



THINK TANKS

## Think tanks make contributions to cooperation between China, S and SE Asia

BY LI HONGFENG

On June 15, the 6<sup>th</sup> China-South and Southeast Asia (Think Tank Forum (CSSATF) was concluded in Kunming, Yunnan. At the closing ceremony, the “initiative to establish the China-South and Southeast Asia think tank network” was adopted. Following this initiative, the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor Think Tank Cooperation Network and the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Mechanism Think Tank Network were unveiled.

During the two-day forum, over 300 experts and scholars from China, Myanmar, India, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Asian Development Bank and 18 other countries and international orga-

nizations gathered in Kunming. They held discussions and made proposals around the theme “build a community for a shared future and deepen the cooperation between China, South and Southeast Asian countries.”

**The Think Tank Forum covered five topics of discussion.** One of these topics addressed how to “promote the construction of the international economic corridors between China, South and Southeast Asia.” Many scholars agreed that the involved parties are geographically, historically and culturally related, and economically compatible. Furthermore, these countries should take measures to advance the construction of the BCIM economic corridor, the China-Pakistan economic corridor and the China-Indochinese Penin-

sular economic corridor.

A scholar from India spoke on how to “build a community for a shared future for China, South and Southeast Asian Countries.” They said that China and India should draw on their long-standing civilizations to cultivate Asian culture and common Asian values.

Scholars from China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Afghanistan and other countries shared a similar view on how to “develop new international relations between China, South and Southeast Asia.” Many of them pointed out that the Belt and Road Initiative would not only promote cooperation between China and countries already involved in the initiative, but also help establish new international relations between China and South and Southeast Asian countries.

This would benefit these newly involved countries and steer the international relations in a new direction.

Discussion of how to “build the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road” revealed that experts believe it is necessary to increase the construction of both maritime transport corridors and infrastructure. Additionally, there should be efforts to build a more open and international economic cooperation zone.

When discussing the topic of how to “create a mechanism for sharing skills between China, South and Southeast Asian countries”, some scholars proposed establishing a new think tank alliance for skills-based cooperation. The scholars from Southeast Asia said that China and Southeast

Asian countries should be working to share skills, information and resources, and to develop joint strategies for the cultivation and training of personnel. This would include participation in technology exchanges and collaborative development of human resources. In particular, the scholars emphasized that the development of collaborative strategies for the training of young, talented personnel should be a high priority.

**Both Chinese and foreign experts recognized that Yunnan province, which is located at the junction of China and South and Southeast Asia, holds an important position in the Belt and Road Initiative. It was agreed that Yunnan should play a greater role in working towards a shared future for the region.**

TRADE

## China announces tariff adjustment under APTA arrangement

China adjusts tariffs on an array of imports from a number of Asia-Pacific countries from July 1, according to the Ministry of Finance.

The adjustment, covering products under 8,549 tariff codes made in Bangladesh, India, Laos, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka, was part of the tariff concession arrangement reached under the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA).

After the adjustment, tariffs on 2,323 categories of commodities such as certain chemicals, optical

components and television cameras are reduced.

The adjustment came after a new arrangement was reached during the fourth round of tariff concession negotiations among the six APTA members in January 2017.

In May 2001, China joined the then Bangkok Agreement, whose name was changed to the APTA in November 2005. It aims at promoting economic and trade cooperation among its members through the adoption of mutually beneficial trade liberalization measures. (Xinhua)

INDUSTRY

## China becomes world's largest li-ion battery producer

China has become the world's largest lithium-ion battery producer, dominating the global market alongside South Korea and Japan, said a report released last week at an international forum on the lithium industry and power battery development.

**China's production capacity of power batteries has reached 38 GWh, accounting for 60 percent of the world's total, said the report released on June 27 at the China (Qinghai) Lithium Industry and Power Battery International Forum held in Xining, the capital city of Qinghai in northwest China.**

The large production volume is attributed to the rapid development of electric vehicles.

However, despite the market boom, industry insiders are worried about the industry's future development, as many major problems remain unsolved, such as the poor level of technologies related to resource utilization and battery production, as well as a lack of a battery re-use system.

Zhang Yongwei, the chief expert of China EV100, a nonprofit organization promoting new energy vehicles, said that China will produce tens of millions of electric vehicles annually by 2030, but the industry will be under intense pres-

sure if the bottlenecks for power battery development are unsolved.

