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Asia's longest cave has many wonders

By **WANG KEJU** in Beijing and **YANG JUN** in Guiyang

Shuanghe Cave in Guizhou province — which was named the longest cave in Asia on Saturday — houses a trove of wonders, including a lizard-like endangered species, 10 centimeters long, and fossils of vertebrates such as giant pandas and what appear to be rhinoceros, saber-tooth tiger and elephant remains.

The slithery lizard, which was found in an underground river in a major branch of the cave, appears similar to a giant salamander. A full definition of the new species will require further research by scientists.

Unlike scientific surveys on the surface, a cave can retain traces of a place for a long time, including its ancient geology, meteorology, paleontology and even hydrology, said Li Po, chief engineer of the Guizhou Academy of Sciences' Mountain Resource Research Institute.

“Those key elements will help us better understand the ancient environment and our current environment,” he said. “Guizhou is truly rich in geological resources and many caves have unique ecosystems that need further research.”

Shuanghe Cave is a karst formation that was discovered in the late 1980s. Nineteen major surveys have been carried out by Chinese and foreign researchers. This year's survey is currently underway.

The cave, located in Suiyang county, is the sixth-longest in the world, researchers said.

“The length of a cave system

equals the total length of all its main caves, branch tunnels, cenotes and underground rivers,” said Qian Zhi, secretary-general of Guizhou Cave Association.

A team of Chinese and French speleologists announced at a Saturday news conference that the surveyed passageways in Shuanghe Cave had reached 238.48 kilometers, making it the longest in Asia. Previously, the longest known Asian cave was the Clearwater Cave in Malaysia, with a length of 222 km.

The known longest cave system in the world is Mammoth Cave in central Kentucky, United States, with 663 km of surveyed passageways.

The cave researchers conducted a joint expedition on March 11 at Shuanghe Cave, attracting more than 30 experts from China, France, Canada and Portugal.

Jean Bottazzi, a well-known French caver who had lived in China for several years to explore the country's underground kingdom, found a new tunnel in Shuanghe Cave connecting with Duiwo Cave, where the new lizardlike species was found.

Duiwo Cave was discovered in 2003 but wasn't explored until 2015 because of technical difficulties. It has been measured at 8 km long so far after three years of exploration.

Dong Xianwu contributed to this story.

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Researchers explore Shuanghe Cave in Guizhou province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Xinjiang official removed, expelled

By **CAO YIN** caoyin@chinadaily.com.cn

A senior official of the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region has been removed from office and deprived of his Communist Party of China membership for “serious disciplinary violations”, the nation's top anti-graft watchdog said on Sunday.

Wang Yongzhi, 53, once a member of the Party Committee of Kashgar and ex-Party secretary of Shache county, was punished because he seriously violated discipline and political rules and ran against the central leadership's plan on Xinjiang's governance, a statement posted by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection said on Sunday.

Wang formed factions and cliques and breached the Party's eight-point frugality rules issued after the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the statement said.

He did not accurately report his personal property and also gave huge bribes to obtain promotions, it said.

In 2010, the CPC General Office and the State Council jointly issued a regulation ordering officials to report

their personal affairs — including marriages, property and whether family members live abroad — to disciplinary authorities.

The Sunday statement also said Wang is suspected of bribery, corruption and abuse of power, “as he took advantage of his work post to embezzle public property and receive huge amounts of money after providing ‘help’ for others, and offering property to get promotions”.

“As a Party official, Wang lost his Communist faith and was greedy, and even after the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012 he still showed no sign of restraint,” it said, adding that Wang is a typical example of duplicity.

Wang's alleged crimes have been sent to prosecutors for further investigation, it added.

Wang, a native of Tianshui, Gansu province, became Party chief of Shache in January 2015. Two months later he became a member of the Party Committee in Kashgar.



