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The Nation

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FOCUS

Yunnan leads the country in biodiversity

The National Botanical Museum of China to be built in Kunming

Numbers

Yunnan has 19,365 higher plant species (including sub-varieties)

108 species are under state level 2 key protection

45 species of wild plants are under state level 1 key protection

161 nature reserves have been established in Yunnan Province with a total area of 2.86 million hectares, accounting for 7.3% of the province's land area.

The signing ceremony of the National Museum of Botany, to be built jointly by Yunnan Provincial Government, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Kunming Municipal Government was held in Kunming on October 8. The clock is ticking down to the construction of the National Museum of Botany.

China is one of the countries with the most abundant biological species in the world. Yunnan has a wide variety of landforms and natural environments, and is the most bio-diverse area in China. It is also the gathering or birthplace of many important plant groups. According to statistics, there are around 19,365 species of higher plants in Yunnan, accounting for 62.9 per cent of the 30,000 species of higher plants in China. Plant species from tropical zone and sub-tropical zone to temperate zone and even frigid zone

have amassed in Yunnan.

Kunming is famous as a spring city and flower city in China. There are more than 1,200 kinds of wild plants and 460 kinds of flowers in Kunming. The output value of flower production in Kunming has been the highest in China for 20 years, which provides favorable conditions for conducting scientific research, developing the health industry, and building a green economy.

The National Museum of Botany of China will combine exhibition of traditional museums with collection and display of living plants and research of traditional culture and the mega-health industry. The project is located in the north urban area of Kunming, with a preliminary scope of about 10 square kilometers.

XI'S REMARKS



Environment is livelihood; green mountains are beauty; and blue skies are happiness. We must protect this planet like our own eyes, and cherish nature the way we cherish life.

—Remarks made by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his participation in the deliberation of the Jiangxi delegation on March 6, 2015 at the two sessions of that year.

STORY

Ecology-based life empowers villagers

Dujieqilin, a 58-year-old Tibetan man, live with his family in the Pudacuo National Park, Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan province. The highland barley he grows, the yaks he raises and his family's ranch now are part of the national park landscape, along with the surrounding snowy mountain meadows, forests and lakes.

"Before, we had little income from cutting down trees and grazing cattle." When talking about the past, Dujieqilin could not bear to think back. His family of seven did farming and raised cattle and their annual income was no more than 5,000 yuan. The extensive way of life destroyed the local ecological environment. Wildlife in the forests was in decline. In late 1990s, animals like the deer almost disappeared.

When Pudacuo National Park was established a few years ago, a community feeding policy was implemented. That gave Dujieqilin three identities: villager and forest rangers of Luorong Village, Jiantangtown, Shangri-la and a citizen of the National Park. "We receive more than 50,000 yuan a year for ecological, grassland, tourism and other types of back-nurture fund. If the ecology is not well protected, the money is gone," said Dujieqilin.

Long Decheng, a villager of Dulong township of Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture, is also a bene-

ficiary from forest protection. He is a village forest resources guard team leader, not only to manage village rangers, but also to lead patrolling in the mountains. Long Decheng said that the 80 rangers in the village cover an area of more than 53,333ha of forest, with a monthly subsidy of 800 yuan per person and 1,400 yuan for each village group leader.

"Accurately recruited registered households, to participate in ecological management and protection, helped the villagers achieve their employment goals and get rid of poverty at their doorsteps in the mountains." Ren Zhizhong, director of Yunnan Forestry and Pastry Bureau, said that patrolling and protecting the forest not only helps increase the local people's income, but also makes it more convenient for them to take care of the old and young in their families. They have achieved win-win results in ecological protection and poverty alleviation.

The "Ecological forest rangers+" model effectively drives a steady increase in incomes and poverty alleviation of the poor. Up to now, 17,000 rangers have been hired in Diqing prefecture. The employment of ecological forest rangers in Nujiang prefecture has helped 51,400 poor people increase their income steadily. (By Wang Jingzhong)

TRAVEL

Qijing's Romance Town popular with tourists

In this golden season of autumn, tourists are flocking to the Romance Town (also known as the Aiqing Town) in Qijing City, Yunnan, where about 67 hectares of flowers are blooming. The Romance Town is located three kilometers away from the government seat of Qilin District of Qijing.

