

Beijing maps out construction of eco-environment

Beijing municipal leaders last Friday mapped out a task list scheduled for eco-environment construction in 2017 on air pollution and water environment treatment, landscaping and removing illegal construction.

This year Beijing will cut coal consumption by 3 million tons to 7 million tons or less, including replacing coal with clean energy in 700 villages, in efforts to control annual average concentration of PM2.5 at about 60 micrograms/cubic meters.

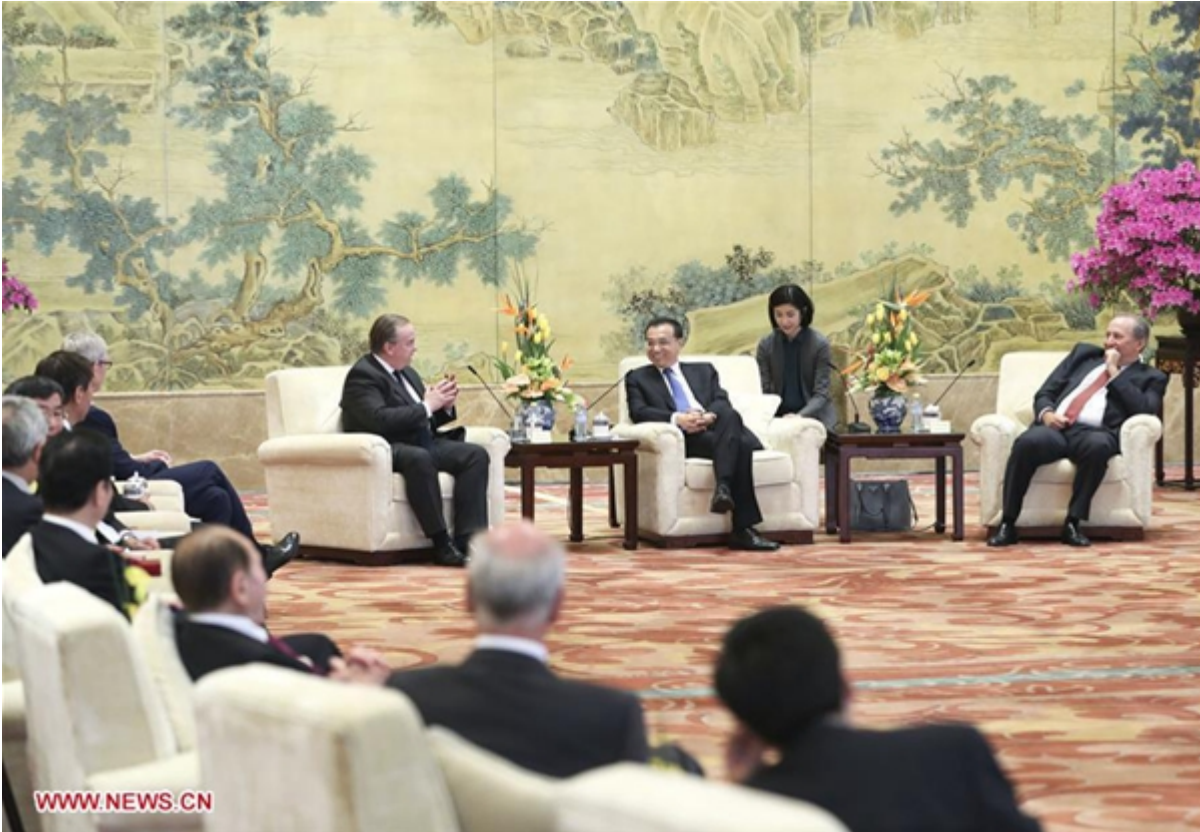
In water environment governance in urban and rural areas, the city will eliminate black and odorous water citywide and cover the areas that have been built in the sub-center with the sewage pipe network and disposal system by the end of 2017.

In landscaping sector, 600 hectares of greenbelt will be paved and 15 leisure parks will be built. The city sub-center will also see 1,800 hectares of greenery to be added and 3,000 hectares to be upgraded.

With respect to traffic management, Beijing will phase in 100 projects to tackle this issue including building 90 more bypasses in six urban districts and increasing the rail transit length by 30 kilometers. 40 kilometers of bus lanes are also planned, joined by a program for 600 kilometers of bikeways. Public sharing bicycle services will be promoted with regulations.

According to Vice Mayor Sui Zhenjiang, 30 million square meters of illegal construction have been torn down over 2016. This year a total removal of 40 million square meters has been targeted to see to it that there would be no more emerging violations.

China's door opens wider to outside world: Premier Li



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang meets with foreign representatives of the China Development Forum (CDF) 2017 in Beijing, capital of China, March 20, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

China will open its door wider to the outside world, said Chinese Premier Li Keqiang on Monday.

Li made the remarks when meeting with overseas representatives at the China Development Forum (CDF) in Beijing.

China will relax market access in service industries, manufacturing and mining, said Li

China supports foreign-funded enterprises to list and issue bonds in China and participate in national science and technology programs as well as infrastructure construction, he said.

China will streamline the administrative procedures for foreign investments and create a fair competition environment for all companies registered in China, he said.

He welcomed more foreign companies to invest in China, cooperate with Chinese enterprises and enjoy development opportunities together.

Li said the Chinese economy has achieved steady growth, with continued improvement in its quality and efficiency.

China is making efforts to advance supply side structural reform, seek growth driven by innovation, promote entrepreneurship and the "Internet Plus" plan, and to streamline administration, he said.

