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## Policies

### **China issues guidelines on implementing 13th 5-year plan**

[Xinhua, 23-10-2016] The Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council have issued guidelines on the implementation of the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) for economic and social development.

The guidelines urged appropriate handling of the relationship between the government and the market, mobilizing the enthusiasm of both central and local governments, coordinating priorities with overall development and strengthening the leading and restrictive role of the plan during the period.

The 25 key indicators of the plan should be included in the national economic planner's annual plan index system, and sub-plans and regional plans should be issued and implemented before the end of this year.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China lays out plan for agricultural modernization by 2020**

[China Daily, 21-10-2016] China aims to achieve "marked progress" in agricultural modernization by 2020, according to a five-year plan released by the State Council Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October.

The country will strive to ensure food security, improve the quality and efficiency of farm produce supply, and enhance the sector's international competitiveness by 2020, the plan said.

It also targets all-round moderate prosperity for rural residents, and a beautiful countryside.

The plan specified tasks to promote innovation, coordination, green development, opening up and farmers' welfare.

Fourteen key projects will be carried out to attain the plan's goals. They include projects to cultivate high-standard farmland, integrate various sub-industries and ensure farm produce quality.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China promotes transfer of farmland use right**

[Xinhua, 30-10-2016] A policy of promoting and standardizing the transfer of the right to use farmland from rural residents to commercial entities is expected to raise the efficiency of agricultural production in China.

According to the policy announced on Sunday 30 October, rural residents will enjoy greater freedom of transferring the land they have contracted, while their right to collectively own the land remains unchanged.

Most of China's farmland is owned collectively by the people who work on it. As the rural workforce migrated to better paid jobs in the big cities, China began, in 2008, to allow farmers to rent out, transfer and merge the land they have contracted, amid a reform to bolster modern farming and reuse unattended land.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Harvest of reform to modernize agriculture**

[China daily, 25-10-2016] The State Council recently issued a five-year plan for strategic agricultural modernization (2016-20) and according to Minister of Agriculture Han Changfu, the plan has clearly defined the importance of agricultural modernization.

The sector has a solid basis for modernization and is entering a development stage, Han said.

According to the plan, by 2020 food security will be effectively guaranteed, the quality and efficiency of the agricultural product supply system will be greatly increased, the sector's international competitiveness will be further enhanced and rural residents' livelihood will be improved.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China promotes e-commerce in rural areas**

[Xinhua, 17-10-2016] To boost rural development, China will push for faster growth of the e-commerce sector across its vast under-developed areas.

"Policy support will be given to small online retailers ... to lower their operational costs," the Ministry of Commerce announced.

More will be done to support and nurture e-commerce businesses operating in rural regions, and training programs will be on offer to small business owners, according to guidance advice posted on the ministry's website.

Cooperation between e-commerce businesses and service providers that deal with rural consumers will be encouraged, infrastructure that supports or facilitates e-commerce in rural areas will be upgraded, and private investors will be encouraged to support the sector, it noted.

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## **Premier underlines water conservancy projects**

[Xinhua, 20-10-2016] Premier Li Keqiang has ordered that work on agriculture-related water projects and major water conservation projects must be intensified.

Li said the construction of farmland water conservation projects will improve agricultural productivity, raise farmers' incomes and help lift them out of poverty.

Vice Premier Wang Yang said that the country should prioritize water- and disaster-damaged renovation projects and step up the construction of large and medium-sized irrigation and drainage projects.

Special emphases will be given to agricultural water-saving facilities and water-saving irrigation processes for farmland, management and protection of water conservation projects.

Click [here](#) for details

## **China pledges to streamline administrative approval, ease rules for foreign investors**

[Xinhua, 08-10-2016] The Chinese government on Saturday 8 October decided to streamline administrative approval, delegate more power to lower government levels and loosen rules on foreign investment in an attempt to revive the economy.

Provincial governments will approve investment projects related to container terminals, vehicle engines, urban transit systems and inland water transportation, according to the new regulations.

