

All kindergartens in nation to be inspected



RYB Education Kindergarten, a well-known chain of preschools, has been the focus of a huge public outcry since Thursday. [Photo/Weibo]

China's top education authorities ordered on Friday an immediate inspection of all kindergartens across the country amid a number of reported child abuse cases.

The recent cases reflect management problems in some kindergartens, and education authorities at all levels must attach greater importance to preschool education, establish a regular supervision mechanism for the operation of kindergartens and improve the accountability system to punish those involved in child abuse, the Education Steering Committee of the State Council, China's Cabinet, said in a statement.

At least three incidents have been reported this month in which children were assaulted or were suspected of being abused.

In the most recent case, RYB Education Kindergarten, a well-known chain of preschools, has been the focus of a huge public outcry since Thursday.

On Wednesday night, some parents whose children attended the Xintiandi branch of RYB Education Kindergarten in Beijing's Chaoyang district called the police, alleging that their children were pricked with needles and fed unidentified white pills at the kindergarten. Some claimed that their children were molested or forced to strip as punishment, according to Xinhua News Agency.

Beijing police and the education commission said they were investigating the case but had reached no conclusion.

RYB Education Inc, the parent company of the Xintiandi branch kindergarten, said in a statement on Friday that the accused teachers had been suspended

and the company was cooperating with police.

Its shares slumped by 42 percent at the opening of trading on the New York Stock Exchange on Friday, almost wiping out all of the 44 percent rise in the stock since its IPO in September.

In response to rumors on social media that the Xintiandi branch's headmaster is a family member of an active-duty soldier at a regiment of the People's Liberation Army, and that the soldier was involved in the abuse case, the Ministry of National Defense said on Friday that a preliminary internal investigation found no involvement of any PLA staff in the case.

"The headmaster of the kindergarten is a family member of a veteran," said Feng Junfeng, political commissar of the regiment. "So far, we've found that no one from the regiment has ever participated in the operation of the kindergarten or been involved in sexually assaulting children."

Feng said the regiment will assist the investigations, and if the accusation about the PLA is proved to be false, those who made the accusations should be held legally liable.

China successfully launches remote sensing satellites

China launched remote sensing satellites at 2:10 am, Beijing Time, Saturday on a Long March-2C rocket from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China's Sichuan Province.

The satellites has entered the preset orbit and Saturday's launching mission was proclaimed a success.

The satellites will conduct electromagnetic probes and other experiments.

The launch is the 256th mission of the Long March rocket family.

Naadam fair injects new life into pastoral areas

Stepping up to the starting line and aiming his bow, local Mongolian herdsman Nasunbator is preparing for an archery contest slated for January 13, 2018,

one of the events during a winter Naadam fair in West Ujimqin Banner of Xilingol League, in northern China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.



Men ride camels in traditional Mongolian costumes at the Naadam festival held in Xi Ujimqin Banner, a banner under the administration of Xilin Gol League, Inner Mongolia autonomous region, Jan 9, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

“The one-month fair, organized by the local government will enrich our life in the cold and seemingly boring pastoral area,” Nasunbator said.

The fair, lasting from January 1 to February 8 next year, will feature ethnic Mongolian traditional sporting events including 5-kilometer and 10-kilometer horse racing, indoor archery competitions with shooting distances of 15 meters and 30 meters, as well as a Mongolian wrestling or “Bokh” contest for 256 wrestlers.

Skiing, skating, snowfield soccer, table tennis and square dancing competitions will be held as well during the fair, according to the local sports bureau.

“Most residents used to stay indoors and seldom did sports in the bitterly cold winter,” said Buranmandura, a civil servant who works for the Banner, adding that the various sports items during the fair will help them lead a healthier life.

The Naadam fair is a traditional display of strength, horsemanship and marksmanship among Mongolians. Nowadays, more sports items have been added to the ancient carnival so as to attract a larger number of participants.

Despite low temperatures that average below -18 degrees celsius in January, many local residents and visitors from other provinces or regions have applied to attend the events, said local sports officials.

[China releases panda pair into wild](#)

A pair of giant panda, male and female, were released into the wild on Thursday as part of a program to rebuild the wild panda population.



A pair of giant pandas are released into the wild at Liziping Nature Reserve in Ya'an, southwest China's Sichuan Province, November 23, 2017. [Photo/China.org.cn]

Ba Xi, the male, was born in July 2015, and Ying Xue is just 14 days older. In light snow on Thursday morning, they were released into Liziping Nature Reserve in southwest China's Sichuan Province.

"They are in good condition today. When they saw humans, they ran very fast to the forest rather than seeking for food from them," said Wu Daifu of the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda.

The pair disappeared in the forest equipped with radio monitoring equipment to track them and collect data on how they adapt to a natural environment and integrate with the wild panda population.

According to the center's Li Desheng the center chooses four pregnant pandas each year to lead their cubs in wilderness training.

"Ba Xi and Ying Xue have learned how to find food and water independently and avoid danger in their two-year training," Li said.

They are the second pair to be released into the wild.

In October last year, two female pandas Hua Yan and Zhang Meng, also both bred in captivity, were released into the reserve. They are currently believed to be in good condition.

The fourth national census on giant pandas in 2015 showed 33 populations in China, 22 with less than 30 pandas.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature reclassified the giant panda species as “vulnerable” rather than “endangered” last year, thanks to decades of protection.

China has 518 giant pandas in captivity. However, the captive stock lacks genetic diversity. China plans to create a giant panda national park and releasing more pandas into the wild.

Carbon-trading system key to shifting energy focus

China’s soon-to-be launched national emissions trading system will help the country achieve its carbon emission goals earlier than 2030, but it may take some time for the system to become “fully functional”.

The nationwide trading system, which is expected to be rolled out by the end of this year, will serve as a key driver to help China achieve its carbon reduction pledges in the Paris Agreement earlier than expected, according to the 2017 China Carbon Pricing Survey published on Wednesday.

“As the world looks to China for leadership on climate change, the strong and consistent efforts to introduce carbon pricing nationwide provide hope that carbon emissions can peak and be brought down quickly,” said Dimitri de Boer, leading author of the report.

The results of the report bolster confidence in China’s efforts to meet carbon reduction emission goals earlier than 2030, as the nation shifts to renewable energy and curbs the use of coal in the power industry.

One key driver comes from market players of the soon-to-be launched carbon trading system, the report said, because enterprises, in particular highly polluting ones, will have to make greener investment decisions to lower carbon emission costs after the nationwide system becomes operational.

Survey respondents expect carbon emissions trading will affect investment decisions on a gradual basis in the coming years.

Around 38 percent of 260 respondents expect investment decisions to be strongly or moderately affected in 2017, and by 2025 this figure rises to 75

percent.

“China has decided to use carbon pricing as an important means of reducing carbon emissions, and the national trading system will provide enterprises with a clear signal that carbon emissions must be reduced,” said Ma Aimin, deputy director-general of the National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation.

The ever increasing impact comes together with the improving infrastructure construction of the national trading system.

Although current preparation is far from enough for the trading market to be “fully functional”, when all of the key building blocks, including legislation, trading platforms, market oversight, are in place.

Nearly half of the 260 respondents expect China’s national ETS to be fully functional, with all key building blocks in place, by 2020, and half of the respondents expect a fully functional carbon market between 2021 and 2025.

A large majority of respondents prefer a strong legal basis for the trading system in its initial phase, with at least State Council regulation in place, the report said.

China has started to prepare for legislation of carbon trade, but there is no specific timeline for its introduction.