

CHINA

NATIONAL VISION, LOCAL ACTION

Ginseng-based industry boom in Tonghua

City leverages innovative strategies to improve traditional medicine sector

By LIU MINGTAI in Changchun and PENG CHAO

The ginseng industry in Tonghua, Jilin province, has entered a phase of high-quality development under a new growth strategy, according to Sun Jian, Party secretary of the city.

Ginseng, a perennial plant renowned for its medicinal properties, has been a staple of traditional Chinese medicine for centuries. In the first 11 months of this year, the comprehensive output value of the ginseng industry in Tonghua, a key production area in China, reached 37.8 billion yuan (\$5.2 billion), a 13.6 percent increase year-on-year.

"The industry's comprehensive output value for the entire year is expected to hit a milestone of 40 billion yuan," Sun said.

Tonghua is home to 26 ginseng enterprises that each earn over 20 million yuan in annual revenue and hosts both A-share-listed companies specializing in ginseng. The city produces over 800 varieties of ginseng products spanning five major categories, with exports reaching countries such as Japan, South Korea, France and Italy.

Since last year, Tonghua has prioritized the ginseng industry as a cornerstone of its green transformation and overall revitalization, aligning with the national Healthy China initiative and the rising demand for health and wellness products.

"The third plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee, held in July, proposed promoting the preservation and innovative development of traditional Chinese medicine. This presents significant strategic opportunities for the ginseng industry," Sun said.

Located in the Changbai Mountain region, Tonghua benefits from a favorable climate, fertile soil and a forest coverage rate exceeding 66.6 percent — ideal conditions for cultivating forest-grown ginseng. To advance the industry, Tonghua has



Ginseng flowers grow in forests in Tonghua, Jilin province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

adopted a new development path focused on rational forest land use, high-quality seed breeding, digital management and brand building.

"Tonghua is the first in the country to complete a comprehensive survey of forest land suitable for ginseng cultivation," Sun said. "Based on factors such as canopy density, slope gradient and soil quality, 60,920 hectares of suitable forest land have been classified into three levels and nine grades, ensuring the highest quality ginseng is grown in the best soil."

To ensure sustainable development, the city has implemented a registration system for forest-grown ginseng plantations. This system enables scientific planning and efficient use of forest resources based on market demand and annual production.

Tonghua has also signed strategic agreements with research institutions, enterprises and expert teams to promote ginseng seed conservation, breeding and distribution.

Currently, a seed base is under construction, comprising 36 plots spanning 304.5 hectares. In addition, the city has developed a digital platform to monitor the entire ginseng production cycle, from planting to processing and sales.

Sun noted that it is the first platform in China to use satellite remote sensing technology for managing ginseng plantations. "With this platform, all ginseng produced in the city is fully traceable, giving consumers confidence in the quality of our products," he said.

Contact the writers at pengchao@chinadaily.com.cn

Heritage protection



An archaeological expert examines a bronze mask at the Sanxingdui Research Institute in Guanghan, Sichuan province, on Monday. The second phase of the ancient Shu civilization protection and inheritance project was launched at the institute. JIANG HONGJING / XINHUA

Safety violations caused deadly explosion in Jiangsu, report says

By ZHOU HUIYING zhouhuiying@chinadaily.com.cn

Authorities in eastern China have concluded that a deadly dust explosion at a metal-processing facility in January was the result of deliberate efforts by the company to evade safety regulations, according to an investigative report released by the Changzhou Emergency Management Bureau.

The blast at Changzhou Shenrong Metal Technology Co in Jiangsu province killed eight people and injured eight others. The investiga-

tion identified it as a "production safety responsibility incident" and cited the company's failure to comply with production equipment design requirements, leading to the accumulation of highly flammable aluminum alloy dust.

