

Russians seek TCM care across border

The director of a Harbin hospital said she has been glad to see traditional Chinese medicine becoming more popular. But in this case, the new patients are not Chinese, but Russians who cross into the border province of Heilongjiang for treatment.

“Our center received its first patient from Russia in 2001, and since then the number of Russian patients has been increasing,” said Wang Yan, director of the rehabilitation center of Second Hospital Affiliated with the Heilongjiang University of Chinese Medicine.

“During the peak seasons between April and October they come in groups of 50 or 60, and they sometimes have to make an appointment to be able to see a doctor.”

Many patients are children or teenagers with difficult and chronic conditions such as brain-related illnesses or injuries, she said. Doctors provide comprehensive TCM treatment, such as herbal drugs and acupuncture.

“We found many Russian patients have more confidence in TCM than Chinese patients,” she said. “We have employed some Russians as translators to facilitate communication.”

Iuliia Matreninskaia, 38, from Russia, took her son to the hospital for treatment this month for the fifth time.

She said she first took her 10-year-old son, Daria, who has cerebral palsy, to Wang’s hospital in 2012, and her son’s brain function has since improved and he is able to move better.

Matreninskaia considers the medical facilities better and costs lower in Heilongjiang than at private hospitals in Russia.

Wang Hailin, president of Mishan Cardiovascular Diseases Hospital in Mishan, Heilongjiang, said many Russian patients seen by the hospital have conditions such as arthritis and varicose veins whose symptoms can be worsened by cold weather.

“TCM has proved to be effective in these diseases,” he said. “We plan to work with hospitals in Russia and tourism agencies this year to attract more Russian patients.”

Shao Zongbo, a manager at Mishan Qianshou Tourism Agency, said more than 200 Russians have used to agency to arrange for healthcare visits to the province every week this year. Most of them come from Russia’s eastern areas, such as Vladivostok and Ussuriysk, he said.

“In the beginning, most of them came here for treatment of diseases, but now many of them also come for other health-related services such as massage,” he said.

TCM institutions across China provided 910 million services in 2015, accounting for 15.7 percent of all medical services in China, compared with 14.3 percent in 2009, according to a report released by the State Council Information Office in December.

[China succeeds in mining combustible ice in S. China Sea](#)



Photo taken on May 16, 2017 shows the flames spouting from the trial mining site in the Shenhu area of the South China Sea. [Photo/Xinhua]

China has succeeded in collecting samples of combustible ice in the South China Sea, a major breakthrough that may lead to a global energy revolution, Minister of Land and Resources Jiang Daming said Thursday.

This is China's first success in mining flammable ice at sea, after nearly two decades of research and exploration, the minister said at a trial mining site in the Shenhu area of the South China Sea Thursday.

Combustible ice usually exists in seabed or tundra areas, which have the strong pressure and low temperature necessary for its stability. It can be ignited like solid ethanol, which is why it is called "combustible ice."

One cubic meter of "combustible ice", a kind of natural gas hydrate, is equal to 164 cubic meters of regular natural gas.

China found flammable ice in the South China Sea in 2007.

International scientific circles have predicted that the natural gas hydrate is the best replacement for oil and natural gas.

According to Zhong Ziran, head of the China Geological Survey Bureau, combustible ice is more environmentally friendly and large reserves exist.

Mining of combustible ice started in the 1960s, but China began research in 1998.

Trial mining of combustible ice in the Shenhu sea, about 320 kilometers southeast of Zhuhai City in Guangdong, started on March 28. Experts first tapped the natural gas hydrate at a depth of 1,266 meters underwater last Wednesday.

An average of 16,000 cubic meters of gas with high purity was extracted each day.

Experts believe that the success shows China has mastered combustible ice mining technology.

Natural gas hydrate is an efficient, abundant and clean energy and is also strategically important for future global energy development, the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council said in a congratulatory letter.

The success marks a historic breakthrough after nearly two decades of continuous efforts and independent innovations by China in theory, technology, engineering and equipment for natural gas hydrate exploration and exploitation, according to the letter.

It is a great technological breakthrough in accessing the deep sea, deep-sea exploration and exploitation, said the letter.

It is another landmark achievement by Chinese people to bravely scale new heights of science and technology, and will have a profound impact on driving the revolution in energy production and consumption.

However, this is merely a critical step in a very long journey, with a daunting task ahead, said the letter, encouraging the staff to promote the industrialization of natural gas hydrate exploration and exploitation.

"Many countries along the Maritime Silk Road have a demand for combustible ice mining," said Qiu Haijun, director of the trial mining commanding headquarters.

"With the advanced technology we could help resolve the energy resource problem and boost economic development and exchanges between countries," Qiu said.

Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region to suffer from ozone pollution



Beijing, Tianjin, and parts of Hebei Province will suffer from moderate to heavy levels of air pollution on May 18 and 19, with O₃ as the primary pollutant. [File Photo/Xinhua]

Heavy air pollution, including high ground level ozone (O₃) levels, is likely to hit Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei and some of its neighboring areas in the coming days, the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) said Thursday.

Beijing, Tianjin, and parts of Hebei Province will suffer from moderate to heavy levels of air pollution on May 18 and 19, with O₃ as the primary pollutant, the MEP said in an online statement.

Days of high temperatures have contributed to the formation of O₃, a pollutant that can be harmful when reaching a certain density.

According to the National Meteorological Center, the country's northern region is likely to see temperatures above 35 degrees Celsius on May 19.

China has been imposing controls on air pollution in Beijing and nearby regions this year to combat heavy smog, caused mainly by fine particulate matter PM_{2.5}.

The density of O₃ tends to rise as PM_{2.5} falls, according to the Chinese Academy of Sciences, as less particulate matter creates a favorable

environment for the formation of O₃.

China has simultaneously rolled out measures to control the levels of PM_{2.5} and O₃, while further research will be targeted on O₃ formation mechanisms to better contain the pollutant.

A weak cold front is expected from May 20 to 23, improving air quality in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, although some areas will still face moderate levels of pollution made up primarily of O₃ and PM₁₀, MEP said.

4 killed in Taiwan nursing home fire

At least four were killed and 50 were hospitalized after a nursing home caught fire in Taiwan early Friday, local media reported.

About 150 people were at the nursing center when the fire broke out, some 50 have been sent to the hospital, with 24 suffering from smoke inhalation, according to local police.

Preliminary investigation showed the fire broke out on the second floor of the Nanmen Nursing Home at about 5 a.m. in Hengchun Township, southern Taiwan's Pingtung County. Firefighters had put off the fire soon after arrival.

The Nanmen nursing home was established in 2004, offering health care services to the senior and patients that require home care.

Further investigation continues.

Mainland warns any attempts to establish 'two Chinas'

Any attempts to establish "two Chinas," "one China, one Taiwan," or "Taiwan independence" is doomed to fail, a spokesperson from the Chinese mainland said Thursday.

An Fengshan, spokesperson for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, made the remarks in response to the name change of a Taiwan organization responsible for handling ties with Japan.

A ceremony was held in Taiwan Wednesday announcing the change of name from

the Association of East Asian Relations to Taiwan-Japan Relations Association.

An said the Foreign Ministry has already made its stance clear on this issue.

“I want to stress that any attempts to create disturbances in the international arena or establish ‘two Chinas,’ ‘one China, one Taiwan,’ or ‘Taiwan independence’ will be in vain and doomed to fail,” An said.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying on Wednesday denounced the name change of the Taiwan organization, urging Japan to abide by the one-China policy and not to disturb China-Japan ties.