



YUNNAN DAILY PRESS GROUP



BRIEF NEWS

BCIM strengthens disease control cooperation

BY PENG XI

During the first BCIM Health and Disease Control Cooperation Forum held recently in Yunnan, experts from Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar reached a consensus to strengthen cooperation in health and disease control to cope with cross-border transmission of diseases.

After extensive discussions, experts and scholars from the four countries reached a consensus that health and disease control are related not only to people's livelihood and well-being but also all countries' sustainable development and security.

Cross-border transmission of diseases has become a common challenge faced by BCIM countries. With increasing economic cooperation and people-to-people exchanges among the four countries, the cross-border transmission of diseases has become a prominent issue that cannot be addressed with the strength of any individual country. This requires the four countries to strengthen regional cooperation and make joint efforts.

Hongtu Airlines' first aircraft arrives in Kunming

BY HU XIAORONG

The first aircraft of Yunnan Hongtu Airlines Company recently touched down at Kunming Changshui International Airport.

The A321 aircraft (registration B-8285) departed from Toulouse, France, flew over Tarbes, France and Aktobe, Kazakhstan and arrived in Kunming after a 15-hour flight. The new aircraft is configured in an all-economy class layout featuring 220 economy class seats and is the first Airbus A321-200 introduced by Yunnan Hongtu Airlines.

FOREIGNERS IN YUNNAN



Dwight Yorke, former player of Manchester United Football Club visited Yunnan's western Dali City recently. There he played football with pupils from local Changyu Elementary School. The visit is one of the activities of "Red Chalk Program" and Dwight Yorke is one of its volunteers. **Photo by Chen Haining (Xinhua News Agency)**

CONNECTIVITY

Kunming-Bangkok Highway has brought Yunnan and Thailand closer

BY WANG JING

Recently, the "Depicting Our Kunming-Bangkok Highway" interviewing group came to the Thai Ministry of Commerce. Mrs. Vannaporn Ketudat, Director of the Office of AEC and Asia Trade Development, Thai Ministry of Commerce, said in the interview that the Kunming-Bangkok Highway has brought Yunnan and Thailand closer.

"Yunnan is an important gateway for Thailand to access China. The opening of the Kunming-Bangkok Highway has promoted economic and trade exchanges between Yunnan and Thailand, and more and more goods are coming to Thailand by this thoroughfare from China," she said.

In recent years, Yunnan-Thailand trade has been on the rise. In the first five months of 2015, bilateral trade volume reached 2.89 billion yuan, a 45.9 percent increase



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Mrs. Vannaporn Ketudat
Director of the Office of AEC and Asia Trade Development, Thai Ministry of Commerce

year on year. According to Mrs. Vannaporn Ketudat, Thailand mainly exports rubber, fruit and electronic products to Yunnan, while importing flowers, vegetables, phosphorus chemical products and electromechanical products from Yunnan. "With the opening of the Kunming-Bangkok Highway,

transport between the two places is more convenient. Thai goods are no longer transported to Yunnan by sea and companies have more transport options. So trade volume has gradually increased."

Investments between the two sides are booming. According to Mrs. Vannaporn Ketudat, statistics released by the Thai Ministry of Commerce show that Thai businesses have invested in more than 100 projects in Yunnan Province. These investors include not only well-known enterprises such as Chia Tai Group and TCC Group, but a large number of SMEs engaged in the catering and home supply industries as well. Yunnan enterprises prefer to make investments in northern Thailand, covering the import and export of agricultural products, mineral development, hotel management and so on.

"Thailand attaches great importance to the Yunnan market, and Thai enterprises participate

in the Kunming Trade Fair every year. In June 2015, the number of Thai companies participating in the event doubled from previous year and they achieved satisfactory results."

Mrs. Vannaporn Ketudat said that China's Belt and Road Initiative agrees with the Thai policy of encouraging enterprises to make overseas investments. As an important part of the Asian road network, the Kunming-Bangkok Highway aligns with the direction of transport infrastructure construction under the ASEAN framework. With the thoroughfare connecting both sides and similar policies on both sides, more project cooperation and exchanges naturally follow.

With the China-Thailand high-speed rail added to the agenda, Mrs. Vannaporn Ketudat is looking forward to travelling to Yunnan by train. She is very confident about the future of Yunnan-Thailand interconnection.

THAI LANGUAGE CRAZE

Ding Song: study in the Land of Smiles

BY SHU WEN

Ding Song is from southwest China's Yunnan Province. He could have gone to a first-class Chinese university, but he chose to come to Thailand for study in 2007. "The world has endless vistas and I have a restless heart. When I set foot in this land, the understanding of Thailand that I had developed from books and movies turned out to be superficial and even false." Recalling his choice eight years ago, Di Song believes himself to be lucky.

Ding Song became part of an exchange programme jointly run by Yunnan Nationalities University and Burapha University in Thailand eight years ago. It was then that he started to learn the Thai language. He thought that with his fluent English he could be a globetrotter, but felt awkward when looking at the strange Thai script.

Having adjusted his mindset, Ding Song plunged into the study of the Thai language. In the classroom, the seafood market or the temple hall, he was often seen talking with others and learning Thai with a dictionary in hand. With the help of warm-hearted Thai teachers and students, Ding Song experienced many "first times". He participated in a Thai speaking contest for the first time. He cooked a Thai dish for the first time. He saw the sunrise from the sea for the first time. The list goes on and on. These experiences enabled him to feel the

warmth of the Land of Smiles.