More private investment will be encouraged in various sectors, including medical care, education, culture and sports.

In addition, the meeting pledged efforts to modernize agriculture, encouraging diversified business models and the mechanization and informatization of the sector. Financing support will also be increased.

China will also curb agricultural pollution by adopting strict rules on the use of fertilizers and additives, and strengthen the supervision of farm produce.

The government will work to enhance farmers' incomes and guarantee their urban housing demands, the statement said.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China to settle 100 mln migrants in cities by 2020**

[Xinhua, 11-10-2016] China will help 100 million migrants settle in cities to expand urbanization, the country's cabinet announced Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October.

The government plans to annually help over 13 million migrants seek urban hukou (household registration) that will qualify them for social benefits such as health care, over the next five years. The plans are part of an attempt to lift the percentage of people living in cities and having the relevant hukou to 45 percent by 2020, according to a statement released by the State Council.

Additional fiscal, financial and land use policies will be rolled out to ensure migrant residents with local hukou enjoy equal social benefits such as health care and education, the statement added.

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### **Shanghai food authority fines fast food supplier over meat scandal**

[Xinhua, 03-10-2016] Shanghai Municipal Food and Drug Administration on Monday 3 October ordered a major fast food chain supplier and its parent company to pay fines for producing and selling substandard products.

According to the authority, Shanghai Husi Food Co. and OSI Group's China office were fined approximately 17 million yuan (2.5 million U.S. dollars) and 7.3 million yuan respectively.

The district market regulators have also added the two companies to a blacklist of those who have committed serious legal violations, meaning stricter regulations in the future.

In a statement, the two companies accepted the punishment and promised to pay the penalty on time.

Husi is a subsidiary of U.S.-based global food processor OSI Group and a former supplier to major fast food chains including McDonald's and Yum! Brands KFC and Pizza Hut.

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### **UN urges food wastage crackdown in China**

[China Daily, 16-10-2016] China should put in place concrete policies to encourage the public to stop wasting food, as its agricultural sector faces mounting challenges amid climate change, a UN food agency official says.

Vincent Martin, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations representative in China, said the country should encourage individuals and families to take part in reducing food wastage, with authorities estimating between 40 and 50 billion kilograms of food are wasted in the consumption process each year.

Martin noted that more than one-third of food produced worldwide was lost or wasted, and that global food wastage emissions were almost equal to global road transport emission.

Poor storage facilities, which resulted in deterioration and loss from scavengers, resulted in the loss of 20 million tons of food, while poor transportation methods - such as horse drawn carriages and tricycles - and the inadequate packaging used by many farmers resulted in the loss of about 7.5 million tons of grain.

Click [here](#) for details

### **EU and China talk food security: a legal framework in the making**

[EUBulletin, 14-10-2016] The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) is planning to formalize its relationship with the China National Centre for Food Safety Risk Assessment (CFSA) during the visit of EFSA's Executive Director to China next month. EFSA will also take part in the "China International Food Safety & Quality Conference + Expo 2016" and co-chair one of its seminars on future priorities in food safety.

The seminar that will be organized by the European Commission and EFSA will outline future food safety challenges and their implications for international risk assessors and other stakeholders. EFSA will also give more insights into its work and provide its new guidelines on applications for novel and traditional foods.

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### **Belt and Road Initiative being materialized for common development, prosperity**

[Xinhua, 24-10-2016] China's Belt and Road Initiative is contributing increasingly more to the development and growth in the scores of participating countries, while expanding common interests with them.

The initiative, on the footing of history and the modern trend of globalization and regional The initiative -- the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road -- has been found to fit in well with development strategies in countries along the routes, despite their different cultures and development stages.

Farming technologies are also among the "exports" of China under the Belt and Road Initiative to Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia, an important stop on the ancient Silk Road.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Science, Technology and Environment**

### **Research center attempts to plant grain on saline land**

[China Daily, 13-10-2016] A research and development center focusing on "sea rice" agriculture is expected to produce quality grain on saline and alkaline land, according to a signing ceremony on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> Oct in Qingdao, East China's Shandong province.

