

Officials in North China punished over sewage pits

Several officials in Dacheng County in North China's Hebei Province were punished after media reports exposed the state of two sewage pits, local discipline inspection authorities said on Saturday.

Liu Guowang, director of the office of the county committee of the Communist Party of China(CPC), received an intra-Party warning, according to a statement by the Langfang Municipal commission for discipline inspection of the CPC.

From September 2013 to February 2017, Liu was the deputy head of the county in charge of the county's environmental protection work. The county government failed to supervise or help Nanzhaofu Township deal with the sewage pits the statement said.

Liu Zenghuai, former secretary of the township committee of the CPC, who did not highlight the problem of the sewage pits and failed to deal with the pollution should be responsible for the problem, it said. Liu Zenghuai and Ma Donghao, head of Nanzhaofu Township, also received intra-Party warnings.

Deputy head of Dacheng County Xiao Jianjun, and director of the county's environmental protection bureau Fan Junliang, and three other local officials receive a public notice of criticism since they have only been in their posts for a short time, according to the statement.

Pictures of the contaminated pools went viral on Tuesday after a report from an environmental organization exposed the pollution.

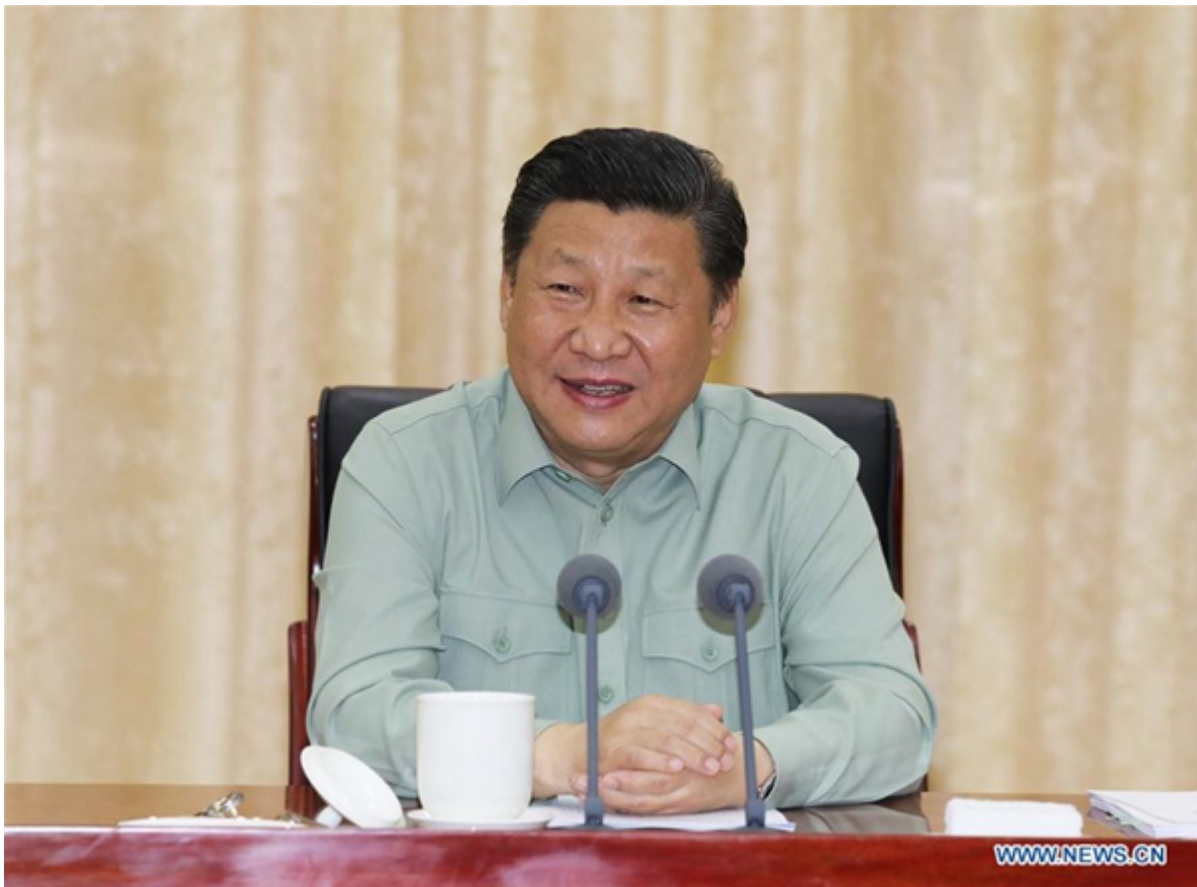
Two polluted pools – 170,000 square meters and 30,000 square meters – formed by years of digging and illegal dumping of waste acid in 2013, have contaminated water and soil in the area.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) has sent investigation teams to look at the pits and ordered local authorities to intensify monitoring of water and soil in and around the pools.

