

[Xi urges continued efforts to build strong military](#)

President Xi Jinping has called for building a strong military by further enhancing the military's political awareness, pushing forward reform, and governing it according to law.

Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, underscored the importance of improving combat readiness through troop training.

The president made the comments while visiting the 65th Army Group stationed in northern China's Hebei Province on Monday.

[Chinese leaders extend festival wishes to predecessors](#)

President Xi Jinping and other Chinese leaders have visited their predecessors with seasons greetings ahead of the Spring Festival.

Former leaders including Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao got personal visits either from the current leaders or from their representatives, according to a statement from the General Office of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on Wednesday.

The visitors wished their hosts a happy Spring Festival, good health and long lives, the statement said.

The leaders of the older generation fully endorsed the outstanding achievements the country has made since the 18th CPC National Congress under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with comrade Xi Jinping as the core, and expressed hope that Chinese people would unite to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on Jan. 28 this year.

[Shanghai railway police seize over 50 ivory products](#)

Shanghai railway police arrested two men illegally carrying more than 50 ivory products, bought in Zimbabwe, as they were about to board a train.

A thin man, who appeared to have a disproportionately large stomach, raised the suspicions of security staff at Shanghai Railway station Tuesday night.

Inspectors found a long cloth bag, wrapped around his midriff, contained 10 ivory products and a further three strings of ivory products in his backpack.

Meanwhile, police captured the man's companion, who attempted to flee, finding more than 30 ivory products in his suitcase.

The pair, from Taihe County, eastern China's Anhui Province, flew to Shanghai from Zimbabwe where they worked for the last year, and planned to return to their hometown by train.

The thin man, surnamed Li, said he had made the cloth bag to hide the ivory products on his body, hoping to avoid police checks.

Zoologists with the local wildlife conservation association said that the products were made from African elephant ivory.

[Premier Li stresses poverty relief](#)

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has urged faster progress in poverty relief, saying that innovative mechanisms are needed and more funds should be collected to fight poverty.

He made the remarks during an inspection tour of southwest China's Yunnan Province from Monday to Wednesday.

[Travel agency boycotts Japan hotel over history denials](#)

China International Travel Service Limited announced on Wednesday that it

will end all business relations with a Japanese hotel chain which refused to remove books from its guest rooms denying the Nanjing Massacre took place.

The official statement released by CITS, a State-owned enterprise, said that APA Hotels' actions had outraged all Chinese.

"After the news came out, we immediately removed APA Hotels from our website so that no tourists could book that hotel through us," said the statement.

"We have also asked our head office and all subsidiaries to check whether they have business relations with the group. Any such business has to be stopped immediately. We will not suggest the hotel group to our clients and we will not run any of its advertisements either."

At a news conference on Tuesday, Zhang Lizhong, spokesman for the China National Tourism Administration, said APA Hotels' actions were a blatant provocation to Chinese tourists and had violated professional ethics.

Zhang said the administration has asked the whole industry to stop doing business with APA Hotels, adding that they hope all Chinese tourists boycott the chain.

On Dec 13, 1937, during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1937-45), the Japanese invaders captured Nanjing. Over the following six weeks, they conducted a massacre where an estimated 300,000 people, including children, were tortured, raped and murdered.