It is a newly built tourist destination with golf course, European-style buildings, hotels, sports facilities.

In the flower sea of town, tourists can appreciate more than 30 varieties of flowers around the year. Among them, the lavender is the main species. Thus the town is also dubbed "China's Provence". (Xinhua)

CULTURE

Innovation gives Yi embroidery a new lease on life



The Yi embroidery handbag.

In Chuxiong Yi Autonomous Prefecture of Yunnan province, Yi embroidery is called "art on fingertip", as it's famous for its sophisticated needlework and exquisite and meticulous design.

Miyilu National Clothing Products Company has many modern Yi embroidery handicrafts: Their products have retained the traditional Yi embroidery style for use in handbags, wallets, teacups, luggage and other daily necessities as carriers, both beautiful and useful, favoured by citizens and tourists.

"Yi girls can dance when they walk and can embroider when they hold chopsticks." According to Zhou Xiaomei, director of Miyilu, the art value of Yi embroidery is very high, but it was impacted by modern textile technology. Traditional Yi embroidery could not adapt to market competition and was faced with oblivion. In order to solve the problem, Luo Jun, inheritor of the intangible cultural heritage of Yi embroidery in Chuxiong Prefecture, founded Miyilu to enable the traditional to thrive through innovation.

"In order to let Yi embroidery integrate into the market, we should understand industrialized production above all," said Zhou. It is reported that Miyilu attracted nearly 3,000 Yi female embroiders for production under the model of company+cooperative+farmer households. By adopting order-based production, the company is responsible for product sales to make embroiders no need to worry about it. In addition, the company opened a Yi embroidery training school to teach the embroidery skills. That has laid a solid foundation for Yi embroidery to cope with industrialisation.

After solving the problem of production, Miyilu innovated boldly and developed a modern Yi embroidery handicraft with both cultural and practical features on the basis of retaining traditional characteristics of Yi embroidery and combining modern fashion elements. Zhou said that, "traditional Yi embroidery gives priority to black, white and red colours; we let go the restriction on the colours and encourage everybody to use blue, purple and aureate, which are more in line with modern aesthetics."

In the meantime, to meet market demand, Miyilu combines daily necessities and considers the practicability of products adequately. Miyilu has developed dozens of modern Yi embroidery handicrafts including suitcases, notebooks and wallets. The exquisite needlework, vibrant colours and beautiful patterns, have added new vitality to Yi embroidery. (By Duan Jianxin)

Further reading

From snow-covered mountains to rainforests traversed by wild elephants, the diversity of plants brings endless splendor to Yunnan. Here, people and plants has long been coexisted.

RHODODENDRON



The majestic mountains of Yunnan are full of rhododendrons in different colours every spring and summer.

Yunnan is known to botanists as the home of rhododendrons. There are more than 800 species of rhododendrons in the world. Among them, 600 species are in China and 400 in Yunnan. From the rhododendron of large white flowers at an altitude of 2,000 metres to the rhododendron of dense branches above an altitude of 4,000 metres, the snow-capped mountains, with their brilliant flowers, are the most beautiful scenery on the plateau in this season and a shining tourist card in many places.

LOTUS KING



In the pond of MengLun Botanical Garden in Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, Lotus King is a star of the tropical rain forest every midsummer and the largest floating lotus in Yunnan province. The mature leaves of Lotus King are in the shape of a round basin with buoyancy to support a kid weighing 20 kilograms.

In Xishuangbanna and other places in Yunnan, there are large areas of tropical rain forest which is home to more than 20,000 plant species. Giant trees cover the sky and wild elephants walk through it, becoming the most important treasure house of biodiversity in China. Yunnan is also home to the world's highest tropical rain forests.

CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE



In Yunnan, plants have been used as medicine for more than a thousand years. Notoginseng, dendrobium officinale and all kinds of flower teas are well known and very precious Chinese medicinal materials. According to statistics, there are 6,559 kinds of Chinese medicinal materials in Yunnan, accounting for 51.2 per cent of the national resources of Chinese medicinal materials. Its planting area of Chinese medicinal materials also ranks first in China.

Today, Yunnan is developing traditional Chinese medicine as a characteristic industry, striving to build the Yunnan medicine brand which has helped many farmers successfully get rid of poverty.

