

Boost set for economic, social goals

China will “stabilize and improve its macroeconomic policies” and deepen reforms to achieve its economic and social development goals this year, according to a statement released after a key meeting on Tuesday.

The nation will continue to adopt proactive fiscal policy and prudent monetary policy, according to the meeting of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, which was presided over by Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee.

Coordination of industrial, regional, investment, consumption, price, land and environmental protection policies will be strengthened, and reforms in key fields will be deepened to achieve better results, the meeting decided. Innovation will be promoted to help improve the efficiency of the economy and release domestic growth potential, participants agreed.

The meeting highlighted the significance of 2017, since the 19th CPC National Congress will convene later in the year.

Acknowledging that China has scored a strong start for the 13th Five Year Plan (2016-20) period, the meeting called for further efforts to balance multiple economic tasks this year, including stabilizing growth, advancing reforms, pushing restructuring, improving people’s livelihoods and preventing risks.

The meeting was held ahead of the two sessions—the annual meetings of the country’s top legislature and the top political advisory body that will be held in early March.

Supply-side structural reform will be further pushed and people’s livelihoods should be improved, the meeting statement said.

The meeting also decided that China will push the supply-side reform of agriculture to ensure healthy growth and increased income for farmers.

Tuesday’s meeting also decided that the government should improve governance to “better serve the people”.

According to the statement, 247 Party organizations have been inspected by teams sent from the CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the Party’s top anti-graft agency, since the inspection effort was launched in 2013.

The inspections, with a focus on sticking to the Party’s leadership, have functioned as a “political microscope” and a “political searchlight”, under which supervision of following the Party’s rules has been enhanced, said the statement.

On Tuesday, the CCDI disclosed information on its recent 11th round of inspections of Party and government agencies, institutes, associations and

news media, such as the Supreme People's Court, the Party School of the Central Committee of the CPC and China Central Television.

"The meeting highlighted the most important tasks for China this year," said Liang Haiming, chief economist of the China Silk Road iValley Research Institute. "It highlights reform, innovation and people's livelihoods."

It is a must for China to further carry out reforms because the international situation has changed rapidly, Liang said.

[Ancient gigantic Buddha statue with puzzling background](#)

After Taliban blew up the world's two largest Buddha statues in Bamyan, Afghanistan, 16 years ago, the 32-meter-high standing statue of Buddha in Sichuan became the largest on Earth.



The world's tallest standing Buddha statue in Sichuan Province in Southwest China. [Photo:scol.com.cn]

However, despite its splendid view on Mt. Baxian, 891 meters high above the sea level, the origin of the statue remains elusive.

Its builders and dynasties have yet to be identified, and its hairstyle, earlobes and dressings are different from conventional Buddha statues. For example, Buddhas don't usually wear bracelets. Moreover, this Buddha statue looks like it's wearing an apron, which distinguishes its clothing from others.

Although the ambiguous elements of the statue perplexes historians, experts still believe the Buddha statue has distinctive historic value.

Ministry issues penalties for nuclear safety

The Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) issued two administrative penalties on Feb. 14 for compromises in nuclear security.



Members of the IAEA-led Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) and staff from the Chinese National Nuclear Safety Authority visit the Fuqing Nuclear Power Plant to review safety upgrades carried out as part of work to improve safety following the 2011 Fukushima accident in Japan. The September 2016 visit was part of an IRRS review of China's regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety. [Photo: NNSA/MEP]

Dalian Teikoku Canned Motor Pump Co., Ltd., a Japanese-funded company and the biggest canned motor pump manufacturer in China, was deemed by the MEP to have violated operating protocols in the welding of nuclear power units of Yangjiang Nuclear Power Station in Guangdong Province, and failed to register the design of the canned motor pump to be used in Hongyanhe Nuclear Power Station in Liaoning Province.

Dalian Teikoku also received another penalty for its welder Zhou Shundong for violating protocol in repair welding, which has led to severe quality risks.

The MEP demand Dalian Teikoku immediately halt unauthorized activities and pay a fine of 200,000 yuan (US\$29,093). The MEP also revoked Zhou's qualification licence.

