

[Shanghai Disney Resort rewards outstanding volunteers](#)

Nearly 100 outstanding volunteers and their families enjoyed a day of magic at Shanghai Disneyland Friday, to celebrate community volunteerism and the upcoming China Youth Volunteer Service Day.

These volunteers, including a torchbearer of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, were selected by the Shanghai Volunteer Foundation as the first group of recipients of the Shanghai Disney Resort Outstanding Volunteer Recognition Program.

The program, founded by Shanghai Disney Resort and the Shanghai Volunteer Foundation, began on December 5 last year, International Volunteer Day.

In the program, 1,000 volunteers and their families will be recognized and invited to enjoy a day at Shanghai Disneyland to reward their contributions to society.

“It is one of Disney’s core values to promote community volunteerism wherever we operate, including here in Shanghai. Through the program, we look forward to working together with the Shanghai Volunteer Foundation to pursue our shared vision of promoting community volunteerism throughout the city,” said Philippe Gas, general manager of Shanghai Disney Resort.

The China Youth Volunteer Service Day is on March 5, the memorial day of Lei Feng, a young soldier in the 1960s, known for his lifetime of selflessly service to others.

As of early February, Shanghai Disneyland had received over 7 million visitors since it opened in June 2016.

[Website launched to commemorate late Premier Zhou Enlai](#)

A website was launched on Friday to commemorate late Premier Zhou Enlai, born in 1898, in the lead-up to the 120th anniversary of his birth.

The website, zhouenlai.people.cn, featured a 366-day countdown to the anniversary, an introduction to his life, and poems, calligraphy and paintings that pay tribute to Zhou, as well as Zhou’s family letters and links to memorial halls dedicated to him in China and abroad.

Visitors can offer virtual “flowers” and pay homage to Zhou online as well as post messages to the website.

[China's top political advisor stresses unity with Xi's leadership](#)

China raised the curtain on its annual political season on Friday, with top political advisor Yu Zhengsheng pledging conformity to the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee with Xi Jinping as the core.

As chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee, Yu delivered a work report to more than 2,000 political advisors gathered in the heart of Beijing to discuss the political, economic and social issues facing the world's most populous nation and second-largest economy.

Yu said that in the course of the nation's great rejuvenation, the importance of 2016 was assured by the endorsement of Xi Jinping as the core of the CPC Central Committee.

Xi's core status embodies the fundamental interests of the Party and the people, and will be of far-reaching significance. His political ideas should be a guidance for all, Yu told the political advisors.

During the gathering, attendees are expected to fully align their thinking with Xi's strategic blueprint of the “four comprehensives” – comprehensively achieve a moderately prosperous society, deepen reform, advance rule of law and govern the CPC strictly, which is crucial to the drive of China becoming a well-off society by 2020.

The CPPCC is an important vehicle for multiparty cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CPC, and the key to socialist democracy.

Political advisors come from various walks of life and ethnic groups. They serve as a think-tank for the government, legislative and judicial organs, and put forward proposals on major political and social issues.

Their proposals can be considered a rough barometer of public opinion, signaling issues of concern on anything from industrial policy to domestic violence, and telegraph the general national agenda for the next year and beyond.

In the past year, seminars have convened to discuss a plethora of topics including new development ideas, supply-side structural reform, revitalization of the northeast region, and rural poverty relief. Agendas

also included creation and management of national nature reserves, preservation of land resources and prevention of pollution, Yu said.

Yu commended the advisors for their work on the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020), saying 2017 is a more important year for the plan's implementation.

The CPPCC will help the country better adapt to the "new economic normal" of steady and healthy economic development, he said.

Friday's CPPCC session was the start of the most important two weeks on China's political calendar. The National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislature, is set to begin its annual session on Sunday.

Together dubbed the "Two Sessions," the meetings are where political and economic developments are reviewed and discussed and key policies are made. This year, attendees will also discuss the general provisions of civil law.

In his speech, Yu saw room for improvement in some aspects of CPPCC work.

"Discussion of state affairs needs to go deeper and to be more practical, work on democratic oversight needs to be further standardized, and CPPCC National Committee members need to do better in the performance of their duties," Yu noted.

The advisors' main efforts this year should be directed toward stable and healthy economic development, communication with representatives of public opinion in Taiwan, and maintaining social harmony and stability.

Yu said communication between political advisors and the youth in Taiwan should be strengthened to consolidate public support for the peaceful development of cross-strait relations.

Political advisors will continue to oversee the implementation of CPC Central Committee policies and raise practical proposals.

While praising the Standing Committee of CPPCC National Committee for promoting unity and friendship, Yu called for work on solidarity and friendship with the people in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, as well as overseas Chinese.

This business rates revaluation has exposed the fundamental flaws in this

outdated system of taxation – Teresa Pearce

Teresa Pearce MP, Labour's Shadow

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, responding to the IFS analysis of the business rates revaluation on local authorities, said:

“This business rates revaluation has exposed the fundamental flaws in this outdated system of taxation. Those flaws will be further magnified once 100% business rate retention comes into effect.

“Our high streets are already struggling – and this revaluation will signal the end for many small businesses, such as independent pubs at the heart of community life.

“The current system means that councils won't see a sharp increase in their revenue – but once 100% retention kicks in, some councils may be rolling in cash whilst others are left out in the cold.

“Businesses and councils need far more support and stability than the Government is currently offering. The Government must re-evaluate the business rates system and produce something which works for communities across our regions and the businesses they rely on.”

Labour welcomes House of Commons Select Committee calls for mission-based industrial strategy

The non-partisan House of Commons select committee for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has today released a report calling for a new mission-based approach to industrial strategy. The select committee's report criticises the Government's sector based strategy for 'picking winners' and for lacking 'meaningful metrics' to determine success.

In its report the select committee

backed the 'mission-based' approach to industrial strategy, which is also advocated by the Labour Party. Labour's industrial strategy will be challenge-led, mission-oriented and values-driven – providing a long-term vision for the economy that mobilises both public and private investment.

Chi Onwurah MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for industrial strategy, commented:

"This report reaffirms what we've been saying all along: cherry-picking favoured sectors for backroom deals is no substitute for a real long-term vision. Theresa May says she wants to see a high-wage, high-growth economy, but public investment has fallen to half the amount it was under Labour and her sectoral approach is leaving the vast majority of British workers out in the cold.

"Labour's industrial strategy will be led by the big challenges of our time, from decarbonizing the economy to caring for an ageing population. Rather than taking a scatter-gun approach to sectors and technologies, we're setting out key missions, such as drawing 60 per cent of our energy from low carbon sources by 2030."

Ends

Notes to editors:

An article by Iain Wright MP, who chairs the select committee, summarising the report's findings can be found here: <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/very-little-industry-and-still-less-strategy-wdt7f99wd>