

## UN forum helps China tackle ageing problems



UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and Zhongshan College based in China's Nanjing City hold a Regional Expert Forum on Integrated Care for Older on March 17, 2017, with an aim to enhance the access of older persons to services in China, including health and long-term care services. [Xu Lin/China.org.cn]

The UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in cooperation with Zhongshan College based in Nanjing City, launched a forum on Friday aiming to help older people gain better access to health and long-term care services in China.

The three-day Regional Expert Forum on Integrated Care for Older People is organized within the framework of a project entitled "strengthening national capacity for promoting and protecting the rights of elders." It particularly focuses on the provision and financing of long-term care.

Dr. Nagesh Kumar, director of ESCAP's Social Development Division, said population ageing was now a major problem facing the whole world, and one of the key challenges in achieving the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

The number of older persons in the region is expected to almost triple from 514 million in 2015 to more than 1.31 billion by 2050. By then, one in four people will be over 60 years of age, out of which number those over 80 year will constitute about one-fifth.

This demographic phenomenon will have a profound impact on the wellbeing of all generations. Older persons are among the groups most likely to be left behind if no adequate policies are adopted. Increasing numbers of elderly will require long-term care, and it is increasingly difficult for their needs to be met by family care alone.

Therefore, Kumar said, population ageing requires innovative policies, especially to address the increasing demand for healthcare services. Using Information and Communication Technologies is one possible approach to increase healthcare access .

One good thing was that the expanding care sector can become a growth sector and a sector driving employment opportunities. "If we train people adequately to provide care for older persons, we can achieve two goals: we increase the quality of care that older persons receive and we increase the potential for them to find decent jobs in the care sector."

At the forum, Zhongshan College was appointed as the INIA (International Institute on Ageing) Zhongshan Satellite Center by the United Nations. Chen Yi, Chairman of Board of Zhongshan College, told China.org.cn that the college is working on the project of Human Resource Development Center for Elderly, featuring a student internship base, a rehabilitation hospital, a nursing home, a training center and a research center of ageing development. The college has provided training in elderly care for more than 15,000 persons so far.

China now has less than 300,000 paramedics, and only 40,000 have qualification certificates, said Professor Jiang Fuxin, president of Zhongshan College. Based on the international standard, China needs a total of 10 million paramedics.

To fill in the gap, the college is offering eight majors of elderly service and management, community-based rehabilitation, community management and service, rehabilitation treatment technology and nursing, etc. A major of rehabilitative engineering technology will be introduced within this year.

Officials, experts, scholars and entrepreneurs from 21 Asia-Pacific countries and regions attended the forum.

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## Questions for the SNP to ponder

When I as a young man was on the losing side in the 1975 referendum on EEC membership, I did not think we should have a second referendum soon afterwards to try again to get us out. Indeed, more than 25 years past before I and others called for referenda on the Euro and the growing political union that the EEC had become. A referendum is designed to answer a question and make a decision for a decent period of time when it is about these fundamental constitutional matters.

The SNP will have time to consider what went wrong with their last case for so called independence, and what has gone wrong for them since that event. At current oil prices, with the rapid run down in oil output, their economic arithmetic needs reworking over what a Scottish budget would look like.

The rest of the UK would clearly insist on an independent Scotland leaving the pound. Being in a currency union requires each part of the Union to underwrite all parts of the Union socially, economically, and the banking system. English, Welsh and Northern Irish taxpayers would no longer be willing to do this for an independent Scotland.

Scotland would be out of the EU whether the UK is still in or out itself. The EU does not wish to encourage separatist movements within EU countries by offering them easy membership. Spain is insistent on this point given its refusal even to allow a referendum in Catalonia. Nor would Scotland as an applicant country be likely to be offered opt outs from the Euro and Schengen, nor a contribution rebate as the UK currently enjoys.

I was interested to read that the SNP now think maybe seeking to join EFTA would be better, so their argument that this is mainly about EU membership has not lasted a couple of days debate about a second referendum.