The devices involved in the penalties were still in the manufacturing stage and did not compromise the actual safety or construction of the aforementioned nuclear facilities, according to MEP statements.

Nuclear safety has been given greater attention in the wake of Japan's Fukushima incident, which was triggered by a major earthquake and the subsequent tsunami.

Minister of Environmental Protection, Chen Jining, has cautioned against nuclear risks now that China is rapidly developing its nuclear energy and nuclear technologies, posing increasing pressure on safety supervision. He urged that precautions must be in place right from the very source, in order to maintain security capabilities and reliability.

Chen said that there must be bottom lines in terms of the safety for nuclear power generation in order to implement all possible measures to lower the risk of accidents. He also called for the enhancing of emergency response responsibilities.

MEP's statement shows that the operational nuclear power-generating units and the nuclear reactors for civil researches have maintained a sound safety record. None of the nuclear power plants nationwide have had any incident or accident above the second degree category. The accident rate involving radioactive sources has dropped to under one case in 10,000 sources each year, from above 2.5 cases in the period 2006-2010.

Liu Hua, the vice minister of Environmental Protection and director of National Nuclear Safety Administration said that there was no "absolute safety" in the nuclear industry, only "relative safety." He said a country's nuclear safety could only be guaranteed as long as the industry keeps improving its technology and the national regulator keeps enhancing its supervision capabilities, in addition to drawing lessons from previous nuclear accidents and incidents.

Dead worker not allowed in elevator

A dead house painter, killed in a new residential building in Wuhan, Hubei Province, was forbidden from being carried down through the stairs or elevators, as property owners believed it could have ominous implications.



The building where the house painter fell down [Photo: Chutian Metropolis Daily]

The worker, around 50 years old, was killed after accidentally falling down from the 16th floor to a 3rd floor platform on Feb. 20.

As staff from the local funeral parlor came to carry down the body, several property owners in nearby apartments demanded that it shouldn't go through the stairs, elevators or the main part of the building, citing superstitious beliefs.

The body was lowered on the outside of the building on a stretcher with the help of a firefighting team.

[Nobel laureate, Turing Award winner enlisted by top academy](#)



Nobel laureate C.N. Yang (left) and Turing Award winner Yao Qizhi. [Photo: China Daily]

Nobel laureate Chen Ning Yang and Turing Award winner Yao Qizhi have become Chinese citizens and officially joined the Chinese Academy of Sciences as academicians—the highest academic title in China, the academy’s faculty office said on Tuesday.

They are the first overseas scientists to relinquish their US citizenship to join the official faculty of China’s highest scientific research organization. Yang, 94, will join the mathematical physics department, while Yao, 70, will enter the information technology and science department.

“They are both world renowned scholars,” the office said in a statement. “Their entry into the academy’s faculty will increase the influence of China’s scientific circles worldwide.”

Yang and Tsung-dao Lee received the 1957 Nobel Prize in physics for their work on parity nonconservation of weak interaction, becoming the first people of Chinese origin to win a Nobel Prize.

Yao became in 2000 the first person of Chinese origin to receive the Turing Award, the most prestigious award in computer science. He won for his fundamental contributions to the theory of computation such as cryptography and communication complexity.

In late 2016, both scientists had relinquished their foreign nationality and submitted their request to join the academy. The faculty office said it had to adopt new procedures to accept the two scientists, who were both foreign academicians at the time.

In order to become a foreign academician, one has to be an accomplished scientist who contributed greatly to China’s science and technology. After

being recommended by more than five Chinese members, the foreign scientist enters a biennial election and must win a two-thirds majority of academicians' votes to join their ranks, according to the academy's charter.

A foreign academician, though lacking voting rights, can advise on Chinese scientific developments and the workings of the faculty office, as well as receive academic publications and invitations to seminars held by the office. Foreign academicians can join the ranks of Chinese members once they receive Chinese citizenship.

A Chinese member can make suggestions on major Chinese scientific projects and vote on prospective new members of the academy.

There are now 754 Chinese and 78 foreign scientists in the academy. In recent years, the faculty office has worked to build a "big academician family", connecting renowned scholars from around the world to give advice and contribute to China's scientific development.

"As China's science, economy and society develop, the influence of the faculties will increase domestically and abroad," the office said.