

China to upgrade submersible Jiaolong before 2019

China plans to upgrade its submersible Jiaolong before 2019, scientists said Thursday.

The submersible ended its trial phase last week after completing the country's 38th and its fourth oceanic scientific expedition, which lasted four months.

It will return to east China's Qingdao on Friday aboard mothership Xiangyanghong 09.

Jiaolong made dozens of dives during the expedition and descended to nearly 6,700 meters in the Yap Trench in the west Pacific, close to its record depth of 7,062 meters in 2012.

Scientists observed and photographed large marine creatures and the seabed, and collected seawater, rocks and samples of marine life from the deep sea.

The 39-year-old Xiangyanghong 09 is also set to retire after carrying Jiaolong for hundreds of dives since 2009.

A new mothership for Jiaolong is under construction, and is scheduled to be launched around the end of 2018.

Conference in Beijing highlights gender inequality

The two-day conference highlighting gender inequality led by the U.N. Women Beijing Office opened on June 21, in the capital of China.

The need for the conference was highlighted after a case where financial relief was given to Chinese women in impoverished rural areas in order to purchase sanitary napkins and medicines to treat and prevent vaginitis. Many of the beneficiaries of the program spent none of the money on themselves, but rather on their husbands and sons. They thought it is necessary as their husbands play a supportive role in the family and the money would be better distributed to the husband to have a pack of cigarettes. The children may need simple necessities such as a backpack, recalled Professor Liu Bohong from China Women's University.

Liu told the story during a panel discussion at the International Conference

on Gender Equality and Philanthropy hosted by the U.N. Women Beijing Office from June 21 to 22.

The conference welcomed over 100 guests including social gender experts, representatives of international organizations and executives for philanthropic funds. The conference discussed the problem of how social gender inequality can be incorporated into international standards of philanthropic development including in China. The challenges facing the allocation of philanthropic funds and the mechanisms for donation and how these can be improved were also discussed.

"We can't make our donations work if social gender disparity remains ignored," Liu said.

To facilitate the implementation of gender equality, Julie Broussard, the country program manager of U.N. Women, underscored the importance of strategic philanthropy.

"In terms of philanthropic commitments, international experience has shown that we need to strive for strategic philanthropy. This is the only way to effectively address the needs of the most vulnerable and the most marginalized," said Broussard.

Elizabeth Knup, the representative of the Beijing Office, Ford Foundation, echoed Broussard, saying that gender equality cannot be achieved without scrupulous gender analysis and gender planning.

"For whatever projects we fund we need to have an understanding of the affected people of different genders," she said while addressing the conference.

According to Heather Grady, the vice president of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, philanthropic undertakings can be divided into institutional, corporate and internet categories – out of which internet philanthropy is growing fastest in China.

Tong Dawei, a renowned actor and U.N. Women Goodwill Ambassador, called on people to change their stubborn minds on gender issues, in particular in relation to the subconscious mindset that men are superior to women.

"In Chinese schools we often believe in the misinterpretation which entails that, although girls are outdoing boys in junior middle school, they will be eventually surpassed by boys in high school, implying a minor but deep rooted discrimination," Tong said.

People need to be actively aware of gender inequality in everyday life such as to make sure that boys and girls can pursue equal access to whatever they are interested in regardless of gender differences, he added.

Three panda cubs born in NW China's Shaanxi Province

Three panda cubs were born in northwest China's Shaanxi Province last week, the provincial forestry department said Thursday.

Fourteen-year-old Yang Yang gave birth to a male cub on June 11 at Shaanxi Rare Wild Animals Rescue and Breeding Research Center. As of Wednesday, the cub weighed 320 grams.

Another panda at the center, Ai Bang, gave birth to twin male cubs on June 12. The weight of each cub has already surpassed 230 grams.

Ma Qingyi, vet at the center, said neither Yang Yang nor Ai Bang are first time mothers so they are both experienced in taking care of their cubs. The three cubs are all in good conditions.

Ma said two other female pandas at the center are expected to deliver soon.

There are currently 22 captive giant pandas and 345 wild pandas in Shaanxi. The wild pandas' habitats cover more than 360,000 hectares and have been significantly expanded, according to statistics from the provincial forestry department.

Giant pandas are one of the world's most endangered species and live mainly in the mountains of northern Sichuan Province as well as southern Gansu and Shaanxi provinces. A national survey released in February 2015 showed that as of the end of 2013, China had 1,864 wild pandas and 375 living in captivity.

Premier to attend Summer Davos in Dalian



Chinese Premier Li Keqiang delivers a speech during the Summer Davos Forum in Dalian in 2015. [File photo: gov.cn]

Premier Li Keqiang will attend the Summer Davos Forum in northeast China's Dalian from June 26 to 28, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang announced Wednesday at a daily press briefing.

Li will address the opening ceremony, hold talks with leaders from countries including Finland and Sweden, meet some forum participants, and exchange views with representatives from fields such as business, finance, think tanks, and media outlets, Geng said.

This year's forum carries the theme "Achieving Inclusive Growth in the Fourth Industrial Revolution." Around 1,500 politicians, officials, entrepreneurs, scholars, and media representatives from over 90 countries and regions will attend.

The annual event is held alternatively in the Chinese cities of Tianjin and Dalian.

[Boy's death triggers controversy over safety of shared bikes](#)



A report from Beijing-based BigData Research showed the number of shared bicycle users exceeded 18 million as of the end of 2016 and is expected to approach 50 million by the end of this year. [Photo/China.org.cn]

The case of a boy who fell down while riding a shared bike and died in Central China has drawn people's attention to safety problems of shared bicycles, hnr.cn reported.

Photo shows bikes that users can easily ride or park under the sharing scheme. [File photo: sohu.com]

The boy, whose name has not been revealed, was reportedly 12 or 13 years old. Witnesses said he and other boys were riding yellow bicycles at high speed and practicing drifting on a steep road in Zhengzhou, Henan province, when the accident happened on Sunday. The bicycles are run by Ofo.

Though the accident is under investigation, some said the boys illegally used the bicycles after cracking the password of the mechanical locks on the bicycles.

Users of Ofo bikes first need to pay via their mobile phones before they are sent the password that unlocks the bicycle.

Many primary students in Zhengzhou, however, showed that they can unlock the Ofo bicycles without the password, with one student unlocking four bicycles out of the 10 locked ones, according to the report.

According to law, those under 12 are not allowed to ride bicycles on roads. As Ofo's mechanical lock has long been criticized for its lax features, many question who should be held responsible for the safety of juveniles who illegally use the bicycles.

"I think the parents should be held responsible," said Liu Ming, a resident of Zhengzhou. He said he once saw his 9-year-old son riding the yellow bicycle and warned him.

Another resident, surnamed Wu, agreed on the importance of guardian's role but suggested that Ofo should change its mechanical locks into safer ones. Shared bicycles on other platforms use smart locks, which are hard to illegally break.

An Ofo employee said the company has launched bicycles with smart locks in Beijing and will introduce the new version in other regions of the country in the future.

If somebody dies due to quality defects or poor management of the shared bicycle, the company should take the responsibility, said lawyer Zhang Shaochun.

But if the minor cracked the password then the juvenile and the guardian should take the main responsibility, Zhang added.