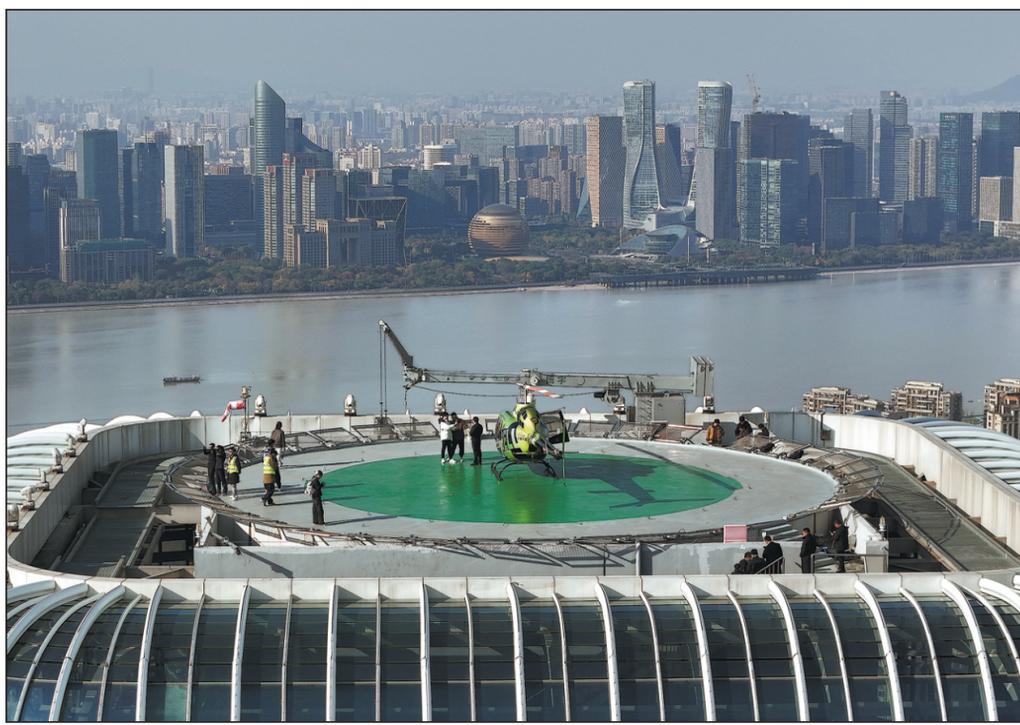
The report said Shenrong Co concealed production activities to evade supervision, a decision that directly contributed to the explosion. Other factors included inadequate emergency response, poor local oversight and lax industry regulation.

The explosion caused direct economic losses of more than 14.83 mil-

Fly around

An intercity sightseeing helicopter lands on the rooftop of the Wisdom Tower Shimao in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, on Sunday. The flight marked the opening of a helicopter terminal on the tower, with several helicopter routes planned for city sightseeing.

LYU ZHIYAO / FOR CHINA DAILY



China to boost Indian Ocean region

By LI YINGQING in Kunming and PENG CHAO

China is seeking to deepen cooperation with countries in the Indian Ocean region to boost the blue economy and explore new maritime economic collaboration models, a senior Chinese official said on Monday.

Wang Yong, vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, outlined the initiative at the Third China-Indian Ocean Region Forum on Blue Economy Development Cooperation in Kunming, Yunnan province.

"China aims to enhance partnerships in maritime transport, biomedicine, renewable energy, infrastructure, and marine science and technology," Wang said. "These efforts will inject fresh vitality into the development of countries in the region."

Wang also pledged that China will collaborate on combating marine pollution, responding to public health emergencies and helping small island nations build climate resilience.

"Peace and stability in the oceans demand collective effort," Wang said. "China is ready to work with others to shape governance rules and promote equitable global ocean governance."

By WANG XIAOYU

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As the number of acute respiratory infections is rising in China, with significant increases in cases of influenza and other viruses that particularly affect children, experts have suggested proper rest at home to avoid further complications.

In a surveillance report published on Thursday, the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention stated that during the week ending Dec 8, the three most prevalent respiratory illnesses nationwide were influenza, rhinovirus and mycoplasma pneumoniae — a common bacterial infection that primarily affects children age 5 to 14.

According to the China CDC's latest data, there is a marked increase in flu positivity rates compared to previous weeks, although infections caused by rhinovirus and mycoplasma pneumoniae are trending down-

ward. However, respiratory syncytial virus — a common cause of cold-like symptoms that can pose severe risks for toddlers and the elderly — is on the rise among children age 4 and under.

Additionally, infections caused by human metapneumovirus are increasing among children and teenagers age 14 and under. Although this viral infection generally causes mild symptoms, it can lead to severe illness in individuals with compromised immune systems.

"Infected individuals are contagious from the end of the incubation period to the acute phase. The duration of immune protection after recovery is relatively short, which increases the likelihood of recurrent infections," the China CDC warned.