Based in Qingdao Licang District, the new center will invest 100 million yuan (\$14.8 million) at the initiative stage and is expected to reach over 2 billion yuan in the future.

Yuan Longping, dubbed the "father of hybrid rice", serves as the director and chief scientist for the center.

Sea rice is a product created with genetic engineering technology. Irrigated by sea water with its salinity no lower than one percent, it can yield 200 to 300 kg per mu (0.06 hectares).

Click [here](#) for details

### **China announces nine new state-level marine parks**

[Xinhua, 03-10-2016] The State Oceanic Administration (SOA) has announced nine new state-level marine parks, bringing the total number of such parks in China to 42.

The SOA has ordered local marine authorities in these provinces to start demarcating the parks, and not to arbitrarily adjust or change the parks' boundaries and zoning.

The SOA has stressed the need to improve protection of the marine environment when tourism and aquaculture activities are conducted in certain zones of the parks.

China's state-level marine parks, first introduced in 2011, offer public space for coastal recreation, enhance protection of marine ecosystems and boost sustainable development of coastal tourism.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Horse lover rescues the Bohai from extinction**

[China Daily, 05-10-2016] Fan Jiayi never expected that the profound feelings he had for a Bohai horse during his childhood would lead him to a lifelong career of raising horses and quite possibly save the breed from extinction.

Fan's farm is China's sole base for preserving the Bohai horse, a famous breed in China. The Bohai horse was developed by interbreeding Mongolian horses and horses introduced from the former Soviet Union during the 1950s and '60s. The tall, well-proportioned and powerful yet gentle horses are found mainly in the northeastern part of Shandong province and the south shore of Bohai Bay.

The breed was used to pull carts and as packhorses in wars. But as mechanized agriculture grew more widespread in recent years, the number of Bohai horses fell sharply from its peak in the 1980s of more than 80,000.

Han Guocai, deputy director of the Horse Research Center at China Agricultural University in Beijing, said the number of Bohai horses had fallen to only 200 in 2007. Today, they are estimated to number about 1,000.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Chinese scientists control major cotton disease with gene technology**

[Xinhua, 04-10-2016] Chinese scientists have made a breakthrough in controlling a major disease of cotton plants using gene technology.

After eight years of research, scientists with the Institute of Microbiology of Chinese Academy of Sciences found that gene interference technology can prevent the spread of a pathogenic fungus, the cause of verticillium dahliae wilt.

Verticillium dahliae is a vascular fungal pathogen responsible for devastating many crops.

Led by Guo Huishan, the research group has discovered how the fungus infects the cotton.

Based on their findings, scientists have cultivated a new strain of cotton with resistance to verticillium dahliae increased by 22.25 percent.

The findings have been published in the latest edition of "Nature Plants."

Click [here](#) for details

## **First international apple symposium to open in Shaanxi**

[People's daily, 09-10-2016] Northwestern China's Shaanxi province will hold an International Apple Symposium (IAS) from Oct. 10-16, a provincial leader said on Oct. 9. The symposium will be the first of its kind.

The decision was issued by the International Society of Horticultural Science (ISHS), and carries the full recognition and approval of China's apple industry, according to Feng Xinzhu, deputy provincial governor, at a press conference on Oct. 9. Feng added that the first IAS will be held in Yangling and Yan'an in Shaanxi province.

More than 150 representatives from over 30 major apple-producing countries will participate in the symposium, which is expected to draw more than 40,000 attendees.

Han Zhenhai, deputy executive president of the Chinese Society for Horticultural Science, noted that 24 out of the 35 apple species available worldwide are originated in China, and was responsible for slightly more than half the world's apple production in 2014.

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## **Agri-tourism booms as colorful concepts crop up across the region**

[China Daily, 05-10-2016] One of the granaries and golden corn belts of the country, Shenyang, capital of Northeast China's Liaoning province, is transforming into an agricultural tourism destination.

