

Ministry of Culture issues five-year poverty relief plan

China's Ministry of Culture has issued a plan calling for targeted poverty alleviation in the cultural field during 2016-2020.

The plan, for the 13th Five-Year Plan period, comes as the country aims to create a moderately prosperous society by 2020, with a key goal to eradicate poverty.

It focuses on artistic creation, modern public cultural services, protecting cultural heritage and development of the cultural industry in poor regions.

Guided by the socialist core values, the ministry said it would step up support in policy and finance, primarily targeting ethnic minority regions, border regions, old revolutionary base areas and concentrated poverty areas.

The central budget will allocate 3,000 yuan (over 441.35 U.S. dollars) for individual theatrical performances to be held every two months in townships in these regions.

There were 43.35 million people living in poverty in China at the end of 2016.

China expects bumper harvest of summer grain

China expects a good harvest of summer crops as a slew of agricultural measures have overcome unfavorable weather conditions, the Ministry of Agriculture said Monday.

Over 70 percent of China's summer grain has been harvested, according to the ministry.

The ministry said the good harvest was due to proper adjustment of the grain-growing pattern, improved production quality and application of green and high-yield technology.

In addition, the government has kept stable wheat purchasing prices to protect farmers' income and interests. Disaster prevention measures have also been put in place to ensure a good harvest, according to the ministry.

[Nobel laureate heads Chinese institute on economics](#)

Nobel laureate in economics Thomas J. Sargent has been tapped to head a Chinese university institute to conduct teaching and research on economics including the use of artificial intelligence and big data in financial analysis.

The Sargent Institute of Quantitative Economics and Finance was set up at the Peking University HSBC Business School (PHBS) in the southern Chinese economic hub of Shenzhen, said PHBS Dean Hai Wen.

He said with the institute the school will start offering a Ph.D. program in quantitative economics and a Master's program in finance specialized in financial technology.

Sargent, an American economist, was awarded the 2011 Nobel Prize in Economics for his empirical research on cause and effect in the macroeconomy. He teaches at New York University.

Hai said Sargent will be personally involved in the new Ph.D. program, teaching the course of advanced macroeconomics. The institute will also host a number of summer and winter projects to encourage wide participation of students in the financial research and academic debates.

Hai said the Sargent institute, among other researches, will study the use of artificial intelligence and big data in quantitative investing, asset pricing, and other financial analysis.

It will partner Shenzhen-based financial institutes and firms to provide them with tools to make better investment strategies.

[Typhoon Merbok to hit southern China coast Monday night](#)

China's national observatory on Monday issued a blue alert for typhoon Merbok, which is expected to hit the southern Guangdong Province on Monday night.

At 8 a.m. Monday, the eye of Merbok, this year's second typhoon, was above the South China Sea some 295 km to the south of Shenzhen, packing winds of up

to 20 meters per second, the National Meteorological Center (NMC) said in a statement.

The NMC forecast that Merbok would move northwestward at a speed of 20 km per hour toward Guangdong and make landfall on the coast between Zhuhai and Shantou on Monday night.

But the center expected the typhoon to weaken gradually after its landfall.

From Monday to Tuesday, parts of South China Sea and the eastern coast of Guangdong will experience strong winds, while storms with up to 180 mm of precipitation are expected to affect parts of southeast Guangdong.

The NMC suggested local governments take precautions against possible geological disasters, and ships in affected areas should go back to ports.

China has a four-tier color-coded system for severe weather, with red being the most serious, followed by orange, yellow and blue.

[Name China's first artificially bred snow leopard](#)



The first artificially bred snow leopard in the snow leopard pavilion at the Tibetan Plateau Wildlife Park in Xining, Qinghai Province, on June 10, 2017. [Photo/163.com]

The Tibetan Plateau Wildlife Park has asked the public to name China's first artificially bred snow leopard to mark the first birthday of the cub.

The existence of the zoo's 'little princess' has only just been revealed, as artificial breeding is only deemed successful after babies are at least six months old, according to Qi Xinzhang, deputy director of Wildlife Park.

Born on June 10, 2016, the female snow leopard is the offspring of an eight-year-old male 'Zhuangzhuang' and a ten-year-old female called 'Erbao'.

Weighing 18.5 kg, the cub is said to be full of energy, walking and jumping up and down in the newly built snow leopard pavilion of the wildlife park.

The baby snow leopard's original 20 square meters 'small room' has been upgraded to 850 square meters 'presidential suite' in the park to give the cub more space.

The wildlife park is hoping the new female will have her own offspring in two or three years' time, making a significant contribution to the wildlife park's breeding of snow leopards.

The snow leopard is regarded as a barometer of the health of the high-altitude ecosystem. In 1996, it was on China's Red List of endangered animal species. China accounts for 60% of the world's snow leopard habitats.