Dacheng authorities have started to treat the pollution and has set aside 38 million yuan (\$5.59 million) to treat the pits in 2017.

Xi inspects PLA Southern Theater

Command, vows to build strong army



Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), speaks at a meeting during an inspection of the Southern Theater Command of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), April 21, 2017. (Xinhua/Li Gang)

Chinese President Xi Jinping inspected the Southern Theater Command of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) on Friday and stressed building a strong army.

Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), urged all military personnel to resolutely safeguard the authority of CPC Central Committee and unswervingly follow the Party's leadership.

He asked all military personnel to greet the 19th CPC National Congress scheduled for later this year with outstanding achievements.

Noting that 2017 is of great significance for the Party and the country, Xi urged the PLA to strengthen ideological building, combat preparation and reform implementation.

Xi urged PLA officers to eliminate the impact of Guo Boxiong and Xu Caihou, two corrupt former CMC vice chairmen, and strictly observe political discipline and rules.

"It must be ensured that the PLA resolutely follows the command of the CPC

Central Committee and the CMC at any time, in any circumstances,” Xi said.

A campaign, which focuses on the study of the Party Constitution and rules, as well as the speeches by Xi, and calls for being qualified Party members, is required to be further launched in the army.

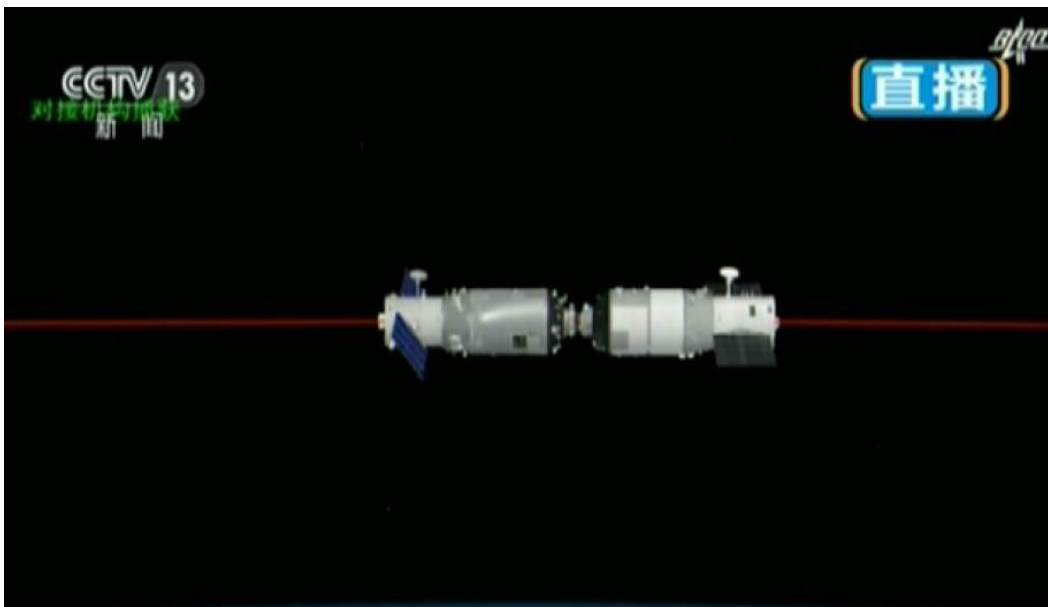
He vowed to fight corruption and enhance the “sense of gain” among officers and soldiers.