China will continue to boost the healthy development of emerging industries and is willing to deepen cooperation with foreign governments and enterprises in this field, said Li.

He hoped that other countries overcome the problems of globalization and properly deal with frictions and divergences through dialogue and consultation.

China will steadfastly advance the liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment, safeguard multilateral trade and support open and transparent regional free trade arrangements, said the premier.

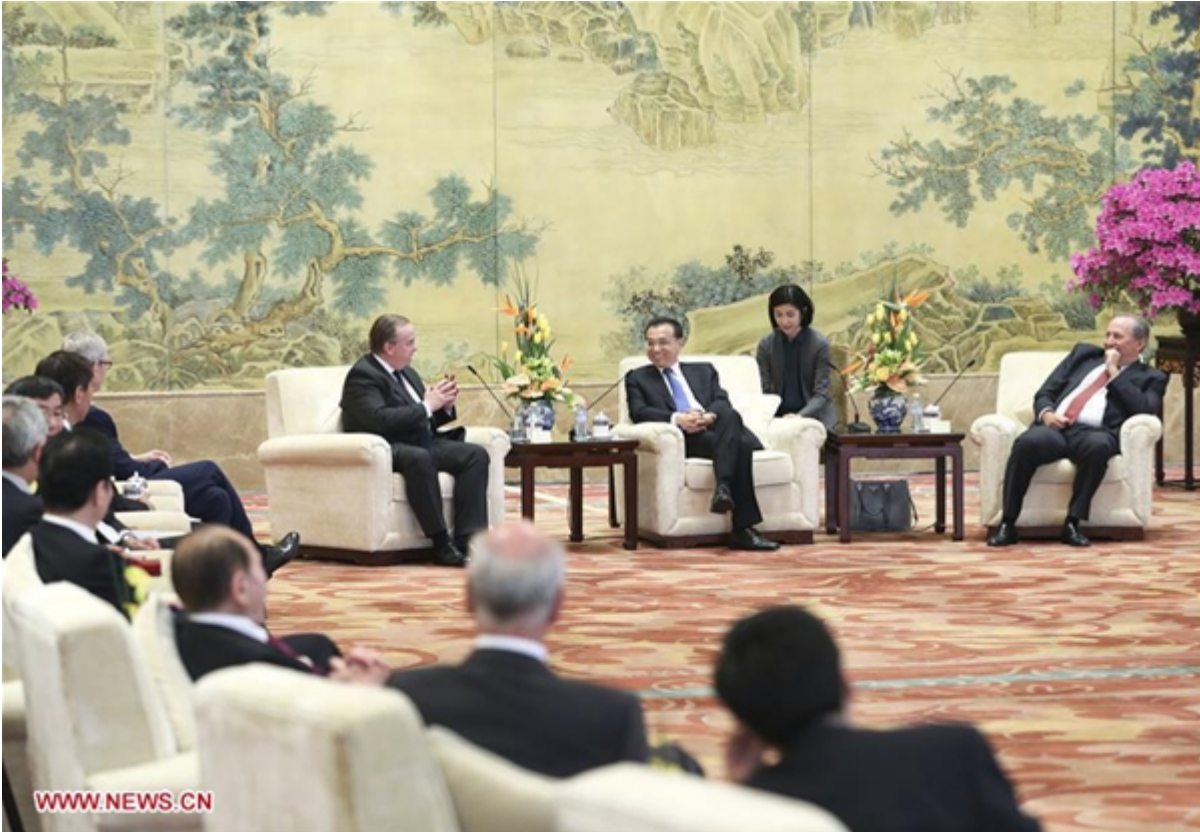
Li answered questions from Stuart Gulliver, the chief executive of the bank HSBC, former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Lawrence Summers, Apple CEO Tim Cook, Martin Wolf, chief economics commentator for the Financial Times and Columbia University professor Edmund Phelps.

Overseas representatives lauded China's remarkable progress in stabilizing growth and restructuring the economy, as well as China's active role in coping with climate change.

The representatives voiced their willingness of participating in China's reform and opening-up process and expanding their partnerships with China.

The CDF, organized by the Development Research Center of the State Council, is a high-level meeting that gathers leaders from international institutions, academia and companies worldwide. It is usually held after the annual sessions of China's national legislature and political advisory body.

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John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, responding to the Guardian revelations that some British banks were involved in the laundering of hundreds of millions of pounds from Russian criminals, said:

"This scandal needs to be investigated in full by the National Crime Agency, and the government must ensure they have all the resources and support needed. Britain cannot be a haven for the criminals of the world who are looking to hide their money.

"It's deeply disappointing that there are British banks involved in yet

another banking scandal as the actions of a few shouldn't overshadow the hard work of the thousands of employees in the sector who will have had nothing to do with this case. But it appears that some of these big banks haven't learnt the lessons of the past, and are clearly not doing enough to clamp down on financial crime and money laundering.

"The government's overall approach to the banking sector is one that has seen them handout billions in tax giveaways that favour the big banks over the challenger banks, and pursue a 'light touch' approach to regulation that borders on a return to the bad old days before the crash. Now we know the date for when Article 50 is to be triggered, we need clarity from the government that this scandal is not a glimpse into the future of what a Tory Banker's Brexit will resemble.

"It is scandals like this that only further support the case for Labour's Tax Transparency Enforcement Programme to ensure that there are no more hiding places for the super-rich to dodge paying their taxes, or to hide proceeds of crime. If the Tories will not act to clamp down on such acts, then the next Labour government will make them a thing of the past."

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