

Fuzhou Initiative appeals for greater BRICS cooperation



Song Tao, head of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, addresses the closing ceremony of the BRICS Political Parties, Think-tanks and Civil Society Organizations Forum in Fuzhou, capital of southeast China's Fujian Province, June 12, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

Representatives of political parties, think tanks and non-governmental organizations in the five member nations of BRICS gathered in Fuzhou for a two-day forum and released the Fuzhou Initiative on Monday appealing for enhanced cooperation among BRICS countries.

The political parties, think tanks and civil society organizations from BRICS and several developing countries met in Fuzhou to exchange views and share experiences surrounding issues of common interest, with an aim to enhance cooperation among BRICS countries and with other emerging markets and developing countries. Recommendations will be submitted to the upcoming BRICS Summit in Xiamen scheduled for September.

"The deepening of all-round practical cooperation and the realization of mutual benefits and win-win results serve as an important foundation for BRICS partnership," the initiative document stated. "BRICS countries should prioritize pragmatism and innovation in their cooperation in a manner that addresses the key social and economic challenges affecting their own countries respectively."

It pointed out that BRICS countries should also intensify policy

communication, expand the scope of cooperation, tap the potential of cooperation, increase and deepen cooperation with other emerging markets and developing countries, combat corruption and build clean governance.

The participants of the BRICS Political Parties, Think-tanks and Civil Society Organizations Forum also viewed that people-to-people and cultural exchanges play an important role in cementing BRICS strategic partnership and garnering public support for BRICS cooperation.

“Enjoying rich cultural resources, BRICS countries should capitalize on their respective advantages to actively engage in and collectively promote ever deepening and substantial people-to-people and cultural exchanges, so as to effectively enhance engagement and a sense of recognition for the peoples of BRICS countries,” it said.

The initiative forwarded that BRICS countries should intensify political and security cooperation, enhance coordination and make collective voices heard on major international and regional issues. “In countering terrorism, BRICS countries should enhance sharing of intelligence and experience as well as capacity building.”

Addressing the closing ceremony, Song Tao, head of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, said in his speech that BRICS political parties, think tanks and non-governmental organizations should facilitate cooperation that will elevate BRICS members to their role as practitioners of new globalization, advocates for new global governance and forerunners of new South-South cooperation.

[Jiaolong descends to 6,681 meters in Yap Trench](#)

China’s manned submersible Jiaolong dived to 6,681 meters in the Yap Trench in the west Pacific Tuesday.

Jiaolong reached a depth of 6,681 meters at 10:15 a.m. local time, carrying three Chinese divers.

Scientists will observe and photograph large marine creatures and the seabed, and collect seawater, rocks and samples of marine life.

The dive is the final one in China’s 38th oceanic scientific expedition that started on Feb. 6, marking the end of a four-year tentative application phase of the submersible.

The submersible plans to be back on its mothership Xiangyanghong 09 at about 5:00 p.m. local time.

Named after a mythical dragon, Jiaolong reached its deepest point of 7,062 meters in the Mariana Trench in June 2012.

Beijing plans 1st exclusive bike lane

Beijing plans to build its first special bicycle lane connecting a crowded residential area with a business center to solve traffic congestion in the area, it was announced on Monday.

Unlike other bike lanes in Beijing, which are often crowded with cars, this one will be exclusively for cyclists.

The 6.3-kilometer lane will connect the Huilongguan residential community in Changping district with the Shangdi of Haidian district, where many companies are located, said Rong Jun, a spokesman for the Beijing Municipal Commission of Transport.

"In the future, the lane will extend to Zhongguancun Software Park where many IT companies are located," he said. "The traffic in the area needs to be improved because of high population density."

The Beijing Municipal Institute of City Planning and Design proposed the bike lane last year. It takes just 20 to 30 minutes to commute between the locations by bicycle, while it can take more than an hour by car because of heavy traffic.

About 370,000 people live in Huilongguan, with up to 20 percent working in Zhongguancun. More than 16 percent work in Shangdi.

