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Policies

Key CPC session draws 15-year roadmap for China's modernization

[Xinhua, 30-10-2020] The Communist Party of China (CPC) has charted the course for China's development in the next 15 years to guide the country's march towards modernization.

Details of the blueprint were unveiled in a communique issued after the conclusion of the four-day fifth plenary session of the 19th CPC Central Committee on Thursday, 29 October. The roles of innovation, real economy, a strong domestic market, rural vitalization and green development were underscored for China's growth.

The session adopted the Party leadership's proposals for formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives through the Year 2035.

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Beijing's climate pledge could pave way to net-zero global economy

[China daily, 15-10-2020] The announcement at the UN General Assembly by Chinese President Xi Jinping that China would become carbon neutral by 2060 and ensure its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions peak by 2030 marks a historic precedent.

As one of the world's largest emitting economies, China will need to drastically cut GHG emissions every year. Announcing its new climate target, China has raised the bar for national climate commitments globally, joining the ranks of a dozen other countries that have made similar commitments.

If China were to achieve its goal of achieving carbon neutrality before 2060, it would lower global warming projections by around 0.2 C to 0.3 C, the biggest single reduction ever estimated by the Climate Action Tracker.

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Big investment needed to meet carbon goals

[China daily, 14-10-2020] A total investment of over 174 trillion yuan (\$25.9 trillion) would be needed in the coming three decades if China endeavors to realize net zero carbon dioxide emissions and greatly reduce emissions of other greenhouse gases around the middle of this century, according to a report.

In the country's energy and electricity systems alone, investments would need to reach 138 trillion yuan from 2020 to 2050, which means that the country needs to invest 2.6 percent of the country's GDP every year during the time, said the report published by the Institute of Climate Change and Sustainable Development at Tsinghua University on Monday.

The numbers are calculated under the scenario of keeping global temperatures this century below 1.5 C above preindustrial levels and using the price levels of 2015 as the base year.

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China adopts law to safeguard biosecurity

[Xinhua, 17-10-2020] China's top legislature on 17 Oct voted to adopt a new law on biosecurity.

The law stipulates that biosecurity is a key component of national security and a holistic approach to national security should be adopted in safeguarding biosecurity.

The law provides for the establishment of 11 basic systems for biosecurity risk prevention and control, such as biosecurity risk monitoring and early warning, risk investigation and assessment, and information sharing.

It also has provisions on the prevention of and response to specific biosecurity risks, including major emerging infectious diseases, epidemic and sudden outbreaks, and biotechnology research, development and application.

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Draft law on China's "mother river" Yangtze submitted for second reading

[Xinhua, 13-10-2020] A draft law on ecological protection along China's longest river, the Yangtze, was submitted to the country's top legislature for a second reading.

The draft, which includes stipulations concerning the establishment of ecological compensation mechanisms for the Yangtze River basin, will be discussed at the 22nd session of the Standing Committee of the 13th National People's Congress.

According to the draft, the country will increase the fiscal transfer payments that provide compensation for areas with key ecological functions, while social capital will be encouraged to set up market-oriented eco-compensation funds.

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China speeds up draft law against food waste as nation strives to feed 1.4 billion people

[SCMP, 16-10-2020] China's legislature is speeding up its drafting of a national law to discourage food waste, following President Xi Jinping's order to clamp down on the problem and ensure stable food supply.

The Legislative Affairs Commission of the National People's Congress is pressing ahead with the law, a first for China, and held a symposium with local lawmakers and legal experts this week to talk preliminary clauses, according to the Hebei provincial legislature.

Hebei is the first Chinese province to launch a local law against food waste. The regulation, which came into effect last month, bans live-streaming of extravagant food consumption and prohibits restaurants from setting minimum charges on food.

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China expected to play big role in global food security

[China daily, 16-10-2020] Stable food production and prices in China will contribute greatly to global food security, which has been challenged by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, a major body of the United Nations said.

The FAO said production of wheat crops and cereal imports in China are stable, and prices of rice and wheat, two of the most important crops in China, have remained generally steady since the beginning of this year.

Throughout the world, however, food security faces challenges caused by the pandemic. An additional 130 million people globally may fall into hunger this year, according to a report jointly released in July by five international organizations including the FAO, the United Nations World Food Programme and the World Health Organization.