Xi asked military personnel to strengthen their awareness in preparing for war, closely follow changes of situations and make unremitting efforts to enhance combat capabilities.

Xi required an accelerated building of the theater joint combat command system, vigorous development of a new-type fighting force and simultaneous improvement of national defense strength and economic development.

He asked for stronger military management, while caring for and loving officers and soldiers and ensuring the stability of troops.

[China's cargo spacecraft docks with space lab](#)



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It is the first docking between the spacecraft and space lab.

Tianzhou-1, China's first cargo spacecraft, which was launched Thursday evening from Wenchang Space Launch Center in south China's Hainan Province, began to approach Tiangong-2 automatically at 10:02 a.m. Saturday and made contact with the space lab at 12:16 p.m.

The Tianzhou-1 cargo ship and Tiangong-2 space lab will have another two dockings.

The second docking will be conducted from a different direction, which aims to test the ability of the cargo ship to dock with a future space station from different directions.

In the third docking, Tianzhou-1 will use fast-docking technology. It normally takes about two days to dock, while fast docking will take only six hours.

Refueling will also be conducted, a process with 29 steps that takes several days.

Tiangong-2, which went into space on Sept. 15, 2016, is China's first space lab "in the strict sense" and a key step in building a permanent space station.

Cargo ships play a crucial role maintaining a space station and carrying supplies and fuel into orbit.

Xi calls for contributions to world peace, development

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday called on the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives (ICCIC) to continue international cultural exchanges and make new contributions to world peace and development.

Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks in a letter in reply to the ICCIC and Beijing Bailie University.

This year marks the 120th anniversary of the birth of Rewi Alley, the founder of the Bailie schools and a social activist who helped build friendly relations between China and New Zealand. He lived and worked in China for 60 years.

Alley initiated the Gung Ho, short for Chinese Industrial Cooperatives movement, to organize unemployed workers and refugees for production to

support the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression.

The ICCIC, established by Alley, Soong Ching-ling and Edgar Snow, made great contributions to Chinese revolution and socialist construction, Xi said.

Beijing Bailie University has carried forward the spirit of vocational education championed by its former presidents, and cultivated a large group of talent for Chinese socialist modernization, Xi noted.

The president called on the ICCIC and the university to promote Alley's spirit and contribute to building a community of shared future for mankind.

Captive and wild panda mating completed in China



Giant panda Caocao. [Screenshot: CNTV]

Chinese researchers confirmed that Caocao, a female giant panda in captivity, has completed natural mating with a wild male companion on March 23, 2017, which marks the first such instance in the world and is regarded as a breakthrough in the country's panda breeding.

On March 27, researchers with the China Conservation and Research Center for the Giant Panda (CCRCGP) reclaimed a voice recorder installed in the collar of Caocao, a subject of the organization's wild mating trial program. Caocao was released into the wild early in March, in a field monitor station in the Wolong National Nature Reserve in southwest China's Sichuan Province.

Researcher recently announced that Caocao mated for 90 seconds with a wild male giant panda on March 23.

Previously a wild panda, Caocao was reportedly found injured and rescued by researchers in 2003, when the then cub was only months old.

The female bear has undergone wildlife training and possesses rich wildness survival experience. She has delivered cubs four times, giving birth to a total of six baby pandas.

According to Zhang Hemin, Deputy Director of the CCRCGP, China's captive panda breeding program has witnessed an increasing population for the species but how to enhance the pandas' genetic vitality and diversity under artificial propagation remains a challenge.

The center hopes that its captive-bred giant pandas released into the wild could mate with wild companions, thus bringing new blood into their existing group.

So far, China has 471 captive pandas, and most of them succeeded in mating via artificial intervention in the past years.