EAT FLOWERS



Almost all people who come to Yunnan can taste the flower cake, a local delicacy. The cake is filled with fresh rose petals for a fragrant bite.

Along with plants, Yunnan people have been eating flowers for over a thousand years. Furze flowers, plantain flowers and pomegranate flowers, whether wild or cultivated—when local people open the door and pick a handful of flowers, a delicious dish will be served soon.

Nowadays, this kind of diet is in vogue. In the modern era, Yunnan people are still enjoying the wisdom of ancestral inheritance and more flowers have joined the modern Yunnan recipes.

MUSHROOMS



After the rain, in the forests all over Yunnan a silent symphony is staged and lovely mushrooms scramble to break through the ground. According to statistics, wild mushrooms in Yunnan cover more than 850 species, accounting for 43 per cent of the world's, and 91 per cent of China's total. It is the region with most wild mushroom species and the highest yields in the world.

Yunnan people had noticed such lively scenes in the forests after rains a long time ago. In summer, people go into the forest early in the morning and harvest the gift of nature. The expensive truffle, the fragrant matsutake and the thick porcini fungus...All kinds of wild mushrooms become part of a scenery that is unique to the Yunnan vegetable market.

CONNECTIVITY

Shang Longyin Bridge on China-Laos railway is closed

The China Railway Kunming Bureau Group said that the Shang Longyin Bridge on the Yuxi-Mohan section of the China-Laos railway has been finished recently. Break-throughs were made in engineering construction.

Construction on the 660.55 meter long Shang Longyin Bridge which is located in Mengla County, was started in December 2017. According to Tang Dongyi, the Bridge Technology Director of the Yuxi-Mohan Railway Project Department of the China Railway 25th Bureau Company Ltd., the Shang Longyin Bridge project involved complicated construction conditions. The biggest challenge was that the bridge had to cross an expressway, a highway and a country road.

The China-Laos railway, connecting Kunming and Vientiane, adopts Chinese technological standards and equipment. When the entire railway line is completed, it will greatly improve the connectivity between the two countries and will be of vital importance for the economic and social development in the region. (Xinhua)

YUNNAN TODAY

Yunnan builds efficient road networks

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, Yunnan has been making effort to build a railway and highway network, which will include eight interprovincial and five international railways, and seven interprovincial and five international highways. After it is finally completed, a huge road network crisscrossing and connecting all directions spreads out on the land of colourful Yunnan, becoming a footnote for Yunnan to realise economic and social leapfrog development of high quality.

Yunnan is located in the border area of southwest China with high mountains and deep valleys. It is difficult to build roads and even more difficult to build railways in the province. "Bells ring in the hills and horse teams

come" and "trains are not as fast as cars" are true portray of the difficult start of the Yunnan road network.

In the past 70 years, the length of Yunnan railway in operation increased six fold from 649.8 km in 1949 to 3914.7 km in 2018. The length of Yunnan highway increased 89.3 times from 2,800 km in 1949 to 252,900 km in 2018, ranking fifth in China. The total length of expressways in service is 5,184 km, ranking 14th in China, and 18,800 km of high-grade highways, accounting for 7.45 per cent of the total length. All the villages in the province have completed hardened road construction, a rate up to 100 per cent.

With the operation of the Shanghai-Kunming high-speed railway, the

Yunnan-Guangxi high-speed railway and the Kunming-Chuxiong-Dali high-speed railway, Yunnan has entered the era of high-speed rail and has become connected with the country's high-speed railway network. The long-cherished wish of drawing the world faraway to very close is being realised. The density and scope of high-speed rail service in Yunnan have been gradually expanded with direct access to 19 major cities.

It has basically formed a high-speed rail traffic circle covering the central Yunnan city cluster in one hour, reaching the surrounding provincial capitals in two to five hours, and reaching the Pearl River Delta and Bohai Rim Region in eight to twelve hours. After the operation of high-speed railway from Kunming to Chuxiong, Dali, Lijiang, Yuxi and Honghe, the coverage and cascading effect of high-speed rail trains are evident.

Now in Yunnan, road networks in all directions have helped alleviate poverty, build prosperity, promote industry as well as scenery and tourism. It supports leapfrog development of Yunnan's economy and society of high quality in the new era. (By Li Chenghan)



The railway and highway are working efficiently in Yunnan's Qujing. Photo by Li Wensheng