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Report on soil pollution prevention law submitted to top legislature for deliberation

[China daily, 15-10-2020] A report on the enforcement of the law for the prevention and control of soil pollution was submitted to the ongoing session of China's top legislature for deliberation.

The report, prepared by an inspection team under the National People's Congress Standing Committee, suggested stricter management of access to land for construction purposes, to ensure the safety of people's living environment.

A mechanism for inter-department joint supervision should be established and improved, and access management should also be improved with a focus on enhancing oversight of the purpose change and use right transfer of land for production and business purposes of key entities subject to soil pollution supervision, according to the report.

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Food safety prioritized to end pandemic

[China daily, 26-10-2020] China, which is committed to ensuring food safety, has redoubled its efforts to bring safe and healthy food to dining tables across the country amid the global COVID-19 outbreak. To that end, the country has been rolling out measures to improve supervision of imported and home-produced food.

As COVID-19 continues to spread globally, cluster outbreaks have been reported in a number of food-processing enterprises overseas, bringing cold chain products under close scrutiny by Chinese authorities.

The authority ordered frozen products from the companies to be returned or destroyed after samples from the inner wall of a container and the products' outer packaging tested positive for the virus.

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Science, Technology and Environment

Simplified fertilization fulfills nutrition needs of rice growth

[Xinhua, 26-10-2020] Chinese researchers have successfully applied single-dose fertilization in mechanized rice planting to reduce nitrogen cost.

The current fertilization is realized by spreading fertilizers over the fields, causing a large amount of fertilizer loss and rice field pollution.

Researchers from the Nanjing Agricultural University adjusted the ratio of slow-release fertilizer and controlled-release fertilizer. Instead of fertilizing the traditional four to five times, now they only need to fertilize once, and the nutrient release from the fertilizers is synchronized with the peak period of rice fertilizer uptake.

Using the new fertilization method, the fertilizer bags are thrown into the soil during rice planting to provide all the nutrition during the total growth cycle of rice.

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Chinese researchers breed new cotton variety to reduce pollution

[Xinhua, 10-10-2020] Chinese researchers have bred a new cotton variety that can reduce the usage of mulch film and avoid potential pollution, according to a report by the Science and Technology Daily.

Mulch film can help preserve heat, inhibit weed growth and prevent pests. However, it has become the main cause of white pollution in cotton fields, seriously affecting the quality of cotton and cultivated land.

A research team successfully bred a cotton variety without using mulch film. The variety also features early maturity, low-temperature tolerance and saline-alkali tolerance. Its yield can reach 350 kg per mu (about 0.067 hectares) on average.

The development of the new variety is expected to solve the problem of white pollution in cotton fields, the report said.

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Saline soil rice breed breaks yield record in east China

[Xinhua, 15-10-2020] A team of Chinese agronomists led by Yuan Longping, dubbed the "father of hybrid rice," has set a record in rice output grown on saline-alkali soil in east China's Jiangsu Province.

The rice breed, developed by Yuan's team, achieved a yield of 802.9 kg per mu on average, or 12.04 tonnes per hectare, in three plots of saline soil in Rudong County.

It is a record output for rice grown on saline soil in China, said a researcher with the China National Rice Research Institute.

Yuan's team had successfully developed varieties of saline-alkali tolerant rice in 2017 with the previous highest yield reaching 620.95 kg per mu.

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Automation can help Chinese horticultural industry

[HortiDaily, 27-10-2020] Even though the mechanization rate of cultivating and harvesting of the major agricultural crops in China has exceeded 70%, the development is uneven among different industries and regions. Chinese experts said that in the future, the low level of automation in the horticultural industry should be targeted as weakness.

Luo Xiwen, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and honorary President of Chinese Society of Agricultural Machinery said, in face of an aging labor force, automation is playing an important role in maintaining the steady development of China's agriculture.

This situation applies to the horticultural industry as well. Globally speaking, China is one of the biggest players in indoor horticulture. Greenhouses and indoor growing facilities have broken the pattern of relying on the weather for food and farming in the open air, but it also has some shortcomings. "

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China's autonomous agricultural machinery sales surge

[Xinhua, 14-10-2020] China's sales of self-driving agricultural machinery equipment and systems reached more than 11,700 units in the first half of this year, posting strong year-on-year growth of 213 percent.