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## [4 mln freed from poverty in China's ethnic areas in 2016](#)

Over four million rural residents in eight ethnic minority autonomous regions and provinces escaped poverty last year, said a forum on poverty relief hosted by Minzu University of China on Friday.

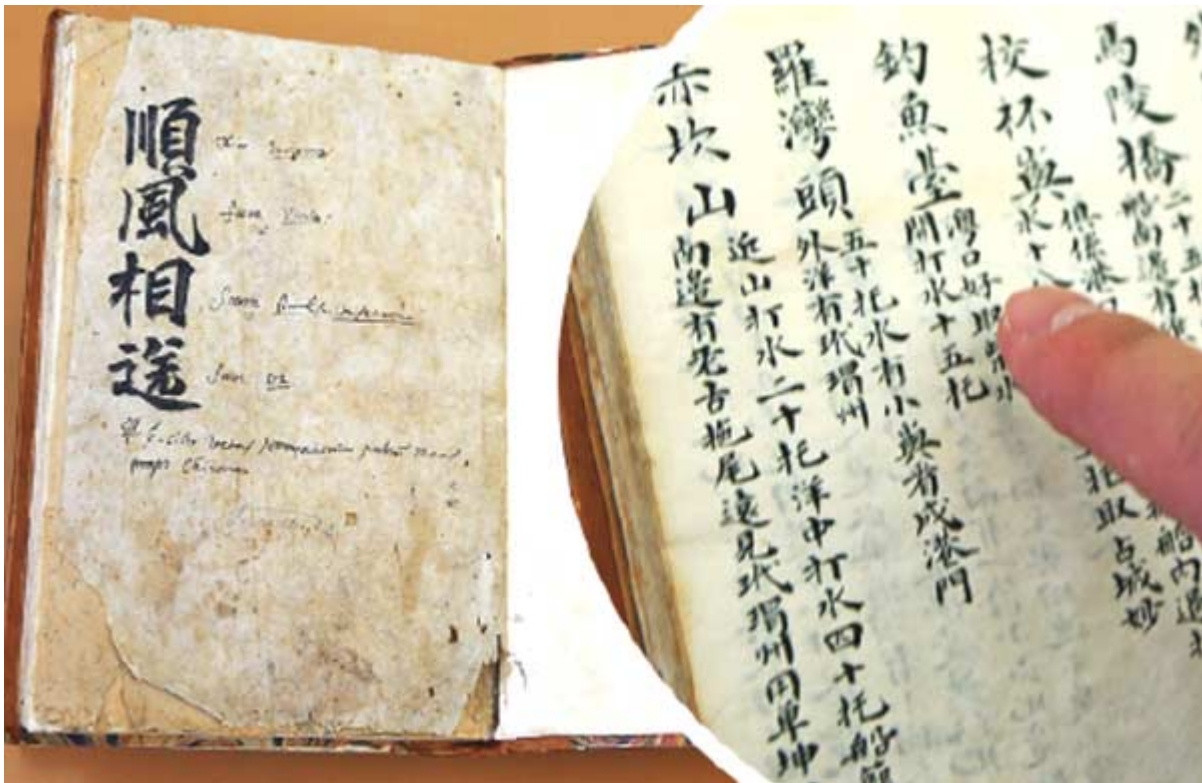
The total poor population in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Tibet Autonomous Region, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and provinces of Guizhou, Yunnan and Qinghai, has dropped to 14.1 million from 2015's 18.1 million.

According to the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, the central government spent about 28 billion yuan (US\$4 billion) on poverty alleviation in the eight autonomous regions and provinces last year, up 39.8 percent, accounting for 41.9 percent of the total poverty alleviation funds.

Zhang Lijun, president of the school of economics of Minzu University of China, said ethnic regions are the most difficult in China's war against poverty, and still need more targeted policies.

