

Blueprint for a better Beijing set

Beijing should improve city planning and construction to build a “harmonious, world-class capital city” and better meet the demands of its residents, said President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, on Friday.

The city should take comprehensive measures to tackle problems that people care about most, such as air pollution, traffic jams, surging housing prices and too large a population, he said at a meeting after a two-day inspection.

Beijing should improve people’s livelihoods and provide better public services for the people, he said while presiding over a high-profile meeting in the Great Hall of the People to discuss how to improve Beijing’s city management and preparation work for the 2022 Winter Olympics.

“Whether its city planning and construction are good should be measured by how satisfied people are,” he was quoted by China Central Television as saying.

During the two-day inspection tour, Xi visited the construction site of Beijing’s new airport in the southern suburban district of Daxing and major stadiums that are to host Winter Olympics events.

He also visited Tongzhou district, the administrative sub-center of Beijing.

At the airport construction site, Xi urged workers and managers to adopt the strictest standards to ensure building quality.

Xi also stressed city planning and urged officials to study and devise effective policies to ensure Beijing’s sustainable development.

Beijing should stick to improving its core functions as the capital and move its non-capital functions out of the city to ease its population and environmental pressures, he said at the meeting.

On Thursday, Xi listened to a report by municipal departments on the traffic integration of Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei province.

The government put forward a national strategy in 2014 to promote coordinated development of the three regional economies so that the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region will grow into a major growth engine for the national economy.

Zhang Liqun, an economist of the State Council’s Development Research Center, said, “The government now emphasizes development of city clusters, and megacities must help neighboring regions develop.

“In the next stage, integration of traffic and water and power supply systems will pick up speed.”

[Nurses detained for locking up public-use bikes](#)

A public-use bike is seen locked at a residential building in Hefei, Anhui province, in January. [Photo provided to China Daily]

Two nurses in Beijing are under administrative detention for putting their own locks on two publicly shared bikes.

“The two nurses who put private locks on public-use bikes disturbed the public order,” said Liu Lin, a lawyer at Beijing Shuangli Law Firm, because it prevented other people from using the bikes.

Those who intentionally damage property may face a five- to 10-day administrative detention, according to the Law on Public Security Administration Punishments.

Tang Ke from the publicity office of OFO, the company that owns the bikes, confirmed the news and said further investigation was underway.

The market for public-use bikes – which are stored along sidewalks and can be accessed through an app – has boomed in China since the middle of last year. The new mode of transportation has brought a greener and more convenient mode of urban transportation, but the model has also caused many problems including illegal parking, theft and vandalism. Parking violations are also a common problem, followed by violation of traffic rules.

“Once users scan the app and click ‘accept’ when they rent the bike, they have signed an agreement with the service provider and should follow the rules,” Liu said.

OFO has introduced a blacklist banning users who break its rules.

Many cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen are proposing draft regulations to manage the market for public bikes. The Shenzhen traffic police department has also announced fines for the illegal parking of bikes.

[Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region to roll out 6 measures to fight smog](#)

Beijing is gulfed by heavy smog. [Photo/Xinhua]

The Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region will take six new measures to continue combating smog in 2017, said Zhao Yingmin, vice minister of environmental protection.

The concentration of PM2.5 – fine particulate matter that is hazardous to human health – decreased by 7.8 percent in the region in 2016, with Beijing reducing 9.9 percent, Tianjin 1.4 percent and Hebei 9.1 percent. But the region still needs to beef up efforts in improving its air quality, especially in winter, Zhao said.

The region will adopt the following six measures in 2017. First, a total of 28 “route” cities, or cities near the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region that can impact the air, should meet the requirement of reducing their steel capacity ahead of schedule, and the small yet heavily polluting plants scattered around the region should be closed down by the end of October. Second, the region will promote clean heating in winter, build “coal-free zones,” close down small coal-fired boilers, and make coal consumption in the 28 “route” cities realize a negative growth. Third, the region will enhance its comprehensive work in fighting industrial air pollution, with key industries meeting emission caps and the region taking the lead in issuing pollutant discharge permits. Fourth, while cement and casting industries in the region continue to halt production in winter, cities such as Shijiazhuang, Tangshan, Handan and Anyang will also slash half of their steel capacity during winter heating seasons. Fifth, car emissions will be controlled. Sixth, dust at construction sites should be reduced in 2017.

[China encourages private sector participation in weapons development](#)

The equipment development department under the Central Military Commission Friday released a document on boosting military-civilian integration in weapons development.

The document introduced a set of measures to liberalize and regulate the weapons sector, including slashing restrictions on the types of arms that private firms are allowed to develop and piloting commercial services for military procurement in the aerospace industry.

Enterprises producing substandard products, violating confidentiality policies or in poor operation should be ineligible in weapons development, the document said.

[China revises law to boost Red Cross credibility](#)

China's top legislature Friday passed a revised law to boost the transparency and credibility of the country's Red Cross societies.

The legislation was adopted after a third reading at the bimonthly session of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), which runs Wednesday to Friday.

Red Cross societies in China are now required to give feedback to donors on the use of their donations, and staff who fail to do so could face civil and criminal charges.

"The revision primarily focuses on strengthening supervision on Red Cross societies and standardizing their activities," Guo Linmao, an official with the Legislative Affairs Commission of the NPC Standing Committee, told a press conference Friday afternoon.

A previous clause giving Red Cross societies power to "rectify" illegal activities by their subordinate societies and staff was deleted from the new draft.

After several scandals, China's Red Cross has grappled with trust issues in recent years.

Revision work for the law began in 2016.

The first reading of the draft suggested that independent third-party agencies should audit donations and that an information disclosure system should be put into place.

The societies should also establish a system for financial management, internal control, public auditing as well as supervision of funds and assets.

The second draft expanded Red Cross societies' duties in stem cell and organ donation.

The Red Cross Society of China established an organ donation administration center in 2012, becoming involved in organ donations at every stage from donor registration to organ distribution.

The third reading specified that Red Cross societies could participate in and promote blood, body and organ donations, and could carry out work related to stem cell donations.

It stated that leading supervisors at all Red Cross societies must be chosen through a democratic process.

The revision will safeguard and regulate Red Cross societies in performing their duties and boost its credibility, according to Zhang Mingqi, a vice chairman of the Law Committee of the NPC.

The law will come into force May 8, 2017.