



BELT AND ROAD

China-Myanmar Railway project to speed up

It takes RMB 300 to 500 million to build an airport with a 3-km runway, and the airport will be operational in around two years. In comparison, the cost of building railways through the mountains of Yunnan is around RMB 100 million per kilometer.

"It seems that developing civil aviation in mountainous regions is more cost- and time-effective. However, it fails to meet the need of mass freight transportation. The geographic advantages of Yunnan still have to be translated into economic growth by developing highway or railway transport," pointed out by Zhang Guangbin, an Associate Professor of Yunnan Normal University. The China-Myanmar Railway will allow freight transport directly from China to the Indian Ocean, greatly shortening transport distance by about 3,000 nautical miles compared with the route via the Strait of Malacca.

Right now, a railway from Dali City to Ruili City on Sino-Myanmar border is under construction. A branch line of the section from Mangshi to Houqiao, a Chinese port on Sino-Myanmar border has also been included in the *China's Mid-and-Long-Term Railway Network Planning 2016-2030*.



A bridge in the Dali-Ruili Railway which is under construction. Online Photo

Yunnan has been establishing itself as a gateway linking China, South Asian and Southeast Asia. The China-Vietnam Railway traversing Yunnan has been operational since 2014. The China sections of other four international railways are also under accelerated construction. Among them, the 330-km Dali-Ruili line will pass by a number of key towns in the region with a design speed of 140 km/h.

"The railway will make its way through the formidable Gaoligong Mountains with extremely complex geographic

terrains and geological conditions. So it takes more time," introduced a local official.

The latest news show that the roughest tunnel project of the railway construction has seen surprising advancement, and the railway is expected to be commissioned as of 2021 based on the current construction speed.

A leading official from Yunnan Provincial Reform and Development Commission told us that Yunnan is going to invest around RMB 300 billion on railway projects in the coming five years.

An optional plan for the railway beyond Ruili may be extending it all the way to Houqiao Port, thus completing the China section of the international railway. Located 60 km to the west of the Chinese frontier city Tengchong, Houqiao is only 13 km away from the nearest Myanmar town.

According to the local development plan for the coming five years, Tengchong (Houqiao) Border Economic Cooperation Zone, with highway, railway and aviation networks available, will become an important functional hub in the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor.

The railway to Houqiao was included in *Yunnan's Mid-and-Long-Term Railway Development Plan* passed by the provincial government last October. This project is expected to start in five years, which was also reaffirmed by a press conference on the interpretation of the transport infrastructure development plan of the province.

"We are prepared for the project and look forward to seeing it included in the national plan," said a local official. (Yunnan Daily)

COOPERATION

Thailand-Yunnan educational cooperatives and exchanges held

BY CHEN XINGLONG

Recently, the 2017 Yunnan-Thailand educational cooperatives and exchanges are to be unveiled in Yunnan University.

During the event, leaders from institutions of higher education in Yunnan and Thailand held discussions on educational cooperatives and the teaching of the Thai language. Other activities will include a Thai higher education promotional exhibition and a series of dialogues between scholars from both sides. Yunnan University hopes to take this opportunity to establish a long-term mechanism for future Yunnan-Thailand

collaborations. It will seek to set up a Yunnan-Thailand university alliance, strengthen the joint training of experts and promote accredit mutual recognition mechanism. The two sides will also explore new ways of achieving common prosperity and development, while jointly opening a new chapter in Yunnan-Thailand educational cooperation.

Currently, a total of 28 colleges and universities in Yunnan offer Thai language programmes. In 2016, more than 2,000 Thai students studied in Yunnan, while more than 4,000 Yunnan students study in Thailand.

Third East Asia Summit – Clean Energy Forum kicks off in Kunming

BY HAN CHENGYUAN

The Third East Asia Summit — Clean Energy Forum kicked off in Kunming on July 3.

The forum's theme was "Concrete Cooperation for Win-win Situations: A Green, Interconnected, Inclusive, and Diverse Regional Energy System". More than 270 government officials, experts, scholars and enterprise representatives from a dozen countries and international organizations participated in the two-day forum. They shared clean energy development achievements and experiences while exploring the future of clean energy development.

Yunnan has been promoting the

development of green economy and is a Chinese 'demonstration province' in terms of low-carbon development and the construction of an ecological civilization. With the implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative, Yunnan has increased its energy cooperation with neighbouring countries. Yunnan is willing to deepen its pragmatic cooperative efforts with all parties in the development and utilization of clean energy, with the goal of creating a green, interconnected, inclusive and diverse regional energy system. It strives to promote the development of a green economy and promote the progress of environmental protection in East Asia.

KALEIDOSCOPE

Siberian tigress gives birth to septuplets at Yunnan Wildlife Park

BY RANG YINGYING

A Siberian tigress gave birth to septuplets in Yunnan Wildlife Park about two months ago. She and her cubs are now in good health.

The tiger went into labour on May 10, and became the first to give birth to septuplets at the Yunnan Wildlife Park. The Siberian tigress is seven years old and has had four pregnancies. Each time it gave birth to three or four cubs. It is very rare for a tigress to give birth to septuplets.

It is reported that Yunnan Wildlife Park has developed mature tiger breeding techniques, and the survival rates of both hand-rearing and breast feeding are higher than 90 percent. (Xinhua)

2.1 kilograms of mango king sells for \$46,470 at auction

BY LIU YANQING

The "Mango King" rating competition was held in Yongde County, west Yunnan's Lincang City recently. Twenty-two farmers selected their biggest mango to the competition.