According to the Shenyang Committee of Rural Economy, agri-tourism is expanding rapidly. Last year, 195 new hospitality projects were approved. Their income reached 908 million yuan (\$136 million) from over 4.4 million visitors.

According to its latest study, China's middle class consumers spend significantly more time and money on leisure activities and tourism. Moreover, they prefer to choose tours that afford memorable experiences, not just sightseeing opportunities.

In this context, agri-tourism offers many opportunities for such experience-seeking travelers.

According to the data of the Ministry of Agriculture, nationwide revenue from agri-tourism reached 440 billion yuan in 2015, up 10 percent year-on-year. About 5.5 million rural families benefited from the development.

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## **China eyes rural tourism to help poverty relief**

[Xinhua, 10-10-2016] Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang urged more efforts to boost rural tourism as the country strives to increase farmers' incomes and eliminate rural poverty.

During an inspection tour in Laishui County in north China's Hebei Province, Wang described the industry as a major means to develop impoverished areas.

Companies will be encouraged to create new business models, and the government will allow farmers to pledge their land management rights to raise funds for tourism businesses, Wang said. He also stressed the protection of the rural environment and culture.

Last year, 2.2 billion trips were made to the countryside by urban tourists, and the revenue from rural tourism totaled 440 billion yuan (around 65 billion U.S. dollars), according to the Ministry of Agriculture. The booming sector has created jobs for 6.3 million rural people.

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## **Agricultural capacity increase to assist in climate change fight**

[China daily, 17-08-2016] China will further enhance the capacity of its agricultural sector to cope with climate change by improving the quality of farmland and reducing food loss and waste, government officials and experts said to mark World Food Day on Sunday 16 October.

Climate-related disasters account for the loss of 50 billion kilograms of grain in China every year, and climate change could further trigger uncertainties in the country's natural environment, according to the China Meteorological Administration.

The government will continue its efforts to implement measures such as conservation tillage, increasing organic content in soil and better integrating water management to cope with the impact of climate change on the agricultural sector, Sun Zhonghua, chief agronomist at the Ministry of Agriculture, said.

Vincent Martin, China representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, said China should step up practices such as reducing food loss and waste, and preventing deforestation and overfishing to counter the potential impact of climate change. It is also important for the country to convert animal waste into biogas as an alternative and renewable energy source, and prepare for climate-related disasters.

Click [here](#) for details

## **Insured crabs, tea help China's farmers avoid extreme weather losses**

[Reuters, 03-10-2016] As erratic weather has become the new norm in China, insurance policies against losses from extreme weather have emerged in a wide range of agricultural businesses, from beekeeping to cattle ranching to seaweed farming. Many are proving hugely popular, thanks in part to cut-rate prices made possible by government subsidies.

Chinese officials say the number of buyers of agriculture-related insurance has more than tripled in the country between 2007 and 2015, while the area of farmland covered by insurance has quintupled.

The fast expansion of insurance is just one thing China is doing to reduce what it sees as a growing risks related to extreme weather and other climate change impacts.

The country now requires infrastructure construction companies to take climate change impacts into consideration when planning new projects.

It has also developed early warning systems for extreme weather events and taken up popular communications tools – such as Weibo, China's version of Twitter – to send out typhoon alerts.

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## **Trade and Business**

### **Chinese food producers joining Slow Food movement**

[Xinhua, 04-10-2016] Small food producers, restaurant owners, chefs, and professors from China are joining the Slow Food movement worldwide in order to create a greener and more sustainable lifestyle in the future, according to the head of the Slow Food organization for China.

Slow Food China was inaugurated in January 2015 at the Italian Embassy in Beijing. Slow Food China has set up an alliance with the China Association for the Promotion of International Agricultural Cooperation, and is currently registered as a non-profit organization.

The Slow Food movement "aims to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions, counteract the rise of fast life and combat people's dwindling interest in the food they eat". It now promotes a comprehensive approach to food and involves people in over 160 countries "working to ensure everyone has access to good, clean and fair food".

