

Geneticist withdraws paper after doubts

A Chinese geneticist is to retract a paper on a new gene editing technology that was published last year after other scientists said they had been unable to reproduce his results.

Han Chunyu and his co-authors applied for retraction of the paper from the May 2, 2016 edition of Nature Biotechnology and said they would like to analyze why the results were not reproduced, according to a brief statement on the website of Hebei University of Science and Technology.

Han's team agreed to have a third-party laboratory carry out an experiment to verify the findings on NgAgo-gDNA, said the statement.

NgAgo-gDNA is a new genome editing technology that could be an alternative to the mainstream CRISPR/Cas9 technique.

With China currently in eager pursuit of heavyweight scientific achievements, Han became an overnight sensation.

He was widely praised for pursuing groundbreaking research at a university with very little standing in the field of genetic sciences.

But doubts immediately emerged, with other researchers saying that the results could not be replicated. They included Dr Gaetan Burgio of the Australian National University.

"A third-party laboratory will perform the experiment with the support of fellow scientists and disclose the results in response to public concerns," said the statement.

China invites overseas journalists to cover CPC congress

A Chinese official has invited overseas media to cover the upcoming 19th Communist Party of China (CPC) National Congress.

Jiang Jianguo, head of the State Council Information Office, made the announcement Thursday during an informal meeting with representatives of overseas media outlets in Beijing.

The national congresses, normally held every five years, are major events for the CPC and China with increasing international influence, said Jiang.

The 70th anniversary of the CPC as the ruling party is in 2019 and the CPC's centenary is just four years away.

Jiang spoke about CPC Central Committee General Secretary Xi Jinping's speech at a workshop for provincial and ministerial officials last Wednesday. The workshop was held to lay the ideological, theoretical and political foundations for the 19th CPC National Congress, said Jiang.

"Xi has earned the utmost trust and respect from Party members and the Chinese people," said Jiang.

This year's congress is expected to seek solutions to a series of issues concerning the short-term and long-term development of the country, according to Jiang.

Attendees of the meeting include representatives of AFP, AP, Asahi Shimbun, Bloomberg, Kyodo, Reuters, TASS and the Wall Street Journal.

[58 telecom fraud suspects brought back to China from Indonesia](#)

A total of 58 suspects in a cross-border telecom scam were brought back to Chengdu in southwest China from Indonesia by air Thursday.



Suspects in a cross-border scam are brought back to Chengdu, Sichuan Province, from Indonesia by air on August 3, 2017. [Photo: Chinanews.com]

Victims in Meishan city, Sichuan Province were swindled out of over 6 million yuan (900,000 U.S. dollars) by a series of phone and wire frauds on May 24.

On June 23, police arrested seven suspects making fake phone cards and credit cards in Chengdu and southeast China's Xiamen, and seized over 1.3 million yuan.

Interrogation led police to a gang of accomplices in Indonesia. Two teams of police officers went to Indonesia in June and July.

With the support of the local police, 68 suspects of two groups were rounded up in Bali and Surabaya, of whom 58 were brought back to China Thursday.

On July 27, an unrelated group of 17 telecom fraud suspects in a separate case were brought back from Cambodia.

[Condom maker sues Guinness World Records](#)

A condom producer in Guangdong province is taking legal action against the Guinness World Records in a bid to retain the title of world's thinnest prophylactic manufacturer.

Guangzhou Daming United Rubber Products Limited has taken Guinness World Records to court in Beijing after its product was deleted, even though it had previously been verified.

Guinness World Records verified the company's aoni condom, which has an average thickness of 0.036 millimeters, as the world's thinnest in 2013.

But the defendant deleted the record due to new internal regulations and rules it introduced in 2015.

Li Xubo, legal officer from Guangzhou Daming United Rubber Products Limited, said Guinness should not use the regulations and rules which were introduced in 2015 to delete previously verified records.

"Guinness, which modified its rules at will, has run counter to the basic business ethics and the principle of good faith," Li said.

Beijing Chaoyang district people's court has yet to hand down its decision after two public hearings took place in July.

China tightens pollution control with discharge permits

China released a list of industries that need to obtain licenses before discharging pollutants Thursday.

The list specified the deadlines for stationary sources of pollution in 82 industries to get licenses and named sectors to be focal points of management in a statement by the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

Thermal power stations and paper-making enterprises were among the first required to operate with the permits, with more than 5,100 licenses already issued.

From the second half of this year, 13 industries including the steel and chemical sectors must apply for the permits. All 82 industries should have licenses by 2020.

By issuing the licenses, environmental authorities will specify the location and number of pollutant discharge outlets for companies, the method and direction of discharge, as well as set ceilings on the variety, concentration and amount of pollutants.

Companies in breach of the policy may face fines up to 1 million yuan (about 150,000 U.S. dollars) or the suspension of operations. Actions that hamper supervision, such as the damaging of monitoring devices and failing to keep original monitoring records, will also be punished.

China is fighting pollution and environmental degradation after decades of growth left the country with problems such as smog and contaminated soil.

The central government has been stepping up supervision of environmental violations while setting detailed tasks to clean up polluted air, water and soil.