

Unit set up to tackle farmland pollution, degradation

The Ministry of Agriculture set up a unit to tackle soil pollution and degradation of arable land.

The new arable land quality monitoring and protection center will build a nationwide network to monitor arable land quality and treat degradation and pollution, said Zeng Yande, an official at the ministry.

The black soil in northeastern provinces is degrading, farmland in some northwestern regions are plagued by salinization while a few places in southern provinces are suffering from heavy metal pollution, according to Zeng.

The move came amid efforts to ensure food security as climate change and pollutants eroded arable land and reduced its capacity to produce food.

Total arable land in the country was 135 million hectares at the end of 2015. China has set a base line of 124 million ha.

Ministry of Justice releases punishment notices

Notices of punishment of legal personnel and institutions have been made available on the official website of the Ministry of Justice.

Such notices issued after Jan. 1, 2017 by judicial administrations, notary and bar associations upon law firms, notary offices, judicial expertise institutions and its staff were available on the website from Monday.

The move was aimed at better protecting people's legal rights and standardizing professional conduct, according to the Ministry of Justice.

Beijing seeks foreign talent for

service industry

Two centers for foreigner exit and entry services opened Tuesday in Beijing to assist foreign talent in service industries.

The centers in Chaoyang and Shunyi districts will accept applications for permanent stays, long-term visas and port visas for foreign elites in the service sector, foreigner members of startups, Chinese with foreign nationality and young foreign students.

Shen Jinsheng, deputy director of Beijing Municipal Commission of Commerce, said the commission would issue recommendation letters for those working in the two districts who passed in a grading before applying for permanent stay.

The new service centers will shorten the period to apply for a permanent stay from 180 to 90 working days.

Many foreigners live in Chaoyang where most embassies and many international agencies and chambers of commerce are located. Shunyi, home to Beijing Capital International Airport, has over 100 international companies and a foreign population of around 8,000.

Li Kai On, a Chinese with British nationality, said he had applied for a permanent stay as he, a teacher at an international school, had seen opportunities in Beijing's education sector.

"I hope with the new measures, I can become a real Chinese in a short time."

China issues regulation on online news service

Cooperation between Chinese online news service providers and entities with foreign investment should go through a security review, according to a regulation released Tuesday.

The regulation, issued by the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), requires the online news service providers to abide by the law, promote healthy Internet culture and safeguard national and public interest.

The CAC will become the new regulator of online news service, replacing the State Council Information Office.

The service providers should put in place a set of information security protocols and measures, such as reviews, checks and emergency responses regarding online news, the CAC said.

There should be an editor-in-chief for all online news service providers and their staff should be qualified, according to the regulation.

It said that platform operators should protect the privacy of users.

The regulation particularly notes the obligations of online news platform operators, whose services would only be available to users who register with their real identities.

Online news platform operators that violate the regulation will be punished.

In the meantime, another regulation on administrative law-enforcing procedures was also issued by CAC Tuesday, aiming to standardize and safeguard the obligations of online news management departments, so as to properly implement administrative penalties and protect the legal rights of citizens, legal persons and other organizations.

The two regulations will go into force on June 1.

[China's big data regulation to boost healthcare, security](#)

China is to issue its first regulation on how the big data from the health sector is collected, stored and used.

Jin Xiaotao, vice-minister of the National Health and Family Planning Commission, said the regulation will be issued soon, as the nation aims to safeguard public security.

Big data for the health industry includes patients' basic information and conditions, disease control and prevention, food safety, lifestyles and even genomes.

"This data concerns public health and national biological security," Jin said. "The new regulation is necessary, especially given that China seeks to develop healthcare data as an asset."

He said an independent management committee will be set up to ensure data security and that the regulation will define the basic rules on ownership, collection and usage.

The move comes after the State Council issued a multidepartment guideline in June to promote and regulate the use of big data in healthcare.

The guideline states that a centralized, uniform big data platform for healthcare is expected to be established by 2020 to standardize data collection, storage, reporting and security management.

"A central goal of the guideline is to improve people's health," said Jin, whose commission was among the departments that produced the document.

The guideline is also expected to play an important role in building a new economic pillar for China involving the application of big data.

Jin said the state-level strategy includes setting up a national healthcare big data center and seven regional centers as well as data research and innovation centers, which will be established with partner institutions from home and abroad.