

# Thousands battle floods along Yangtze River

Thousands of soldiers, armed police, civil servants and members of the public are battling floods in several provinces along the Yangtze River.



Staff members clear away mud after a flood at a vegetable base in Lianyuan City, central China's Hunan Province, July 3, 2017. Works of epidemic prevention and mud-cleaning are underway as floods subsided in central China's Hunan Province and south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. (Xinhua/Zhang Yang)

In Hunan Province, the water level at the Changsha monitoring station in the Xiangjiang River, a major Yangtze tributary, reached a record high of 39.51 meters early Monday, higher than the previous record of 39.18 meters set by a massive flood in 1998.

Floods have inundated houses, uprooted trees, damaged cars and sabotaged roads in Changsha, capital of Hunan.

The public, even elementary school students who are on summer vacation, volunteered to help fill sandbags to prevent the water from overflowing. Fourth grader Yang Shan, who lives in downtown Changsha, distributed ropes and filled sandbags for soldiers to carry to the riverbank.

Intermittent rain is forecast to last in Changsha until Wednesday, and the city is under heavy pressure to battle flooding.

In neighboring Hubei Province, the Three Gorges Dam on the upper Yangtze has

reduced water discharge by 70 percent in the last three days.

Its flow was 27,000 cubic meters per second before July 1, but has now been reduced to 8,000 cubic meters per second, according to the Yangtze River Flood Prevention Headquarters.

The reduction stopped 3 billion cubic meters of water and lowered the water level by up to 1.5 meters, the headquarters said.

“We hope the reduction of outflow will give soldiers and the people enough time to evacuate and stack up sand bags to battle the flood,” said Wu Zhaohui, an official with the water resources bureau in Hubei Province.

In Hubei alone, 16,000 people are on high alert for flooding.

In eastern Jiangxi Province, 28,100 people are battling against the floods, as water levels in the Jiangxi section of the Yangtze and Poyang Lake, China’s largest fresh water lake, have risen above warning levels.

Heavy downpours also hit Sichuan Province on the upper reaches of the Yangtze. Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport in the provincial capital of Chengdu was forced to close down for over an hour on Monday afternoon.

Nearly 8,000 passengers were affected and 40 outbound flights were delayed.

Besides provinces along the Yangtze, other southern areas of China have also been plagued by heavy rain.

Rain-triggered floods have killed 16 people and left 10 missing in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, with 91,600 local residents relocated so far, according to the regional civil affairs department.

According to the Ministry of Finance, a total of 1.88 billion yuan (276.8 million U.S. dollars) was allocated to 20 provinces and regions Monday to aid disaster relief.

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## **Shanxi builds clean government**

Shanxi Province has adopted rigorous rules and transparent systems to regulate local governance and Party organizations in response to the country’s stringent anti-corruption campaign.

During a conference hosted by the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) last Friday, the provincial government showcased their procedures in selecting and appointing officials while committing to build a clean government.

According to Sun Dajun, the executive vice chairman of the Organization

Department, CPC Shanxi Provincial Committee, there are 10 procedures, including, qualification checking, deliberation, inspection, and public polls which are to be considered when deciding on promotion.

Candidates competing for higher posts should reveal their true financial conditions, including their accounts of assets, equities and other properties as the government launches a zero tolerance to corruption. Furthermore, their official status is closely related to the views of the public that they have served.

“What we need are committed, clean and responsible officials,” said Sun, adding that the government officials who qualify for promotion should have sufficient experience obtained while working in different positions.

“The essential value of our democratic system is generally the same as the rest of the world, even though we take different paths. I don’t think all countries must have democracy only in the form of direct elections,” Sun continued.

He said the government needs to learn from the public to consider the candidate and consider their competence through shared public views to finally select the most qualified official. This costs immensely less than direct elections.

Hu Yuting, the secretary of CPC Jinzhong Municipal Committee said that selection is open and transparent as the qualifications of the candidates including their education backgrounds, work experience, lawful accreditations and health conditions will all be publicized for supervision.

Shanxi Province is transforming from a natural-energy (especially coal mine)-centered economy to a new economic model driven increasingly by innovation and conservation, with the growth of non-coal sectors reaching 9.8 percent in the first five months, this year.

Daniel A. Bell, the dean and professor of the School of Political Science and Public Administration of Shandong University, said, Shanxi needs to protect its environment and ancient architectures to carry on its distinctive cultural legacy.

“Knowledge of local history and culture may not matter as much as in the new cities, such as, Shanghai or Shenzhen, but it is important for a historic city as Ping Yao (an ancient town in the province),” he said.

