

# CHINA

## Guideline bolsters rights of truck drivers

By **LUO WANGSHU**  
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A recent guideline aims to improve the protection of truckers' rights, laying out plans to provide a better working environment and to simplify inspection procedures, among others.

The guideline, released by 16 ministry-level departments, includes measures for building more rest stations and setting up hotlines to file complaints against unreasonable fines.

Most freight transport is moved via road in China. In 2020, trucks transported 34.2 billion metric tons of cargo, accounting for 74 percent of the annual freight volume, according to the Ministry of Transport.

China has about 17.3 million truck drivers, who are known for keeping long hours and their heavy workloads.

Overloading has been an issue in truck transportation, which has led to unreasonable fines for some truckers. In addition, trucks are not allowed to drive on some roads in urban areas, and these restricted channels sometimes change, which also troubles drivers.

According to the guideline, a hotline has been established by local transportation and public security departments, and truckers can call to file complaints for unreasonable fines or misconduct during inspections. It also streamlined the procedure for truckers to carry out vehicle inspections and allows drivers to handle most government-related affairs in different provinces.

Wang Yang, vice-minister of transport, said the guideline focuses on issues raised by truckers, such as difficulty parking in service areas, passing through urban areas, a lack of rest centers and thefts of cargo and diesel. He made the remarks at a news conference in November.

The ministry has promoted the building of more parking spaces for trucks in service areas and more rest centers for truck drivers.

China has nearly 230,000 parking spots for trucks in its freeway network and more than 700 rest centers for truckers nationwide. The drivers can take a break, have a shower and do laundry at the centers.

Cai Tuanjie, director of the ministry's transportation service department, said more rest centers will be established in industrial parks and gas stations.

"Even at service areas, some truckers are reluctant to leave their trucks to take a break because they worry about cargo and diesel being stolen," he said, adding that more cameras will be set up in truck parking areas to ensure the safety of the cargo and reassure truckers.

Sun Kunyu from Chongqing has driven heavily loaded trucks on expressways for more than a decade, mainly transporting construction materials.

He said he is happy to have more rest centers along the way.

## Art show draws youth



Children draw at an art show showcasing works by Italian illustrators of children's books in Haikou, Hainan province, on Tuesday. The show was part of an art season that will run through March on the island. SU BIKUN / FOR CHINA DAILY

## First national botanical garden gains approval

Site in Beijing will promote plant conservation, high-level research

By **YANG WANLI**  
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China will develop the country's first national botanical garden in Beijing, as the State Council announced the approval of its establishment in the nation's capital on Tuesday.

Using resources from the Institute of Botany of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Beijing Botanical Garden, the national garden will be divided into two areas, according to an official reply from the State Council, China's Cabinet, to a request for the garden's approval.

The reply said the two areas will be constructed with unified planning and feature key functional areas, collection venues, scientific and research platforms and supporting infrastructure.

The garden will be jointly built by the National Forestry and Grass Administration, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the CAS and municipal government.

"The garden will showcase the harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, show respect to nature by putting conservation first and share its benefits," the reply noted.

It will also promote the off-site conservation of plants and the systematic collection, preservation, high-level research and sustainable utilization of plant groups.

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The garden will demonstrate the charm of Chinese culture and biodiversity, and innovations will be encouraged in its construction ... Our national botanical garden will be built with Chinese characteristics.”

Reply from the State Council, China's Cabinet, to a request for the garden's approval

“The garden will demonstrate the charm of Chinese culture and biodiversity, and innovations will be encouraged in its construction. Meeting international standards, our national botanical garden will be built with Chinese characteristics,” the council said in its reply.

Development of the garden will focus on the protection of plants and scientific research functions, the reply stressed, adding that requirements for the capital's management and control should be implemented, and the scale of the construction should also be

reasonably controlled.

Botanical gardens not only shoulder the protection of plant resources but also safeguard the country's natural resources for future utilization and sustainable development, said Chen Jin, secretary-general of the China Botanical Garden Association.

The Wuhan Botanical Garden under the CAS, for example, has been conducting research and preservation work for species of kiwi fruit in China since the 1980s. So far, it has preserved 58 kiwi species and runs the world's largest kiwi gene bank.

“Botanical gardens originated from Europe,” said Zhou Ju, an expert from the CAS' Bureau of Science and Technology for Development.

“For hundreds of years, botanical gardens have been used for various purposes, including medical use, agricultural development and as germ plasm resource banks.”

