



Back Page

Former Miss Singapore shares her success secrets

>> FROM PAGE 2

endorsed by this year's session of the 13th National People's Congress, assigned each of the 57 key tasks in 12 aspects specified in the Work Report to competent departments.

Trump's Taiwan act deals blow to stability

The Taiwan Travel Act signed on March 16 by US President Donald Trump has "dealt a serious blow" to the complex ties between China and the United States, as well as to cross-Straits peace and stability, a Chinese official said on March 18.

The act sends the wrong signal to "Taiwan independence" separatists, said An Fengshan, spokesman for the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office.

The act says that the US government should encourage visits between officials of Taiwan and the United States at all levels. Trump pledged shortly after taking office to support the one-China policy.

"Once again, I would like to solemnly urge Taiwan that relying on foreigners to build you up will only backfire," An said.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said Beijing firmly opposes Trump's signing of the act and has lodged serious representations to the US side.

Xi, Merkel mark path ahead in phone call

President Xi Jinping spoke by telephone with German Chancellor Angela Merkel on March 17, saying China and Germany should set an example of win-win cooperation.

Xi extended his congratulations to Merkel on her fourth election as German chancellor, and Merkel congratulated Xi on his election as Chinese president by a unanimous vote on March 17 at the session of the 13th National People's Congress.

Xi said China and Germany should set an example of win-win cooperation, align their strategies, plan for mutually beneficial cooperation, push forward cooperation within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative and achieve common development.

The two countries should also lead the development of China-European Union relations, and play constructive roles in promoting China-EU strategic mutual trust and cooperation, he added.



Underneath a red lantern, two women brave a snow flurry in Beijing on March 17. The capital had just recorded 145 consecutive days without precipitation, its longest dry spell in 47 years. ZHANG CHENG / XINHUA

Jiangsu set to expand high-speed rail network

East China's Jiangsu province will build more than 1,200 kilometers of railways and add air routes to further develop its transportation network and generate new growth points for sectors such as e-commerce, smart manufacturing, tourism and automobiles, senior officials said.

The total length of the province's railway network will grow from the current 2,791 km to over 4,000 km by 2020, according to Lu Yongquan, director of the Jiangsu Transportation Department and a deputy to the National People's Congress, the top legislature.

Jiangsu plans to build more regular and high-speed railroads in the north of the province, where the transportation network is weaker than in other parts, Lu said, adding that four high-speed railroads with a total length of 958 km are already under construction.

Artist's handwritten menus sell for \$1.2m

Work by a famous artist can command a huge price — even if it is a stack of dinner menus.

A collection of handwritten menus by the prodigious Chinese

guohua (traditionalist) painter Zhang Daqian was sold at Christie's in New York on March 20 for about \$1.2 million. Zhang was a committed foodie who would meticulously write menus by hand for his private chef.

"Today Christie's sold in our March New York auction of fine Chinese paintings all the menus handwritten by Zhang Daqian. The total price was more than eight times the combined low estimates," said Elizabeth Hammer, head of sales for Chinese paintings at Christie's.

"These listings of Zhang Daqian's favorite dishes were given to Hsu Minchi, who worked for Zhang as his private chef in Taiwan from 1977 to 1979," Hammer said.

More seniors recognize value of writing wills

An increasing number of seniors in China are recognizing the importance of writing wills while they are physically and mentally healthy in order to avoid disputes and simplify inheritance procedures, according to a white paper released by the China Will Registration Center commemorating its fifth anniversary on March 21.

Launched in Beijing in 2013, the center is the country's only

nonprofit organization dedicated to providing free consultations, registration and custodial services to local citizens aged 60 and above.

The center works with psychiatric organizations that perform mental health evaluations on seniors to determine if they are of sound mind when drafting a will.

More than 82,000 seniors aged 60 and above in the country have written and stored their wills at the center.

The white paper revealed an increasing awareness and willingness among seniors to draft and store a will.

Bonus points in five gaokao areas to be cut

China will eliminate five preferential items from its education policy that adds bonus points to a student's national college entrance exam, or *gaokao*, as part of an effort to have a more fair and scientific selection process, the Ministry of Education said on March 21.

The ministry will stop giving bonus points to students who have exceptional sports ability, who have won academic Olympiads or science and technology competitions, who are named "provincial-level excellent students" or those who have performed "righteous and

courageous deeds," according to a statement posted on its website.

The statement does not mention ethnic groups, the children of national martyrs or returned overseas Chinese, meaning they may still be eligible for bonus points on the *gaokao*.

Smartphones hurting sleep of young people

More than 60 percent of people born after 1990 — the group that most actively uses smartphones late at night — do not sleep well, according to a report on the sleep patterns of Chinese netizens.

Netizens sleep 7.1 hours a day on average, but 56 percent do not sleep well, according to an online survey of 2,000 people aged 18 to 50 in 10 major cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, and South China's Guangzhou and Shenzhen.

IT workers are most likely to suffer insomnia, with 16 percent claiming to have problems sleeping, followed by blue-collar workers, salespeople and consultants, the report by the Chinese Sleep Research Society said.

Released on March 18, the report said 12 percent of people born after 1990 had experienced insomnia, and for 75 percent of them, emotions such as anxiety and sadness had affected their sleep.

Single supplement can cut stroke risk: Experts

Health experts in China call for what they say is long overdue: An effort to curb H-type hypertension by prescribing supplemental folic acid.

H-type hypertension is said to pose eight to 10 times the risk of a stroke due to an artery blockage to the brain compared with the non-H variety.

By reducing the incidence of the more dangerous type, 2.1 million cases of stroke could be averted annually, the experts say.

People with high blood pressure who have elevated levels of homocysteine, or Hcy, an amino acid, are defined as having H-type hypertension. China has roughly 200 million such patients out of a total 300 million people with high blood pressure, according to Huo Yong, director of the Department of Cardiology and Heart Center at Peking University First Hospital.

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