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Private companies to monitor water quality

Private companies have been put in charge of collecting and analyzing water samples for quality in a bid to prevent interference from local authorities, the Ministry of Environmental Protection said on Oct 16.

According to a plan from the ministry's China National Environmental Monitoring Center, starting this month third-party agencies will collect samples from rivers, lakes and reservoirs before delivering these to independent labs for random analysis.

The data on water quality will be directly uploaded to the center, which will then release the results to the public, the ministry said.

Previously, provincial and city environmental protection bureaus were responsible for the whole process.

The first independent national collection began on Oct 9 and is scheduled to be completed by the end of this month.

China gains ground in ranking of research

Academic research papers from China garner the second most worldwide citations, after those from the United States but ahead of those from the United Kingdom, according to a new study.

The analysis was conducted by Amsterdam-based information and analytics company Elsevier and commissioned by the UK's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Citations are the way in which scholars give credit to other researchers and acknowledge their ideas. They indicate how seriously research is taken by other scientists.

Elsevier assessed the performance of the UK's research base between 2010 and 2014 and compared it with seven other countries: China, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the US.

The analysis found that, in 2014, research papers originating in China accounted for 18.1 percent of all citations, a sharp increase from the 11 percent it had in 2010.

Central SOEs register record profits of \$167b

China's State-owned enterprises (SOEs) under central government administration posted a record high net profit of 1.11 trillion yuan (\$167.6 billion) from January to September, due to more supply-side reforms, reducing the asset-liability ratio requirement and adding curbs on capital outflow.

The nine-month profits represent a year-on-year growth of 18.4 percent, with double-digit growth each month.

Among the 98 central SOEs



Participants in the 10th Chinese Bridge competition celebrate the opening of the event at Yunnan Normal University in Kunming, in Southwest China's Yunnan province, on Oct 17. This year's edition — a test of Chinese proficiency among foreign secondary students — is themed Learn Chinese, Double Your World. More than 300 contestants from 96 countries and regions participated. REN DONG / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

monitored, profits of 56 grew by more than 10 percent and 31 surged by more than 20 percent, the country's top regulator of SOEs said on Oct 12.

Shen Ying, chief accountant of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission, said central SOEs are fostering new growth engines by expanding their footprints in strategic new industries and high-tech sectors, such as digital and green economies, artificial intelligence and new energy vehicles.

Nonfinancial ODI falls 41.9% to \$78b

China's outbound direct investment (ODI) from nonfinancial sectors dropped 41.9 percent year-on-year to \$78.03 billion, between January and September, the Ministry of Commerce announced on Oct 17.

The drop in the country's ODI during this period narrowed 3.9 percentage points from the first half of this year, indicating that China kept deploying more investment in manufacturing and modern service-related businesses in global markets.

Investment in leasing and commercial services, manufacturing, retail, and information-related businesses took 32 percent, 17.3 percent, 12.2 percent and 10.5 percent of the country's total ODI, respectively, during the nine-month period, said the ministry.

Companies from China invested in 5,159 companies in 154 countries

and regions from January to September and signed \$168.2 billion in new contracts for overseas projects, a rise of 13.8 percent year-on-year.

US debt holdings see third straight increase

China's holdings of US treasuries rose for a third consecutive month in August to the highest in a year on the back of rising foreign exchange reserves and expectations that the greenback may appreciate further.

The country's total holdings of US bonds, notes and bills rose by \$34.5 billion on a monthly basis in August to \$1.2 trillion, according to data from the US Treasury Department on Oct 17.

Japan, which overtook China as the largest holder of US treasuries last October, cut its holdings by \$11.4 billion to \$1.1 trillion in August.

China's foreign exchange reserves rose to their highest level so far this year in September to \$3.11 trillion, marking a rise for the eighth straight month.

PBOC official expects yuan to be more stable

Yuan exchange rates will have a more stable foundation after the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the market will have a bigger role in determining the currency's value, a top central bank official said on Oct 18.

The People's Bank of China, the

central bank, has almost withdrawn its "regular" intervention in the foreign exchange market, Pan Gongsheng, head of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, said.

"We can also see that the exchange rate is more market-driven and has been more stable recently," said Pan, who is also a deputy governor of the central bank.

The central bank released a report on its website on Oct 17 saying that the bank will continually facilitate the yuan's internationalization to reflect a more stable position in the global monetary system.



A runner sporting a giraffe costume participates in the 2017 Nanjing Marathon Championships (Nanjing Station) in eastern Jiangsu province on Oct 15. Around 28,000 people, both professional runners and amateurs, took part. Many dressed up in costumes. WAN CHENGPENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

PLA releases rules on opening doors to public

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has published guidelines on how and when barracks of some units can be opened to the public, aiming to boost awareness on national defense.

The guidelines were made and published by the Central Military Commission's General Office and have been put into effect.

The idea is to display the PLA's "new images", strengthen the public's passion for the military and their respect toward service members, and encourage officers and soldiers to dedicate themselves to building a strong military, according to a news release from the office.

This is the first time the Chinese military has issued specific rules regarding open houses at its units. Previously, PLA units conducted such activities in accordance with their own plans and schedules.

Shanghai rehab centers use VR to help addicts

Drug rehabilitation centers in Shanghai have become the first in China to use virtual reality (VR) technology to help addicts, according to the city government.

Around 700 addicts in two of the city's five rehab centers have been using a newly developed system since late September to help staff members understand the sufferers' level of addiction and assist them to turn their lives around more quickly, the Shanghai Drug Rehabilitation Administration said.

Users wear a VR helmet with an eye-movement tracking system and then "walk into" scenes with drugs and other paraphernalia. Their eye movement, together with other biological indicators such as heart rate and skin conductivity, is recorded as an objective way to show their level of addiction.