Although China has abundant lithium resources, the utilization rate of lithium is low because of poor technology and underdeveloped supporting industries, said Zheng Mianping, a member of the China Academy of Engineering. According to estimates by his research team, approximately 70 percent of the lithium resources used in China were imported from foreign countries.

Further to that, China is short of nickel and cobalt, two other important materials to make power batteries, Zheng said.

Another major problem is that China has no battery re-use system. About 70 to 80 percent of power is still usable in the scrap batteries of new energy vehicles, and there are many valuable metals which can be reused if treated properly.

The first batch of power batteries used in the Chinese market are approaching retirement. Chen Qingtai, the president of China EV100, suggested that the authorities establish rules on technology development and battery disposal programs in addition to launching a plan to encourage the reuse of power batteries. (China.org.cn)

RELIEVE POVERTY FOR COMMON PROSPERITY

## Yunnan villagers improve livelihood for Australian nuts

Li Zhizhong may not be able to locate Australia on a map, but he is a master at cultivating Australian macadamia nuts.

Li, 63, has devoted more than a decade of his life to the two hectares of macadamias he grows in Mengzhi Village in southwest China's Yunnan Province. The village is among the largest production areas of macadamias in China thanks to locals who brought the Australian seedlings there more than 20 years ago.

“We used to grow corn and potatoes in the mountains, but we did not make much money,” Li recalled. “With macadamias, we all became rich.”

Currently, about 133,333 hectares of macadamias have been grown in the city of Lincang, where more than 170,000 farming households are engaged in the business, according to official statistics.

In the 1990s, local officials established Mengzhi as a pilot area to grow macadamias, but villagers were reluctant to switch to the exotic crop.

“Most villagers were suspicious about the seedlings because they basically knew nothing about the nuts,” Li said.

Only one man named Bi Jiayu was willing to give them a try, Li said.

“He read a magazine about the environment needed to grow macadamias and about the nuts’

high market value,” Li said. “He said the county's climate was perfect for growing the nut trees.”

Bi then went to the county government and asked for 100 seedlings.

“He spent days choosing the right place, growing and fertilizing the seedlings, and experts sent by the government often came to help,” Li said. “He also frequented bookstores in the county to learn more about his crops.”

In 2001, Bi's fields produced the first batch of macadamias. Production climbed year after year, with each hectare of the nuts generating up to 240,000 yuan (37,471 U.S. dollars) annually.

The exotic nuts truly transformed the fortunes in the county. Take Li for example. Growing the nuts has allowed him to buy a car worth 130,000 yuan and a house priced at more than 400,000 yuan.

“I paid in full for both my car and my house,” Li said.

In the village next to Mengzhi, resident Yang Wenzhu can make about 500,000 yuan a year growing macadamias. Yang calls his newly bought house the “nut house” and his car the “nut car” because they were bought thanks to the booming nut industry.

“The industry has not only beautified the mountains in our hometown, but also improved our livelihood,” Li said. (China.org.cn)

CONNECTIVITY



Passengers pose for photo on a bullet train running on Kunming-Dali High Speed Rail. Photo by Li Qiuming

## Bullet trains reduce travel time to two hours between Kunming and Dali

BY HU XIAORONG

After five and a half years of construction, the Kunming-Chuxiong-Dali high speed railway went into operation on July 1. This marks the integration of western Yunnan into the national high-speed rail network and the official opening of Kunming-Dali Section of China-Myanmar International Railway.

Dali, a city located in west Yunnan Province, is one of the most popular scenic spots for travelers both at home and abroad. It is famous for its unique culture of local

Bai people and beautiful natural landscapes. With its gentle climate, hospitable people and slow-paced lifestyle, Dali is considered as the perfect place to relax in China.

Usually, it takes 50 minutes by plane or 4-5 hours by bus from Kunming, the capital city of Yunnan, to Dali. By taking bullet trains, it takes you less than 2 hours. It means your next travel from Kunming to Dali will not only be less time-consuming, but also certainly cost you less.

The 280-kilometer railway starts at Kunming Railway Station and ends at Dali Railway Station

in west Yunnan, with a designed speed of 200km/h. The 4G network was available all the way.

Ten stations are set on the line, involving Kunming, Guangtongbei, Chuxiong, Nanhua, Yunnanyi, Xiangyun, and Dali. Travelers can take the bullet trains to Dali either at the downtown Kunming Railway Station or at the Kunmingnan Railway Station in Chenggong.

In the future, the Kunming-Dali railway will be extended to northwest Yunnan's Shangri-La and further west to Ruili. The railways will allow you to enjoy more beauties of Yunnan.

