorates ancient Chinese poet Qu Yuan. Chinese people eat zongzi, a type of rice dumpling, and race dragon boats during the festival.