The data was released from an on-site meeting on autonomous agriculture hosted on Wednesday by the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology in the city of Jiamusi in northeast China's Heilongjiang Province.

Autonomous agricultural machinery could reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers by over 30 percent and increase work efficiency by over 50 percent, playing a very positive role in agricultural production.

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How China's digital farmers can grow a post-COVID-19 future

[WEF, 15-10-2020] At the beginning of 2020, China's central government announced plans to pilot a "digital village". It's the country's latest push towards a "Digital China" since the information consumption policy of 2013, which promotes the use of information technology to stimulate more domestic consumption, leading to a boom in the mobile internet-driven economy.

According to the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), as of March 2020, China had the world's largest online population (903 million people) with the percentage of those using mobile phones to go online exceeding 99%. For many people in China, especially in rural areas, a consumer's first internet experience is often via mobile rather than desktop. In fact, farmers have been quick to adopt a digital lifestyle, using mobile payments and online video entertainment. In some areas, the extent to which villagers are connected to the internet is greater than in large cities.

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Research charts road map for China's carbon neutrality vision

[China daily, 13-10-2020] New research suggests China's ambitious target of achieving carbon neutrality by 2060 is in line with the vision of the Paris Agreement to maintain a global temperature rise below 1.5 C.

For China to achieve the target of net-zero CO₂ emissions and a significant reduction of other greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 – which is necessary to limit the temperature rise to 1.5 C – China will need to significantly raise the share of non-fossil fuels in its total energy mix to 86.1 percent from 15.9 percent in 2020, while reducing the proportion of coal to 5.4 percent from 57.4 percent.

The research, titled China's Long-Term Low-Carbon Development Strategy and Pathway, proposed policies and strategies for China's low-carbon development in the next few decades.

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Biodiversity in SW China's Yunnan

[Xinhua, 01-10-2020] Though Yunnan accounts for only 4.1 percent of China's land area, the province is yet deemed "Kingdom of Animals and Plants" and "Gene Bank of Species" because it harbours more than 50 percent of the country's biological species.

In recent years, China has made significant achievements in ecological conservation with the enforcement of laws, policies and other measures, such as the construction of national parks and a ban on forest logging.

Yunnan has established 166 nature reserves at different levels, protecting about 90 percent of the typical ecosystem and 85 percent of important species, including Asian elephants and Yunnan snub-nosed monkeys.

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From survival to revival, the return of crested ibises

[Xinhua, 01-10-2020] From the world's last seven to a global population of more than 5,000, China spent nearly 40 years bringing back crested ibis from the brink of extinction.

In 1981, the entire species around the world was down to the seven crested ibises which were found in Yangxian County, northwest China's Shaanxi Province and deep in the Qinling Mountains, making Qinling, a natural boundary between China's north and south, the "Noah's Ark" of the wild bird.

Since 1981, the local government of Yangxian County has put forward four bans for the protection of the species, prohibiting activities including hunting in the bird's living areas, cutting down trees where it nests, using chemical fertilizers and pesticides in its foraging areas and firing guns in its breeding areas.

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Capital launches platform to trace imported cold-chain food

[China daily, 28-10-2020] The origin and flow of all imported cold-storage meat and aquatic products available on the market in Beijing will be traceable starting in November, as part of efforts to put such food under effective supervision for COVID-19 control and prevention.

All businesses dealing with imported cold chain food in the Chinese capital will be required to upload data on their products, including the origin and flow, onto a platform starting on Sunday, the Beijing Administration for Market Regulation said.

All imported cold-storage meat and aquatic products will be electronically coded on entering Beijing, and trace codes will be available on the packages of the products or market shelves where they are placed so consumers can scan and get information on the products, including their origin and flow.

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Food waste declines during major Chinese holiday

[Xinhua, 05-10-2020] With more Chinese heeding a national call, curbing food waste and promoting thrift have increasingly become a common practice among restaurants and diners. It is also apparent during the ongoing eight-day National Day and Mid-Autumn Festival holiday.

Chinese catering firms have been urged to introduce measures to put an end to food waste while improving the quality of products and providing better service, according to an action plan co-issued by the food safety authority under the State Council.

The plan calls for measures to be integrated into the entire process from material purchase, storage, processing, to serving food and takeaway.

