

China collects over 400 bln yuan in taxes from major FTZs

China collected 409 billion yuan (59.3 billion U.S. dollars) in taxes in four major free trade zones (FTZs) last year, data from the State Administration of Taxation (SAT) showed.

The tax revenue growth was driven by fast development, reasonable industrial structure and strong innovation in the Shanghai, Tianjin, Fujian and Guangdong FTZs.

Nearly 90 percent of the tax revenue came from the modern services sector, while high-end manufacturing witnessed strong growth in tax revenue, SAT data showed.

SAT data showed tax receipts from car manufacturing had annual growth of 44 percent last year, 34 percentage points higher than the national average.

Internet, software and information technology services posted stellar growth in tax revenues. The Guangdong FTZ, supported by tech-hub Shenzhen, saw tax revenues from the two sectors increase 470 percent and 390 percent respectively year on year.

FTZs are part of government efforts to test reform policies, including interest rate liberalization and fewer investment restrictions to better integrate the economy with international practice.

China launched its first FTZ in Shanghai in 2013. In late 2014, Tianjin, Fujian and Guangdong were allowed to set up a second group of FTZs. Another seven were approved in August 2016 in a bid to replicate the success of previous trials.

'Hong Kong independence' leads nowhere

The notion of "Hong Kong independence" will lead nowhere, a government work report to be delivered by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Sunday said.

The report, available just before the opening of the annual session of China's top legislature, the National People's Congress (NPC), also pledged to fully implement the "one country, two systems" principle in the special administrative region.

It said the central government will continue to implement, both to the letter and in spirit, the principle of "one country, two systems," under which the

people of Hong Kong govern Hong Kong, the people of Macao govern Macao, and both regions enjoy a high degree of autonomy.

“We will continue to act in strict compliance with China’s Constitution and the basic laws of the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions, and we will ensure that the principle of ‘one country, two systems’ is steadfastly applied in Hong Kong and Macao without being bent or distorted,” the report said.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to China.

The report pledged full support for chief executives and governments of the two regions in exercising law-based governance, growing their economies, improving people’s well-being, advancing democracy, and promoting social harmony.

It added that efforts will be made to push forward cooperation between the mainland and Hong Kong and Macao.

In particular, the report said the central government will draw up a plan for the development of a city cluster in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, give full play to the distinctive strengths of Hong Kong and Macao, and elevate their positions and roles in China’s economic development and opening up.

“We have always had full confidence about ensuring lasting prosperity and stability in Hong Kong and Macao,” it said.

[Endangered bird-trafficking ring busted in C China](#)

Police in central China’s Hunan Province have busted a ring involved in hunting, killing and trafficking endangered birds, the provincial forestry public security department announced on Saturday.

Ten people from the ring have been caught, and the other six remain at large, forestry police in Xiangyin county in Yueyang city said.

At the end of last year, local police discovered some people had been hunting, killing and selling endangered wild birds, especially cygnets, in the county’s Hengling Lake area , a natural wetland at the south end of Dongting Lake.

An investigation showed that the ring has hunted red-crowned cranes, cygnets, and wild ducks, police said.

According to Wu Xiaogang with the provincial forestry public security

department, the ring hunted more than 10 cygnets and sold them for 500 yuan (72.5 U.S. dollars) to 600 yuan each, or 1,000 yuan to 1,200 yuan for live ones.

Police are tracking down the six suspects at large, and the case is under investigation.

Robot offers legal assistance in central China

An artificial intelligence robot made its debut in central China's Hubei Province Saturday, capable of providing legal assistance.

The robot, FaGouGou, is backed with 30 million cases and massive legal knowledge data, covering the criminal, labor, marriage and traffic fields, said Liu Qian, a co-developer.

It provides consulting service for lawyers as well as customer data mining service. A new version will be developed specifically to offer legal service to the public, according to the developers.

The robot is excellent in AI storage, computing power and judicial assistance, said Xiong Minghui, professor at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangdong Province.

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