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## [Online literature booms in China](#)



Online literature is booming in China, and its market size has exceeded 9 billion yuan. [File Photo]

Online literature is booming in China, and its market size has exceeded 9 billion yuan (about 1.32 billion U.S. dollars), authorities said.

By the end of 2016, there were 333 million online literature readers, accounting for 43.3 percent of the total number of netizens in China, according to Beijing Municipal Bureau of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television.

Among them, 304 million users access literature through mobile phones.

Over the last 20 years, China's online literature industry has registered explosive growth, with an annual growth rate of 20 percent, the bureau said.

An online literature convention will be held in Beijing from August 11 to 13.

"China's online literature has entered an era of golden opportunities. Much of the literature has gone beyond borders to overseas countries and regions," said Yang Shuo, head of the bureau.

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## [8 dead, 35 injured in gas pipeline explosion in SW China](#)



The site of a gas pipeline explosion is seen in Qinglong, southwest China's Guizhou Province, July 2, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

At least eight people died and another 35 were injured in a natural gas pipeline explosion in southwest China's Guizhou Province on Sunday, local authorities said.

The explosion occurred at around 10 a.m. in the town of Shazi, Qinglong County. The injured, including four in critical condition, have been sent to hospital for treatment, according to rescuers.

Days of heavy rain triggered a landslide, which crushed the pipeline operated by the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) and caused gas leak and ensuing blast, according to the preliminary investigation.

The fire caused by the explosion was put out and residents nearby were evacuated, while further investigation continues, said the rescuers.

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## [Bully victims learn to manage their emotions](#)



A social and emotional learning (SEL) class is given to students at Sanjiang Ethnic Experimental School in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County. [Photo/Xinhua]

At a school in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, several children shed tears as they share their experience of being bullied.

"He broke my pencil without any reason, punched me, and gave me a bloody nose after I asked him to pay for my pencil," a fourth-grader recalls.

The boy takes off his glasses, briefly wipes his tears then bursts out crying again. His teacher walks over and gives him a hug.

The class at Sanjiang Ethnic Experimental School in Sanjiang Dong Autonomous County is called social and emotional learning (SEL). It is a joint project run by the Ministry of Education and UNICEF.

SEL is about helping students develop skills such as self-recognition and confidence, understanding and managing emotions, and maintaining positive relationships with others. "Say 'no' to bullying" is one of the topics.

During the course, Zhou Lihong, the teacher, tells a story of an imaginative but introverted girl's long-term bullying and asks students for ways they would help the girl.

Some suggest making friends with her, some advise her to turn to teachers or parents for help, someone suggests "an eye for an eye."

"Bullying is constant and intentional, initiated by the stronger against the vulnerable. We should learn to protect ourselves, and meanwhile, never bully others," Zhou tells the children.

UNICEF educationalist Guo Xiaoping says that since launch of the SEL project in 2013, the number of participating schools has increased to over 500.

These schools are mainly in less-developed middle and western parts of the country, said Guo.

“With the support from local education authorities and experts, some schools that are not included into the pilot have also joined in,” she said.

Wu Xinyun, head of the primary section at the Sanjiang school, says students receive an SEL lesson every two weeks, using textbooks provided by the project.

“We have found there is less physical conflict among the children,” she said.

Each class has around 60 students, more than the advised national maximum of 45. “Physical contact is very frequent in the classroom, and often led to fights in the past. SEL helps students understand each other, so brawls are much more infrequent,” Wu said.

Guo says a study of US primary and high schools and kindergartens in 2011 found SEL participants did 11-percentage points better than control groups.

Wei Jiaqi, 12, has drawn a picture of a classmate holding an umbrella for her in rain. She names the drawing, “Thanks for caring about me.”

“I was upset as my mom had scolded me that day. It was my classmate who kept me company,” she says.

“I changed my girl pal into a boy, because drawing a boy is easier,” she says, adding that they like the SEL courses very much.

Li Fuzhuo, head of teacher education at Guangxi Normal University, said SEL is meant to create an atmosphere in which students feel, experience, think and acquire the related skills. Competent teachers are vital.

To address this issue, the ministry and UNICEF organize training and demonstration courses for school heads and teachers.

The project also encourages parents to participate and the team is compiling articles about SEL to be released via the UNICEF WeChat account.

In this way, parents, especially migrant workers who have left their children behind, will be able to join in the SEL project.

Huang Guizhen, an official at the education ministry, believes SEL not only improves teaching competence, but enables vulnerable groups, such as left-behind children, to feel more care and love from school and the family.

“We want to expand the project to more schools, so that more children benefit from it,” she said.