After the evaluation, a 2.1 kilograms mango impressed the audience and won this year's "Mango King" title with its outstanding weight.

With the king of mango selected, an auction started at the same time. In the auction, Mr. Luo from Shanghai bought the mango king by paying 316,000 yuan (\$46470).

It is said that all of the money will be used for charity in Yongde.

This news stirs the topic online. Many netizens jealously express that they want to go back home to plant mango.

CULTURE

Honor to Chinese navigator Zheng He



The 2017 China Kunming Zheng He International Cultural Tourism Festival was declared open in Jinning on July 11. Zheng He (1371-1433), born in Jinning County, Kunming City, Yunnan was a navigator and diplomat during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). He captained a fleet on seven diplomatic missions to the Red Sea and Africa via Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean. He visited more than 30 countries and regions in Asia and Africa, sowing the seeds of friendship. The festival aims to passing on Zheng He's Spirit of daring to be the first, exhibiting great dedication, good neighbourliness and inclusiveness. (Xinhua) Photo by Luo Chunming

START-UPS

Succulents bring in big money

BY KE ZHONGJIA

Editor's note: Liu Junfeng quit his job at a rice company and began to sell succulents with two friends. He and his friends breed and grow succulents in greenhouses in a suburb. In this issue we will relate their entrepreneurial story.

Four years ago, Liu Junfeng graduated from Northeast Agricultural University in Harbin, northeast China's Heilongjiang Province and began to work in a rice company. His life was eventless and he earned a moderate salary, and he felt frustrated at the thought that he probably would live like this for his entire life.

In recent years, there are growing numbers of succulent-lovers in Harbin, and their preferences are getting more and more diverse. However, the succulents on the market today are mostly transported from the south of China and are very expensive. "We love succulents and know how to grow them. Why not turn our hobby into a career to meet the market demand? My friends readily agreed with me, so I quit my job," Liu Junfeng recalled.

Quite by chance, Liu Junfeng heard that a farm on the outskirts of Harbin had some greenhouses that

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Liu Junfeng

were lying idle. "A lot of people in Harbin would come to plant something in the greenhouses, each of which can be rented for 4,000 yuan a year. If more people came to the farm, they would know our greenhouses and succulents," Liu Junfeng said.

The farm provides clean air, convenient transportation and low rent. More importantly for Liu Junfeng and his friends, the area receives helpful updates regarding weather forecasts.

Their succulents come in many varieties and the prices range from a few yuan to more than 100 yuan per plant. If the friends only grew ordinary varieties, they

would certainly fail. "I'm now responsible for cultivating new, rare and high-value varieties. To keep track of market demand, we organize salons for lovers of succulents and communicate with our customers through our WeChat public accounts," Liu Junfeng said.

Liu Junfeng has found that bright-coloured and lovely succulents are particularly popular, so he has devoted his efforts to breeding such varieties. Now, the most expensive plants sell for more than 500 yuan per plant. And yet even these are still in short supply.

The cultivation of a new rare succulent variety involves a complex and cumbersome process, but it is easy to breed once cultivated. Therefore, when Liu Junfeng completes the cultivation of a new variety, he increases production before selling it on the market. Otherwise, the variety will be easily copied and the friends will lose both their brand and market share.

Last year, Liu Junfeng and his partners earned more than 100,000 yuan each, much more than the salaries they earned in the past. "To maintain good momentum, we must seize upon market trends. Only in this way will our business thrive and prosper," Liu Junfeng said.

(People's Daily)

China, Laos launch cross-border survey of endangered species

BY DAI ZHENGHUA

A team of Chinese researchers left Phongsali Province in Laos for Jinghong in early July. They had just finished a first-ever field study training program aimed at understanding the rare and endangered species along both sides of the China-Laos border.

In order to build up the experience of the field workers, their training is an important step to ensure

the success of the cross-border survey on rare and endangered wildlife. These animals included Asian elephants and Indochinese tigers.

Ten field workers from different Lao national nature reserves and wildlife authorities, as well as 25 Chinese colleagues, took part in the six-day training period on a number of topics. These included field monitoring methods, infrared camera installation skills, field patrols, community protection and others.

PEOPLE

The old man and the Flying Tigers



Sun Guansheng shows a visitor around the Yunnan Flying Tigers Museum. Photo by Li Hongfeng

BY LI HONGFENG

More than 20 years ago, an idea of collecting and researching historical materials related to the Flying Tigers has germinated in Sui Guansheng's mind. Now, this retired old man in his 70s spends all his time and money searching everything related to this legendary air force.

American Volunteer Group (AVG) of the Chinese Air Force, nicknamed the Flying Tigers, was composed of pilots from the United States Army Air Corps (USAAC), Navy (USN), and Marine Corps (USMC), and commanded by Claire Lee Chennault. The group came to China and helped the Chinese people in their war against Japanese aggression in the World War II, destroying around 300 enemy aircrafts, while losing 26

pilots in combat.

In addition to collecting information, material evidence and even aircraft wrecks of the Flying Tigers, Sun also proposed and set up China's first Flying Tiger Research Association in Yunnan. A great deal of research articles the association published attracted extensive attention from home and abroad. A number of senior American diplomats to China visited the Flying Tigers Museum he built, acclaiming what he has done deepens the friendship between the two peoples.

According to Sun, the Flying Tigers Museum has come into partnership with its American counterpart Chennault Aviation and Military Museum.

"We should have a heart of thanksgiving to the heroes in the past," Sun said.