

China's mining of combustible ice beats expectations



Photo taken on June 21, 2017 shows the trial mining site in the Shenhu area of the South China Sea. China has extracted about 235,000 cubic meters of the combustible ice from the South China Sea, beating previous expectations for the mining operation. Wednesday afternoon marked six weeks of an ongoing mining operation in waters near the Pearl River estuary, without being disrupted by this year's second typhoon Merbok. [Photo/Xinhua]

China has extracted about 235,000 cubic meters of the combustible ice from the South China Sea, beating previous expectations for the mining operation.

Wednesday afternoon marked six weeks of an ongoing mining operation in waters near the Pearl River estuary, without being disrupted by this year's second typhoon Merbok, according to operators of the trial mining site in the Shenhu area of the South China Sea.

"China has beaten expectations in completing the trial explorations of combustible ice using local innovations in technology and engineering. It marks a historic breakthrough," according to a statement released by the mining site.

Combustible ice usually exists in seabed or tundra areas which have the strong pressure and low temperature necessary for its stability. It can be ignited like solid ethanol, which is why it is called combustible or flammable ice.

One cubic meter of combustible ice, a kind of natural gas hydrate, is equal to 164 cubic meters of regular natural gas.

China declared its first success in collecting samples of combustible ice in the South China Sea on May 18 after discovering the substance in the South China Sea in 2007.

State Council appoints HKSAR gov't officials

China's State Council, or Cabinet, on Wednesday appointed main officials of the fifth-term government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), in line with the Basic Law of the HKSAR.

The officials were nominated by the HKSAR's fifth-term chief executive Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor.

Cheung Kin-chung was appointed Chief Secretary for Administration.

Chan Mo-po was appointed Financial secretary.

Rimsky Yuen was appointed Secretary for Justice.

Joshua Law was appointed Secretary for the Civil Service.

Lau Kong-wah was appointed Secretary for Home Affairs.

Lee Ka Chiu was appointed Secretary for Security.

Nip Tak-kuen was appointed Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs.

Sophia Chan was appointed Secretary for Food and Health.

James Lau was appointed Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury.

Yeung Yun-hung was appointed Secretary for Education.

Michael Wong was appointed Secretary for Development.

Yau Tang-wah was appointed Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development.

Chan Fan was appointed Secretary for Transport and Housing.

Law Chi-kwong was appointed Secretary for Labor and Welfare.

Wong Kam-sing was appointed Secretary for the Environment.

Nicholas W Yang was appointed Secretary for Innovation and Technology.

Tsang Kwok-wai was appointed the Director of Immigration.

Tang Yi-hoi was appointed the Commissioner of Customs and Excise.

Peh Yun Lu was appointed the Commissioner of Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Sun Tak-kei was appointed the Director of Audit.

Lo Wai Chung was appointed the Commissioner of Police.

According to the Basic Law of the HKSAR, the officials will assume office on July 1, 2017.

[Carrie Lam has high hopes for Hong Kong's future](#)



Hong Kong's Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor will be the SAR's first female chief executive. [Photo/China Daily]

Hong Kong's chief executive-designate, Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, says she hopes the city will take advantage of China's increasing economic power to seek new impetus for its long-term prosperity and stability.

Lam, the first female chief executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, said she is optimistic on China's future development and that Hong Kong's rapid growth as an international financial center and regional business hub could not have been achieved without the nation's economic takeoff since the reform and opening-up.

According to the SAR's government, Hong Kong's GDP last year was HK\$2.5 trillion (\$320.6 billion), an 81 percent nominal increase from 1997.

"Based on my experience as a civil servant in the past more than 30 years, I believe Hong Kong's future is very promising, thanks to our country's rise as an emerging economic power," Lam said.

She said Hong Kong can always find a new growth point under the context of national development.

"The Belt and Road Initiative proposed by President Xi Jinping in 2013 will provide new opportunities for us to move forward and maintain our advantage as a regional service center," she said.

Lam said Hong Kong could use its experience in asset management and risk management to make a contribution to the nation's major development plans, including the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20) and the Belt and Road Initiative.

The prosperity and stability Hong Kong has enjoyed during the past 20 years exemplify the successful implementation of the principle of one country, two systems—"Hong Kong people administering Hong Kong" with a high degree of autonomy, Lam said.

After being elected as Hong Kong's fifth chief executive in March, Lam pledged to do her utmost to uphold the one country, two systems principle and guard Hong Kong's core values.

She also promised to address issues concerning the city's future development, such as applying new resources to education, tackling housing problems and introducing new financial and tax measures.

"I expect Hong Kong to become a place where residents will feel satisfactory, children will grow up happily and healthily, young people will have an arena to exert their advantages and elderly could enjoy their retirement," she said.

Based on the latest data, Hong Kong continues to be the world's most expensive housing market. Lam conceded that rising prices are an urgent issue for the next government and said she intends to tackle the problem with measures such as a "starter home" program.

She also plans to put more resources into the education system to cultivate more talent for sustainable development.

The city government introduced a policy of free kindergarten education this year, extending the 12 years of free education to 15 years.

Lam, who was former chief secretary of administration, said Hong Kong has fallen behind in the Internet Plus industry and that it will be the next government's priority to catch up.

"I invited Jack Ma, the chairman of Alibaba, to my office for advice on developing Hong Kong's internet industry at a faster pace," she said.

To push forward the city's economic development, government needs to become more positive and play new roles, Lam stressed.

"I felt the heavy burden on my shoulders when I received the appointment document from Premier Li Keqiang," Lam said. "Being the chief executive of Hong Kong can be really challenging as I have to be responsible to both the central government and the city.

"But I have confidence in making Hong Kong into a vigorous special administration region in the nation."

[More than 10 injured in NE China gas blast](#)



More than 10 people were injured after a gas blast at a night market in northeast China's Liaoning Province on Tuesday. [Photo/Weibo.com]

More than 10 people were injured after a gas blast at a night market in northeast China's Liaoning Province on Tuesday, said local authorities.

The blast happened at 8:20 p.m. at a pancake booth in Jinzhou City, Liaoning, due to the owner's misoperation of the gas cylinder, said the city authorities.

The injured have received treatment. None is in critical condition.

Rainstorm to sweep away heat wave in

Beijing

The recent heat wave in Beijing and neighboring areas will be swept away by a rainstorm, according to the Beijing Meteorological Observatory Tuesday.

From Wednesday to Saturday, heavy rain will hit Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei Province, the observatory said.

Beijing will experience thunderstorms from Wednesday afternoon, and heavy rainfall Thursday, with precipitation of 40 mm to 150 mm, said Guo Jinlan, chief forecaster of the Beijing Meteorological Bureau.

Accumulative precipitation in Hebei and Tianjin is also forecast to reach rainstorm levels, Guo said.

The bureau has reminded citizens to stay away from dangerous sites such as rivers, reservoirs and construction venues during the rainstorm and called for prevention of rain-triggered flood and landslides.

Four tourists and one herder died, with another missing, after a rainstorm triggered a flash flood in a mountainous area of Beijing and Hebei Province Sunday.