Unlike botanical gardens in developed countries, which use them as educational tools and to promote biodiversity protection, those in developing countries now mainly function as domes for endangered plants, Zhou said.

At the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) in October, China announced the development of botanical gardens in Beijing, Guangzhou in Guangdong province and other places.

So far, China has nearly 200 botanical gardens, conserving more than 23,000 plants, according to a white paper on biodiversity conservation released by the State Council last year.

## Ice-snow tourism booms as Olympics approach

HARBIN — Every winter in Northeast China, the coldest places are often the hottest tourist spots. This is especially true at the moment, with the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics just around the corner and the Chinese people's passion for the cold stronger than ever.

Ice and Snow World, a famous seasonal attraction in Harbin, capital of Heilongjiang province, was bustling with tourists during the recent New Year holiday, which lasted from Saturday to Monday.

Covering 820,000 square meters, the park used some 230,000 cubic meters of ice and snow to create 65 landscapes this year, with the popular “super ice slide” attraction extended to 423 meters.

Comprehensive COVID-19 prevention measures are in place at the site. Visitors can be seen lining up in an orderly manner at the gate, scanning their health codes and having their temperatures taken before entering the park.

Park tour guide Liu Lu spends about six hours in the freezing weather every day, showing visitors the sights and telling them how the ice was collected and how the park was built.

“When I see tourists enjoying the park, I see the value of my job and don't feel cold at all,” Liu said.

Located in the Changbai Mountains, Snow Village in Heilongjiang's Hailin city kicked off its annual tourist season on Dec 29, when temperatures dropped to around -20 C, transforming the village into a snow-capped wonderland.

Fan Zhaoyi runs a homestay in the village. Days before its opening, he stored plenty of food and had some maintenance work done in preparation for the incoming tourist rush.

Fan said the attraction has become increasingly popular with visitors from southern China, where impressive snowy scenery is hard to find. In the northern village, snowy weather can last seven months a year.

The village has conducted emergency drills for all staff and provided training on infectious disease prevention and emergency response. It is also equipped with a mobile nucleic acid testing laboratory with a daily testing capacity of 10,000 samples.

Snow Village was formerly a forest farm, and Fan once worked there as a logger. The development of ice-snow tourism has benefited both local economic upgrading and environmental protection efforts.

In recent years, Chinese people's fervor for winter sports has also been on the rise, with night skiing in the spotlight. In fact, experts have noted that the nocturnal activity has become a new economic driving force in northern China.

Songhuahu Ski Field, a well-known urban ski resort in Jilin city, Jilin province, introduced night skiing sessions in 2016, and the number of participants grew from 30,000 that year to around 100,000 in 2021, according to Wang Jiayu, a manager at the resort.

“Night skiing is a perfect way for me to deal with stress,” said frequent visitor Zhang Tian. “It has become an integral part of my winter entertainment.”

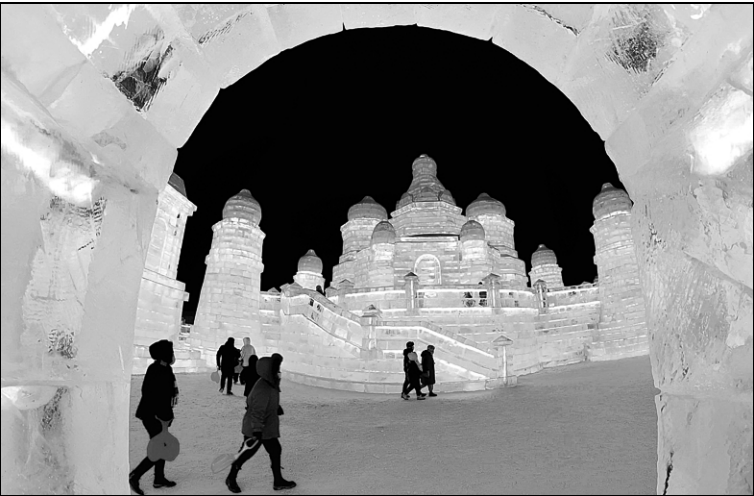
Business-savvy people are now catching up with the latest trend, setting up catering and hospitality services and developing hot springs around ski resorts. Zhao Chunjie, who has been an avid skier for 10 years, recently opened a homestay near the Songhuahu resort.

“My homestay can accommodate over 100 guests, and tourists from southern China have been accounting for 70 to 80 percent of the total,” he said, noting that the homestay is already fully booked for the Lunar New Year holiday in February.