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## Ancient Diaoyu references revived



The original volume of Shun Feng Xiang Song, and an entry about the Diaoyu Islands. [Kevin Wang/China Daily]

A facsimile edition of two manuscripts that are believed to be the earliest-known historical references to China's Diaoyu Islands was unveiled at the University of Oxford on Thursday as part of this year's London Book Fair. China Publishing Group presented the copy of the manuscripts to a group of European Sinologists at Oxford's Bodleian Library.

The Diaoyu Islands are an uninhabited group of islands in the East China Sea.

The two ancient books, Shun Feng Xiang Song (Voyage With a Tail Wind), and Zhi Nan Zheng Fa (Compass Directions), are believed to be the world's last existing copies that offer concrete proof of China's sovereignty over the islands. Both original books are kept at Bodleian Library.

David Helliwell, curator of the Chinese Collection at the Bodleian, said: "These two manuscripts are important because they are the only two surviving manuscripts of the books of this kind. ... This is the first time that Diaoyu is mentioned in any Chinese texts, according to what we know."

The manuscripts are known as rutters, which are charts of compass bearings of sea routes and directions.

"These books must be common, because we know that Chinese merchants were going to all parts of the world in the late Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)," said Helliwell.

Both books record facts about the Diaoyu Islands, written among a list of

place names and a list of routes in the charts.

“Diaoyu, these little islands, represent a turning point in that voyage, and they are used as markers from which to take compass bearings,” Helliwell said.

The publication of the facsimile edition is the result of a chance visit last year to the Bodleian Library by Wang Jun, department head of Zhonghua Book Co, which is owned by China Publishing Group. Wang got to know and respect Helliwell.

“Helliwell talked to us and, after a testlike little chat, invited us into the Bodleian’s internal library,” Wang said.

“He may look like a British gentleman, but I know he is Chinese inside and was Chinese in his previous life,” Wang said, praising Helliwell’s passion and knowledge of ancient Chinese books.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Jiang Jun, vice-president of China Publishing Group, said: “The production of these two books means a lot for preserving and sorting out ancient books and sets an example for international cultural exchange and cooperation.”

The two ancient books were first identified and transcribed by Chinese historian Xiang Da when he was sent by Peking Library on an exchange program to work at the Bodleian from 1935 to 1936.

Shun Feng Xiang Song had been given to the library in 1639 by Archbishop William Laud, who was chancellor of the University from 1620 to 1641. Xiang Da strongly suspected it had been produced in the 16th century. Nan Zheng Fa is part of the Backhouse Collection, which was donated to the library in stages between 1913 and 1922. It is believed to have been written in the late Ming and early Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.

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## [China creates world’s 1st coal-to-ethanol production line](#)

China has successfully created the world’s first production line to turn coal into ethanol, or drinking alcohol, the Chinese Academy of Sciences said on Friday.

Created by Shaanxi Yanchang Petroleum and the academy’s Dalian Institute of Chemical Physics in Liaoning province, the production line went into operation in January and has the capacity to make more than 100,000 metric tons of pure ethanol every year, according to Liu Zhongmin, the institute’s deputy director.

By 2020, China will build a factory capable of producing 1 million tons of ethanol each year using the same technology, he said.

The country currently produces 7 million tons of ethanol each year using other methods, which can "hardly satisfy" its industrial and energy needs, according to Liu.

"Most countries produce ethanol using food, such as corn or sugar cane, but this is not a viable option for China given its massive population," he said.

"By turning China's abundant coal resources into ethanol, the technology will help safeguard our energy and food security,"

Moreover, ethanol is a green fuel and versatile ingredient. "Utilizing it could reduce our dependency on fossil fuels, and make our industrial production and energy structure more environmental friendly," Liu said.

In addition to alcoholic beverages, ethanol can be used to produce thousands of everyday products from plastics to detergents. It can also replace more toxic ingredients, such as methanol, during industrial production.

Other uses include mixing it with petroleum to increase its fuel efficiency and reduce pollution. An abundant supply of ethanol would also make ethanol-fueled vehicles more viable, Liu said.