Slow Food China, as a Chinese association linked to the Slow Food International network, always follows international values, criterion, process and structure.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Healthy food hits the road**

[China Daily, 06-10-2016] You are what you eat. But if you are busy with work, away from home, and cannot prepare meals by yourself, how can you ensure that you will eat healthy and stay healthy?

An alternative, at least for people in big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, has arisen recently - emerging services to sell people food that is supposed to be healthy and is delivered to locations as needed.

Such services in Beijing include Need Nutrition, 700 Kcal and Sweetie Salad, while Home Salad and Lemon Awake are among those in Shanghai.

According to Wei Wei, founder and CEO of Need Nutrition, a startup founded this year, there are now at least a dozen such services in Beijing, although late last year there were only a few.

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### **Chinese getting a real taste for British tea**

[Ecns, 09-10-2016] British Tea sales appear to be booming in the place you might least suspect – China. According to UK government figures, British tea companies have seen exports skyrocket. Sales to Hong Kong have nearly tripled last year while exports to the rest of China have nearly doubled. The reason for the rapid rise in sales is a blend of fashion and changing tastes.

In the traditional tea parlours of London there's a change brewing. Rising numbers of those taking to the UK's favourite tippie are from China. The country's young and educated travelling to try new tastes.

"What we're seeing today in China is an opening up to the world, a fascination with cultural activities around the world and what we're doing now is providing an opportunity for the travelling Chinese to discover and enjoy the English interpretation of the afternoon tea ceremony," Whittard of Chelsea CEO Mark Dunhill said.

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### **Brexit makes China keener to strike a trade deal with Britain, says ambassador**

[Telegraph, 11-10-2016] China wants to do more business with post-Brexit Britain, the country's ambassador to the UK said, as he praised the City of London and Britain's financial prowess.

Britain is keen to strike more deals with China, so the warm words from Liu Xiaoming will encourage the Government in its plans to increase non-EU trade.

“Britain is now China’s major trading partner and investment destination in Europe – the Brexit referendum has certainly not dampened the enthusiasm of Chinese businesses about investing in this country,” Mr Liu told HSBC’s China and renminbi forum.

China’s current “belt and road” plan to grow trade “is setting the stage for China and the UK to engage in multiple forms of co-operation – the opportunities are limitless,” he said.

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### **Chinese, US enterprises sign agricultural transaction contracts**

[China Daily, 15-11-2016] More than a dozen Chinese and the US enterprises on Friday 14 October signed agricultural transaction contracts worth \$2.1 billion, under which Chinese enterprises will import 5.1 million tons of farm products from the US companies.

Nearly 100 officials and enterprise representatives from China and the United States attended the signing ceremony held in Des Moines, Iowa.

As Iowa is a leading soybean-producing state in the United States and China is the world's biggest buyer of the product.

Chinese official statistics show that China accounts for 60 percent of the world's soybean transactions. China consumed 95 million tons of soybeans in the 2015-2016 seasonal year, and is expected to consume 98 million tons in the following seasonal year, of which the demand for import will be 83 million tons, up 1.2 percent from the 2015-2016 seasonal year.

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### **Australia's Rinehart and China's Shanghai CRED agree on deal for Kidman cattle empire**

[Reuters, 09-10-2016] Australia's richest woman Gina Rinehart and Chinese developer Shanghai CRED have agreed on a deal to jointly purchase S. Kidman & Co, the country's largest private land holding, for A\$365 million (\$276.8 million), the companies said on Sunday.

Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting will own 67 percent and Shanghai CRED 33 percent of Australian Outback Beef Pty Ltd, a new joint venture created to buy Kidman in a bid to overcome government concerns about foreign interests buying the cattle empire.

In April, the Australian government rejected a A\$371 million (\$281.3 million) bid by a consortium headed by Shanghai CRED and Hunan Dakang Pasture Farming Co Ltd, alongside a minority 20 percent Australian interest, the group's second rejection in six months.