Zhao is quite confident about his business.

“I believe that more people will engage in ice and snow sports after the 2022 Winter Olympics conclude,” he said.

XINHUA



People visit Ice and Snow World in Harbin, Heilongjiang province, on Sunday. LIU YANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

## It's right for Lithuania to correct wrongdoing

By **MO JINGXI**  
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A Foreign Ministry spokesman said on Wednesday it is important for Lithuania to correct its wrongdoings after the Baltic nation's President Gitanas Nauseda said that the country's decision to allow Taipei to open a representative office using the name of Taiwan was a mistake.

“Recognizing the mistake is a right step,” ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told reporters at a regular news briefing in Beijing. “It is more important to take actions to redress the erroneous acts of creating the false impression of ‘one China, one Taiwan’ and come back onto the track of upholding the one-China principle,” he said.

Noting that the ins and outs of the difficult China-Lithuania relations are very clear, Wang said that looking for excuses for one's mistake won't help solve the problems or improve bilateral ties.

“We also warn the Taiwan authorities that attempting to seek ‘Taiwan independence’ is doomed to fail,” he said.

In November, the Lithuanian

government allowed the Taiwan authorities to set up the “Taiwanese Representative Office in Lithuania” in disregard of China's solemn representations. In response, China downgraded the two countries' diplomatic relations to the charge d'affaires level.

Also on Wednesday, Wang confirmed the appointment of Zhang Ming, China's ambassador to the European Union, as the new secretary-general of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Zhang began his three-year term on Saturday.

“I'm sure he will push for new progress of the SCO just like his predecessors,” Wang said, describing him as a veteran diplomat with rich experience in multilateral diplomacy.

Wang said that as the host country of the SCO Secretariat, China will continue to support the work of the Secretariat and the secretary-general and jointly uphold the Shanghai spirit with other parties.

The appointment makes Zhang the first Chinese head of the SCO since veteran diplomat Zhang Deguang, the first secretary-general of the organization, left office in 2006.

## Leading contractor plans more than 40 space launches

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China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp, the country's major space contractor, plans to carry out more than 40 space launch missions this year, according to its annual work report.

Among the scheduled launches, the most important ones will be the six related to the Tiangong space station program, according to the report delivered by Xu Qiang, general manager of the State-owned space conglomerate, at the company's annual work conference on Tuesday.

The six launches will be used to deploy the Shenzhou XIV and XV mission crews to the Tiangong station, which is circling the Earth in a 400-kilometer-high orbit; to transport the Tianzhou 4 and 5 robotic cargo spaceships to the station for refueling and resupply operations;

and to deliver two large space labs to dock with Tiangong, the report said.

Mission planners at CASC have said that of the six spacecraft, the first to be launched will be the Tianzhou 4, followed by the Shenzhou XIV manned spacecraft. Then the two space labs — Wentian, or “Quest for Heavens”, and Mengtian, or “Dreaming of Heavens” — will be lifted to complete the Tiangong station. The Tianzhou 5 will be the fifth, and the final one will be the Shenzhou XV.

Pang Zhihao, a spaceflight researcher in Beijing who worked at the China Academy of Space Technology for decades, said that the government is determined to complete the in-orbit construction of Tiangong before the end of this year, so CASC must make sure that all of the six launches will be suc-

## 55 orbital launches

were conducted by China in 2021, the most in the world.

cessful and on schedule.

Currently, Tiangong is occupied by the Shenzhou XIII mission crew — Major General Zhai Zhigang, Senior Colonel Wang Yaping and Senior Colonel Ye Guangfu — who arrived at the station in mid-October and are scheduled to stay there for six months.

Last year, CASC carried out 48 launch missions with its Long March rockets, which are the nation's pillar space transporters. All of the missions were successful, making Long March the world's busiest launch vehicle family last year.

China conducted 55 orbital launches in 2021, more than any

other country. The United States performed 51 launches last year, second in liftoffs.

In another development, CASC also plans to conduct the maiden flight of its Long March 6A rocket this year, according to the work report.

Designers said the medium-lift Long March 6A will consist of a 50-meter, liquid-propelled core booster and four solid-fuel side boosters. It will be tasked with transporting satellites to multiple types of orbit including sun-synchronous, low-Earth or intermediate circular orbit.

The rocket, developed by the company's Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology, will have a liftoff weight of 530 metric tons. Its core booster will have a diameter of 3.35 meters and will be propelled by two 120-ton-thrust engines burning liquid oxygen and kerosene.