Even if people don't drive and choose public transportation, they still have to leave home an hour in advance because of the large number of people using buses and subways during rush hour.

Ji Zhonghui, a teacher in his 40s who lives in Huilongguan and commutes by car, said he welcomes all methods that can ease congestion.

"If the bike lane is built, people will definitely ride to work when the commute distance is within 6 to 7 kilometers," he said.

Yu Shenlan, a resident of Huilongguan in her 30s, said she doesn't think people can easily change their ways of commuting. When it's too cold or too hot, many people still prefer to drive.

"I believe the key issue is the huge population in the area," she said.

China aims to build world's 3rd ocean drilling research vessel

China aims to build the world's third ocean drilling research vessel and become a key leader in international deep-sea drilling scientific efforts by 2028, a senior government consultant said Monday.

Wang Pinxian, a marine geologist from Tongji University and also with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, made the remarks at a press event to announce the successful conclusion of a China-led international drilling mission to find out how the South China Sea was formed some tens of millions of years ago.

The four-month mission was conducted on board the American vessel JOIDES Resolution as part of the 367th and 368th expeditions of the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program (IODP), an international collaboration on deep-sea geological scientific research that began in 1968.

China joined the IODP in 1998 and participated in three drilling missions focused in the South China Sea in 1999, 2014 and 2017. The latest mission was proposed, designed and led by Chinese scientists. Over 60 researchers from more than ten countries were involved.

Wang, who serves as a consultant for China's IODP involvement, said the mission marked the first step in a three-part strategy for China to engage in international ocean drilling activities.

He said China aims to drill seabeds in other oceans and set up the world's fourth seabed rock database and a lab before attempting to build an ocean drilling vessel.

The two ships used by the IODP are JOIDES Resolution and Japan's Chikyu.

JOIDES Resolution docked in Shanghai Sunday, the first-ever visit of an international ocean drilling vessel to a Chinese port.

Tongji University marine geologist Jian Zhimin, a co-lead of the IODP mission, said at Monday's press briefing that during the expedition they dug 17 holes at seven sites in the South China Sea. The combined drilling depth exceeded 7,669 meters, and samples including sedimentary and volcanic rocks were collected.

The study of the rocks indicates the South China Sea was formed differently than the Atlantic, scientists have found.

Jian said the newly discovered formation of the South China Sea was so unique that they might need to rewrite the textbooks on continental shelf break-up

and ocean formation.

Further research is required.

China to enhance grassroots community governance



A firefighting publicity activity is held in a community in Beijing.
[Photo/China.org.cn]

China will set up a community governance system led by grassroots Communist Party of China (CPC) organizations by 2020, according to a guideline released by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council Monday.

Local governments will play a guiding role in the community governance system which also feature public participation.

Governance capacity in both urban and rural communities will improve significantly by that time, as public services, management and security will be effectively ensured, the guideline said.

Within another five to ten years, a more mature and comprehensive community governance system will offer strong support for the CPC at a grassroots level, while consolidating local governments, the guideline noted.

Issues such as the basic role of autonomous organizations, the participation of social groups and the functions of communities are also included in the guideline.

According to the guideline, on major issues relating to community public interests as well as those that matter to the residents' immediate interests, the community residents' role in the decision making and dispute resolution processes should be enhanced.

Also, community services that are closely related to the residents' interests, such as employment, social security, health, education, housing, public security as well as legal and arbitration services, should be made more widely available, the guideline said.

The guideline called for increased efforts to resolve disputes within communities. Party congress delegates, legislators, political advisors and CPC members and officials should maintain contact with communities and their residents via proper channels, it said.

It urged more support for groups in need, such as the poor, children in difficulty, mentally-challenged people, left-behind children, senior citizens as well as people who have been convicted of crimes or released from prison.

The guideline also requires infrastructure improvements and better environmental management in communities.

To enhance community governance, the guideline pledged more financial investment in this regard. It also encouraged the public to contribute via channels such as charity donations and community foundation endowments.