YUNNAN WEDDING CUSTOMS

## Blang people: How she serves tea determines whom she loves

BY WANG DAN

**Editor's notes:** Yunnan's diverse living environment and cultural deposits have contributed to the evolution of a great variety of marriage customs. From marriage customs of various ethnic groups, we can feel the charm of Yunnan culture. Today, we introduce u to the Blang wedding custom.

In the marriage customs of Blang people, tea is very important, from marriage proposal, engagement to wedding ceremony. In addition, tea is also inseparable after marriage.

Young people from Blang ethnic group gather and look for their loved ones on jubilant occasions such as the Tea Ancestor Festival and the Water-Sprinkling Festival. When night falls, young wooers sit around the fireplace in the house of the beloved one to sing songs. In front of every one of them, there is a cup made of bamboo or wood in which there are tea leaves. The girl they pursue will fill water into the cups, which is a subtle way for her to express her feeling. For the one



Photo by Meng Zhigang

she loves, she will fill less water into his cup, indicating that she wishes he can stay at her home for a longer time. And if she fills up the cup, she wants the person drinks more tea and then goes to toilet and will not come back.

Tea is the soul of Blang people. It must be served at various rites including the wedding ceremony. After young people tell their family members their affections, the young man's parents will send relatives to have a talk about the marriage at the young lady's home. The relatives will be trusted with a bag of tea and a bottle of wine which

will be presented to the girl's parents during the visit. If the family of the young lady shows no objection to the marriage, they will accept the gifts.

During the wedding ceremony, the couple needs to serve tea for all attending seniors and receive their blessings. At night, they will prepare water for washing their feet, and make the bed for them. In return, the elderly will give the couple some cash or gifts. On the third day, an elder will introduce all relatives to the couple. (Daguan Weekly)



A macadamia nut factory in west Yunnan Photo by Zhang Tong

ECO

## Fuxian Lake safe again for the "picky" fish

More than 500,000 schizothorax taliensis were released lately in the crystal clear Fuxian Lake, a plateau rift lake stretching out through Chengjiang, Jiangchuan and Huangning Counties in central Yunnan's Yuxi City.

Schizothorax taliensis is dubbed as the “elf of the jade pool”, is a unique species of fish living in Fuxian lake. They have slender bodies and strong reproductive capacity. Usually, the fish can grow to 20 centimeters long. In the 1970s, schizothorax

taliensis was almost on the verge of extinction due to overfishing and invasion of alien species.

In recent years, Yuxi City has made tremendous efforts to protect the Fuxian Lake and the schizothorax taliensis. Among them, the annual release of the schizothorax taliensis is an important measure. Now, Fuxian Lake has become one of the Grade I freshwater lakes in China, which enables Schizothorax taliensis, the “picky” fish to live safely.

FOREIGNERS IN YUNNAN

## Polish Mateusz's promising career and wonderful life in Yunnan



Mateusz (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) is treating a patient. Photo provided by Mateusz

BY WEI RANRAN

Mateusz Puslecki, a physiotherapist from Poland, now works at a hospital in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan Province. He says that he is so overwhelmed by the charm of the province that he has fallen in deep love with it.

In the summer of 2011, when Mateusz was working in Poland, an idea suddenly came to him that he should visit somewhere else to experience different culture. He resigned and came to Xiamen in China where he studied Chinese and worked in a kindergarten. One year later, he decided to return to his profession of physical rehabilitation, and moved to Yunnan.

According to Mateusz, compared with Beijing and Shanghai, physical therapy is less popular in Yunnan. “To put it another way, it means that there is more demand from patients.”

His expertise has been recognized by his patients, evidenced by the piles of thank-you notes

and cards on his desk. “Seeing my patients recovering and picking up their smiles gives me a sense of accomplishment. I really enjoy helping others,” said Mateusz.

In his spare time, Mateusz loves rock climbing. “Climbing allows me to get close to nature and better understand the landscape and local customs of Yunnan,” he said the climbing has become an indispensable part of his life in Yunnan.

Thanks to this hobby, Mateusz and his friends spent a special Spring Festival in 2017. When they were on their way home from a climbing trip in Fuming, Kunming on the eve of Spring Festival, they passed through a small village and encountered a family gathering around a campfire outside their house. It was dinnertime and the villagers warmly invited them to have dinner together. “The food was simple, but it was so warm. And they prepared separate dishes for my vegetarian friends,” he said emotionally. (Daguan Weekly)