The agency advised people to rest at home if they are experiencing fever or other symptoms of respiratory infections. Students and school

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Wang Yong, vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference

The forum, themed "Future of the Blue Indian Ocean — Development Practice of the Global South", addressed issues including fisheries, disaster prevention, climate adaptation, marine energy and ecological protection.

Luo Zhaohui, head of the China International Development Cooperation Agency, said that advancing the blue economy aligns with the shared interests of all nations.

"Small island states, despite their breathtaking beauty, face existential threats, yet their concerns remain under-addressed," Luo said.

He highlighted China's support for such states through the Belt and Road Initiative and the Global Development Initiative, citing projects in agriculture, marine energy and early-warning climate systems.

Maldivian Vice-President Hussain Mohamed Latheef underscored the urgency of climate action, noting his country's ambitious renewable energy goals and expressing gratitude for China's support.

"The Maldives is doing everything possible to adapt and mitigate climate impacts despite limited resources," Latheef said. "China has always been a reliable partner for our progress."

The Maldives plans to meet 33 percent of its electricity needs with renewable energy by 2028, he said, adding that bilateral agreements signed earlier this year with China will further bolster blue economy cooperation.

Barbados Senate President Reginald Farley also praised the forum's significance for small-island nations, emphasizing China's contributions to multilateral development and its role in advancing the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

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Afflicted with flu? Take rest at home

By WANG XIAOYU

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"Infected individuals are contagious from the end of the incubation period to the acute phase. The duration of immune protection after recovery is relatively short, which increases the likelihood of recurrent infections," the China CDC warned.

The agency advised people to rest at home if they are experiencing fever or other symptoms of respiratory infections. Students and school

faculty members are also advised to stay home if they are feeling unwell.

Moreover, individuals with weakened immune systems are encouraged to get vaccinated against influenza, COVID-19 and pneumococcal disease.

"If children exhibit symptoms such as breathing difficulties or persistent fever, they should be taken to a hospital immediately," the report emphasized.

Wang Liping, a researcher at the China CDC, explained during a news conference earlier this month that the rise in respiratory infections among children during winter is largely due to increased time spent indoors and reduced respiratory protection in cold temperatures.

To curb the spread of these viruses, she recommended expanding vaccination coverage, maintaining good hygiene practices and ensuring proper ventilation in indoor spaces.

Briefly

Job market steady, official data shows

China's job market remained generally stable in the first 11 months of the year, as the average surveyed urban unemployment rate edged down on a year-on-year basis, official data showed on Monday. The surveyed urban unemployment rate on average stood at 5.1 percent in the first 11 months, down 0.1 of a percentage point from the same period last year, the National Bureau of Statistics said in a statement. In November, the surveyed urban unemployment rate in the country came in at 5 percent, the same as the previous month, the data showed. The surveyed urban unemployment rate in 31 major cities stood at 5 percent, also unchanged from the previous month, the NBS data showed.

Former senior Fujian legislator prosecuted

Public prosecution has been initiated against Su Zengtian, a former vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the Fujian Provincial People's Congress who has been charged with bribery and abuse of power. Following the Supreme People's Procuratorate's designation, the Ningbo Municipal People's Procuratorate in Zhejiang province recently filed charges against Su with the Intermediate People's Court of Ningbo, according to an SPP statement released Monday. He is accused of abusing his official positions in Fujian to secure benefits for others and of illegally accepting substantial bribes in the form of money and valuables.

Xinjiang's 1st cargo plane flies to London

The Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region has recently opened its first airfreight route to London, local authorities said on Monday. The maiden flight, carrying some 50 metric tons of cross-border e-commerce cargo, left Urumqi Diwopu International Airport for London on Saturday. With the rapid development of cross-border e-commerce, the volume of e-commerce goods at the airport has been steadily increasing, according to the airport's customs officials. Urumqi has now opened 14 international cargo routes, seven of which serve Europe.

Internet satellite group launched

China successfully sent the first group of low Earth orbit satellites for a satellite internet constellation from the Wenchang Space Launch Site in southern Hainan province on Monday. At 6 pm, this group of satellites was launched by a Long March-5B carrier rocket with a Yuanzheng-2 (Expedition-2) upper stage atop the rocket. The satellites have entered their preset orbits. The launch marked the 552nd mission of the Long March series carrier rockets.

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