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China a positive force in safeguarding global food security

[Xinhua, 18-10-2020] China has become a positive force in safeguarding the world's food security, Chinese and UN officials said on World Food Day, 16 Oct.

Faced with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chinese government has introduced a series of policies to stabilize food production and ensure supply, which in turn guaranteed stable prices on the market, according to Marielza Oliveira, acting China representative of the United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization.

E-commerce enterprises in China also took innovative measures to develop online sales channels for agricultural products, Oliveira said.

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Trade and Business

China agricultural hi-tech fair sees 16.5 bln USD in deals

[Xinhua, 26-10-2020] Investment and transactions worth 110 billion yuan (about 16.5 billion U.S. dollars) were signed at an agricultural hi-tech fair in northwest China's Shaanxi Province.

The 27th China Yangling Agricultural Hi-tech Fair kicked off on Oct. 22 and concluded on Oct 26 in the Yangling agricultural hi-tech industrial demonstration zone.

Displaying more than 9,000 of the latest agricultural scientific and technological achievements and advanced practical technologies at home and abroad, the event attracted delegations from over 50 countries and saw 1.5 million attendances both online and offline.

2,000 booths were set up in six exhibition halls, and over 6,000 enterprises exhibited online.

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China's pork supply to continue improving amid policy supports, import hikes

[Xinhua, 25-10-2020] The supply of pork in China is expected to continue improving and price jumps are unlikely in the remainder of 2020, as pro-hog production policies take effect and imports expand, said the agriculture ministry.

By the end of September, the number of hogs available for slaughter had reached 370 million, pork prices have continued to decline for seven consecutive weeks as hog production gains further recovery momentum.

To ensure the stable supply of the staple meat, the country has also expanded pork imports. During the January-September period, total inflows hit 3.8 million tonnes, up 132.2 percent from the same period last year.

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2020 China dairy industry summit held in Hebei

[MARA, 13-10-2020] The 2020 China Dairy Industry Summit (D20) was held in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province on Oct. 12.

The theme of this year's summit was "Empower the dairy industry and offer health guidance in a shared society." The summit reviewed the experiences of past five years since the first D20 Summit and shared the achievements of China's dairy industry. The summit also released the 2020 Quality Report on China Dairy Industry, gathered outcomes of the China Milk Action project and launched the Three-year Action Plan for China's Top 20 Dairy Companies.

The summit reiterated the importance of seizing the opportunity to make the dairy industry a pioneer of China's agricultural modernization. The summit also noted that it is imperative to promote high-quality development of the dairy industry through greater efforts and more practical measures; create a quality and safety monitoring system along the whole industry chain; and develop world-renowned dairy brands to help build a bigger and stronger industry.

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Cross-border e-commerce expanding rapidly

[China daily, 23-10-2020] Cross border e-commerce, which has expanded during the coronavirus pandemic, has played a positive role in the resumption of agricultural production and trade relations, industry insiders said.

China has established bilateral e-commerce cooperation mechanisms with 22 countries worldwide, providing an economic and trade boost to participants in the Belt and Road Initiative, said a senior official at the Ministry of Commerce.

E-commerce in China soared to a record 34.8 trillion yuan (\$ 5.21 trillion) last year. In the first three quarters this year, China's import and export through the customs cross-border e-commerce management platform reached 187.39 billion yuan (\$28.03 billion), a year-on-year increase of 52.8 percent.

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Online retail provides strong support for China's consumption growth amid COVID-19

[China daily, 04-10-2020] The online retail market has provided strong support for China to promote consumption growth and domestic circulation as economic activity is hampered by the coronavirus epidemic, according to the latest statistical report on China's internet development.

The report released by the China Internet Network Information Center noted that China's online retail sales in the first half of 2020 had risen by 7.3 percent year on year to exceed 5.15 trillion yuan (about \$758.5 billion), citing National Bureau of Statistics figures.

During the same period, online retail sales of physical commodities accounted for as much as 25.2 percent of the total retail sales of consumer goods.

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Livestreaming e-commerce to become trillion-yuan market in 2020

[China daily, 22-10-2020] Livestreaming e-commerce, an emerging trend in the consumption sector, is expected to continue its rapid growth and its market size to surpass 1 trillion yuan (\$157.5 billion) this year, according to a new report.

