

41.2 pct of Chinese hold urban hukou in 2016

China's registered permanent urban residents rose to 41.2 percent of the total population in 2016, after easing of "hukou" (household registration) policy, the Ministry of Public Security announced Thursday.

In 2015, only 39.9 percent of the population held urban status and the current urbanization drive is aiming for 45 percent by 2020.

At a video conference held on Thursday, the ministry of public security called for a more reasonable points system and for registration in most cities for students and migrant workers to become easier still.

The government is gradually bringing the unregistered population into the hukou system, including orphans, second children born illegally during the one-child policy and the homeless.

Last year, more than 1.43 million people formerly without hukou were registered, the ministry said.

Various benefits such as health care and education are based on hukou, and are supposed to be in line with long-term places of work and residence.

Injured finless porpoise found, in stable condition

After three days of searching, an injured finless porpoise was finally discovered Thursday afternoon in the Poyang Lake, China's largest freshwater lake.

Finless porpoise protection volunteers in Jiangxi Province discovered a large fishhook on the back of the endangered animal, using a long-focus lens on Feb. 5, but the the animal disappeared before they could help.

Jiangxi Provincial Fishery Department initiated a search for the animal after being informed by volunteers. Hydrobiology experts from the Chinese Academy of Sciences also joined the search.

Experts said the porpoise seemed to be in stable condition, and are making plans to capture the porpoise to offer it assistance.

Zhan Shupin, a department employee, said it was hard to catch it since it was in a water channel 400 meters wide and 20 meters deep.

Rarer than China's giant panda, the finless porpoise is a mammal similar to the dolphin, and now teeters on the brink of extinction, with a population of around 1,000. About 450 live in the Poyang Lake.

Overseas NGOs welcomed to China: MPS

China said overseas NGOs are welcome to carry out friendly exchanges and cooperation in China.

Efficient and convenient services will be provided for overseas NGOs and their legitimate rights and interests will be protected, according to a statement from the overseas NGO management office under the Ministry of Public Security (MPS).

So far, authorities in Beijing, Shanghai and south China's Guangdong Province have issued registration certificates to 32 representative offices of NGOs from outside the Chinese mainland, according to the MPS.

Registration services for overseas NGO representative offices became mandatory from Jan. 1, as a new law on overseas NGOs took effect the same day.

To support the process the MPS, which is responsible for registration, has released a registration guideline, set up registration counters at provincial-level police authorities and launched a supporting website.

Registration records of some overseas NGOs, which were previously kept at the civil affairs and industrial and commercial authorities, have also been transferred to the new authority in charge.

The MPS and other authorities have held a number of meetings with representatives from overseas NGOs as well as delegates from the European Union to China and foreign embassies and consulates, to listen to their suggestions on the new process.

In Shanghai and Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province, police have given foreign diplomats and representatives of overseas NGOs demonstrations of the new procedures.

Adopted by the top legislature in April, 2016, the new law requests all NGOs outside the Chinese mainland to secure approval to operate on the mainland.

The MPS said it will continue to improve the new service.

Former FAW chairman sentenced for taking bribes

Xu Jianyi, former chairman of one of China's largest auto producers FAW Group Corp., was sentenced Thursday to 11-and-a-half years in prison for accepting bribes.

Beijing No.1 Intermediate People's Court ordered that all of Xu's personal property listed in its verdict statement should be confiscated, and his illicit gains should be turned over to the national treasury.

The court found that from 2000 to 2013, Xu took advantage of his various posts to help others with business contracts, promotions, and directly or indirectly accepted assets worth 12.19 million yuan (around 1.77 million U.S. dollars).

Xu had served as vice general manager, general manager and chairman of FAW Group Corp.; a member of the standing committee of Communist Party of China (CPC) Jilin provincial committee; and Party chief of Jilin city from 2000 to 2013.

The court showed leniency, taking into consideration his confession, remorse and the fact that he voluntarily turned over all his ill-gotten gains.

New material discovered to filter PM 2.5 particles

The latest publication of Nature has highlighted a discovery headed by Professor Wang Bo from the Beijing Institute of Technology, whose team created a membrane made from metal-organic frameworks (MOFs) to filter PM2.5 particles.

According to Wang, the porous crystallization material is a compound of organic monomers and metal ions, which can catch and dissolve the small particles, and evaporative Volatile Organic Compound (VOC).

The team has by now applied the crystallized compound to the surfaces of textiles, foam materials, plastics and steel meshes.

The material is probably the most powerful filter yet and can absorb and store more than 10 times the number of molecules as currently available filters.

It can also morph the pollutants into carbon dioxide and water when catalyzed under sunlight—a sustainable and zero polluting way—to ensure the purification of the air, with a rate as high as 99 percent.

The material can lower pollution caused by PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ to 0.5 percent, and the rate will only be affected when the temperature rises to as high as 200 degrees Celsius. It is expected to be applied to reduce the polluted particles from dust bags of vacuum cleaner, exhaust pipes of automobiles and particles produced from manufacturing bases. It can also dissolve massive VOC.

According to Wang, his team plans to apply their discoveries to air purifiers and screen windows, and to reduce industrial emissions.

Wang Xun, dean at the Chemical School of Tsinghua University, said the discovery is significant in view of the country's efforts to reduce smog and improve air quality.

"Its application will be broad and extensive," Wang said.