Having studied Thai language at Burapha University for a year, Ding Song followed his "restless" heart and drastically changed his study plan. Through examinations for self-taught students, Ding Song was admitted to Thailand's Assumption to study management.

"In Thailand, or "a land of the free", the concepts of openness and inclusiveness are deeply rooted in every aspect of society, including education." During his study at Assumption University of Thailand, Ding Song experienced the perfect combination of a rigorous teaching style and an open learning environment. Ding Song discovered that Chinese education and Thai education have their own characteristics. As more and more students from Yunnan came to study in Thailand, many Thai friends also asked Ding Song for advice on matters relating to studies in Yunnan, convincing him that the distance between his homeland and Thailand is constantly narrowing.

After graduation, Ding Song chose to stay in this fascinating country, and he is now engaged in the import and export trade industry with China. "At university, my heart was so attached to Thailand. Now, I live in Chonburi and my wife is from Bangkok. It is high time I made due contributions to closer cooperation between Thailand and Yunnan," said Ding Song with a smile.

ECOLOGY

A city of seagulls



Every winter, thousands of black-headed seagulls fly from Siberia to Kunming. This year, their number exceeds 40,000, a historical record. **Photo by Lin Yiguang (Xinhua News Agency)**

DISCOVER YUNNAN

Mysteries of human evolution posed by "Red Deer Cave People" fossils (Part I)

Who were Red Deer Cave People?

Editor's Note: After several years of research, Chinese and Australian paleoanthropologists found that although the "Red Deer Cave People" who lived in Mengzi, Yunnan Province, China 14,000 years ago had existed up until the dawn of agricultural civilization, they retained many features of *Homo habilis* or *Homo erectus*. Who on earth were the "Red Deer Cave People"? Were they *Homo habilis*, *Homo erectus* or *Homo sapiens*? Why did they live in isolation in a corner of southwest China?

Ji Xueping, the lead researcher and the director of the Department of Paleoanthropology of the Yunnan Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology and Darren Curnoe, a professor at the University of New South Wales published a paper in the U.S. journal PLOS ONE on December 17 last year, uncovering the mystery of the "Red Deer Cave People".

BY LIN SHUO

"Red Deer Cave People" were originally called "Mengzi People". Their fossils were first discovered in a quarry in Wenlan Town, Mengzi County, Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. Rescue excavations uncovered a relatively complete human skull fossil, three fossilised fragments of skull and human mandible and teeth fossils, as well as a large quantity of ash, burnt red clay, charcoal, bone char, animal bones and other fossils. Since a number of large deer fossils

were found in the cave, archaeologists later named the site "Red Deer Cave". Ancient humans once living there were in turn named "Red Deer Cave People".

In 2008, Ji Xueping and Curnoe set up a joint team to conduct a joint study of the Red Deer Cave human fossils that had been sealed in Mengzi for nearly 20 years.

The first thing Ji Xueping's team did was to date the "Red Deer Cave People". Using Carbon-14 and other dating methods to precisely date owners of the fossils, the "Red Deer Cave People" were found to

have lived 14,000 years ago, but Ji Xueping's team unexpectedly discovered that although the Red Deer Cave People lived during the age of anatomically modern humans (anatomically modern humans ushered in the dawn of modern humans), but the features retained in the skull and other fossils showed that they were more likely an earlier human species.

One thing is certain—the "Red Deer Cave People" were the last species of ancient human to exist before the emergence of modern human. The exploration of the mys-

tery is far from over.

In 2012, Ji Xueping and Curnoe co-published an article in journal PLOS ONE. Based on their analysis of the skulls of the "Red Deer Cave People", they concluded that although the "Red Deer Cave People" lived during the age of anatomically modern humans, they had the features of Archaic *Homo sapiens* that lived at least 100,000 years ago, suggesting a group of Archaic *Homo sapiens* had survived into the age of anatomically modern humans, spanning hundreds of thousands of years.

When the paper was published in 2012, it caused a sensation in the academic world. The "Red Deer Cave People" have been seen as another major breakthrough in the study of human origins and evolution after the discovery of "The Hobbit" in Indonesia in 2003.

On December 17, 2015, Ji Xueping and Curnoe published another paper containing the results of their study of a femur from the "Red Deer Cave People" in PLOS ONE. The research once again drew attention from many mainstream media outlets and academic institutions in

Europe and the United States.

This time they found that although the owner of the femur also lived during the age of anatomically modern humans, it had the features of *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus*. This means that the owners' features spanned a longer period of time, possibly one million years, two million years, or even longer.

"Three years ago, we studied the skull discovered. Then we found the features of Archaic *Homo sapiens* that lived 100,000 years ago," Ji Xueping said in an interview with reporters, "But today,

after studying the femur, we found that the owner of the femur still retained many features of *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus*. This seems to suggest that although the owner of the skull and the owner of the femur both came from the Red Deer Cave, they probably did not belong to the species."

"This will open up a very interesting area of research. Why did different species of ancient human live in the same geographic space in the same period?" Ji Xueping asked.

(Xinhua News Agency)