The report, released by KPMG and Ali Research, predicted the livestreaming e-commerce market would reach 1.05 trillion yuan this year, up from 433.8 billion yuan in 2019. The livestreaming e-commerce market saw 210 percent year-on-year growth in 2019, and will continue its fast growth trend this year.

Data from the Ministry of Commerce show the number of livestreaming e-commerce programs passed 10 million in the first half of 2020, attracting more than 50 billion views and promoting more than 20 million products. On average, more than 50,000 livestreaming e-commerce shows were held per day, garnering 260 million views.

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EU agri-food products to be protected in China

[European Parliament, 27-10-2020] In a resolution approved by 38 votes, with one vote against and three abstentions, the Trade Committee backed the EU's agreement with China, signed in September 2020. It will ensure that one hundred European products bearing Geographical Indications (GIs) will be protected against imitations and misuse of a product's name. In exchange, one hundred Chinese products will enjoy the same type of protection in the EU.

Within four years, the agreement will be extended to include a further 175 European and Chinese products.

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Argentina's beef exports to China this year seen at pre-pandemic pace

[30-09-2020] Argentina is expected to export about 870,000 tonnes of beef to China this year, the main destination for the South American country's renowned red meat, matching last year's exports despite the global pandemic, a local meat chamber said.

Argentina is a major global food suppliers and China is an avid consumer of its beef. About 75% of Argentine beef exports were destined for the Chinese market last year, according to government data.

The flow of beef products from Argentina to China, a major trade partner, did not endure a significant slowdown in the midst of COVID-19, the head of Argentina's ABC meat export consortium said.

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New Zealand dairy giant Fonterra sells China farms to reduce debt

[Xinhua, 05-10-2020] New Zealand dairy co-operative Fonterra has agreed to sell its farms in China to local partners for a total of 555 million NZ dollars to reduce debt, the company said in a statement.

The sale is believed to be a part of Fonterra's review and trimming of its investment portfolio as it targets reducing debt.

Fonterra announced on Sept. 18 its 2019/20 net debt remains 4.7 billion New Zealand dollars despite a better earning performance. The company vowed to follow through on its commitment to financial discipline, which has increased its financial strength.

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UK to highlight food, beverage display at CIIE

[Xinhua, 12-10-2020] The UK will showcase British food and drink as well as other products at the upcoming 3rd China International Import Expo (CIIE), held from Nov. 5 to 10 in Shanghai, meanwhile looking for more business opportunities by setting up a virtual exhibition hall.

Themed "Food is GREAT," the UK pavilion at this year's CIIE covers an area of 300 square meters, with a delegation consisting of more than 120 UK companies, including leading brands in the agriculture and food and beverage industries.

In addition to its physical pavilion, the UK also launched a digital platform in late September with a unique digital offer that enables Chinese companies and consumers to connect with some 250 British companies before and after the expo.

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China's major hog producer expects surging profit

[Xinhua, 10-10-2020] China's leading hog producer Muyuan Foods expected surging profits in the first three quarters amid high demand for pork, a staple meat in the country.

The company's net profits attributable to shareholders in the first nine months are expected to reach 20.7 billion yuan (about 3.05 billion U.S. dollars) to 21.2 billion yuan, more than 14 times that in the same period last year, the firm said in a statement filed with the Shenzhen Stock Exchange.

The surge in profits was due to a rise in both hog prices and the number of hogs sold, according to the statement.

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China inflation eases further as farms recover from floods, swine fever

[AFP, 15-10-2020] The rise in Chinese consumer prices slowed for a second successive month in September, official data showed on October 15, as pork supplies bounce back from the devastating African swine fever while farms recovered from flooding.

The consumer price index (CPI), a key gauge of retail inflation, rose 1.7% last month from a year ago, compared with a 2.4% reading in August, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). The increase was also less than expected.

Food prices have begun to stabilize after months of huge rises fueled by the swine fever, which ravaged pig herds across the country and sent the cost of pork rocketing, in turn pushing up demand for other meat.

Floods also swept across China in late June, hitting vegetable crops and transportation.

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This issue is compiled by SAIN Secretariat (UK). If you have any further enquiries, please contact Yuelai Lu at: y.lu@uea.ac.uk; for more information about SAIN, please visit: www.sainonline.org/English.html

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