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### **New Hope Group opens Australian headquarters**

[China Daily, 06-10-2016] Diversified Chinese conglomerate New Hope Group Co Ltd's Australian expansion has taken another step, opening its Australian headquarters in Sydney on Thursday 6 October, eyeing further agribusiness acquisitions and an expansion of its fledgling real estate developments.

The group has been forging a strong presence in Australia since 2013, officially beginning construction of its first luxury residential development in Sydney's northern suburbs on Wednesday.

New Hope Group Co Ltd is also eyeing to increase its investment in Australia's dairy industry, expand its healthcare products business, but also source new opportunities and potential new markets in food and agribusiness.

New Hope Group Co Ltd chairman Liu Yonghao told reporters at the launch he sees a lot of opportunities in the Australian market.

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### **China's taste for Australian food leads to Monash deal**

[FR, 10-10-2016] China's biggest food company, Cofco, is partnering with Monash University to help Australian firms export better-designed products for Chinese consumers, a deal which could lead to the state-owned giant making investments in the local food and beverage industry.

Under the agreement, Cofco's Nutrition and Health Research Institute will provide Australian companies with targeted market research and guide them through the certification process for their products.

The service is being offered through the Victorian government-backed Food Innovation Centre. The centre's partnership with Cofco will allow the Chinese group to connect with Australian companies focused on China and could lead to investment opportunities.

The centre is focused on Australia's food and beverage industry, from start-ups and SMEs to large corporations. The deal with Cofco is potentially significant because one of the main issues facing Australian exporters is China's complicated and evolving regulatory requirements.

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### **Chinese seed company opens North American office in Des Moines**

[Business record, 03-10-2016] Origin, a germplasm and crop seed provider, established its North American office in Des Moines' Financial Center Aug. 29, the company announced.

The company has expanded its work in biotech traits. CEO Bill Niebur, CFO Shashank Aurora and other employees will work in Des Moines. Key biotech and seed breeding operations will remain in China. Origin Agritech Ltd. earlier announced it is selling its seed production and distribution business for approximately \$60 million to Beijing Shihui Agricultural Development Co, Ltd., which contributed to the late announcement of the new headquarters. "Des Moines is an ideal location for Origin's North American operations, providing superior access to talent, technologies and proximity to our key target markets," Niebur said in a statement. "Iowa is positioned in the center of agricultural innovation, which will allow Origin to attract and retain great talent, while working collaboratively with, and in close proximity to, our strategic partners."

Origin was founded in 1997 in Beijing.

Click [here](#) for details

### **Chinese firms rush into Cambodian farming**

[GT, 09-10-2016] Chinese investors are rushing to invest in agriculture in Cambodia, drawn by ideal farming conditions and the sound relationship between the two countries, although there are challenges such as Cambodia's underdeveloped infrastructure and limited fundraising channels.

Favorable factors including fertile cropland, relatively low factor prices and the good relationship between the two nations encourage domestic companies to invest in the farming sector in Cambodia, experts said.

Also, Chinese investors can get access to Cambodia's cropland at low prices. For example, cropland costs about 1,000 yuan (\$150) per mu (0.067 hectare) in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, while it costs only 30 yuan per mu in Cambodia.

Furthermore, Cambodia's economy has been growing quickly and its society and politics have become more stable in recent years.

Click [here](#) for details

### **China, Portuguese-speaking countries boost relations**

[Xinhua, 11-10-2016] Chinese Premier Li Keqiang announced on Tuesday 11 October that China has put forward 18 new measures, including offering aid and preferential loans, to boost relations with Portuguese-speaking countries (PSCs) in the next three years.

China will offer aid and preferential loans worth at least 4 billion yuan (almost 600 million U.S. dollars) to PSCs in Asia and Africa, Li said.

He made the announcement at the opening ceremony of the 5th Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries in Macao.

At least 2 billion yuan in aid will be given to help develop agriculture, facilitate trade and investment, prevent and control malaria, and conduct research on traditional medicine in these countries.

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