Wang Yongzhi

Beautiful engineers



Huang Chunping (right) and Liu Tengting (second from left), employees of China State Construction Engineering Corp who were named the Most Beautiful Workers in Beijing, share their awards with coworkers at a construction site in the capital's Tongzhou district on Monday. Ten workers received the honor after a vote by the event's judging panel and netizens. More than 1,000 workers participated.

CHENG GONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Hukou rules clarified for overseas residents

Decision to cancel household status put on hold in Shanghai

By **XU JUNQIAN** in Shanghai xujunqian@chinadaily.com.cn

Chinese people who live abroad and have not renounced their Chinese citizenship can keep their Shanghai *hukou* (household registration) intact — at least for now — according to the Shanghai Public Security Bureau.

Updated regulations on the registration system take effect on May 1.

The announcement was made by the bureau on Sunday, after publication of the updated regulations two weeks ago raised public concerns.

A clause required those living outside China or those who have renounced their Chinese nationality to report to the bureau and give up

their *hukou* within one month after the regulations take effect.

The latest announcement said the cancellation of *hukou* has been put on hold for overseas residents because there is no specific legal definition of the group under China's Exit and Entry Administration Law.

Zhuang Liqiang, the Shanghai bureau's spokesman, responded to questions from China Daily on Monday saying there is no timetable for defining the affected group.

A statement issued by the State Council's Overseas Chinese Affairs Office in 2009, however, identified overseas residents as those who have settled abroad for more than 18 months within two years.

Although the bureau emphasized in an earlier

clarification last week that the requirement has been in effect since the first regulations were published in 2003, major concerns and controversies have arisen over the past week.

Sixty million Chinese people had settled outside the country as of 2015, making it the world's biggest source of immigrants, according to a report by the Center for China and Globalization, a think tank. In the United States alone, 903,000 Chinese were granted permanent residence permits between 2000 and 2013, second only to Mexico.

Dual nationality is not recognized by China.

Despite Shanghai's relaxed regulation being only locally effective, there are worries that the municipality might simply be a test to reinforce the rule nationwide.

“A Chinese citizen deprived of *hukou* could end up being a second-class citizen,” said

Zhou Haiwang, a demographer at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.

Concerns include the inconvenience brought up by the denial of an ID card, resulting from a *hukou* cancellation, which could cause trouble in air travel, hotel check-ins and registration of bank accounts in China.

Shanghai's updated regulation proposed that a canceled *hukou* can be retrieved once its owner returns to the homeland and settles down.

The *hukou* system is a unique residency policy instituted in the 1950s. A person's *hukou* suggests more than geographical dwelling place but also a string of social and economic benefits and welfare that involves the education of children, pension benefits, medical care, the right to buy or inherit property and even to obtain a car license plate in big cities like Shanghai and Beijing.

Briefly

BEIJING Foreign minister goes to Russia

State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi will begin a two-day working visit to Russia on Tuesday, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying announced on Monday. Wang will meet with Russian leaders and hold talks with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, to exchange in-depth views on arranging high-level exchanges this year and promoting cooperation in key areas. Wang will visit the country as a special envoy of President Xi Jinping, reflecting the high level and special nature of China-Russia relations, Hua added.

SHANGHAI Suspects in child abuse prosecuted

Shanghai's Changning District Procuratorate said on Monday that it is prosecuting eight suspects involved in last year's child abuse at the in-house day care center owned by online travel service provider Ctrip. The suspects, former employees of the center, will be prosecuted for mistreatment of minors. The center, which was operated by a third party, has been suspended since November after video footage showed staff members at the center treating children roughly.

HEILONGJIANG Province gets acting governor



Wang Wentao, former Party secretary of Jinan, Shandong province,

was appointed acting governor and vice-governor of Heilongjiang province on Monday. The Standing Committee of the Heilongjiang People's Congress also accepted the resignation of Heilongjiang Governor Lu Hao. Lu has been appointed minister of the newly established Ministry of Natural Resources. Wang was born in May 1964 in Nantong, Jiangsu province, and graduated in philosophy from Fudan University.

GUANGXI Police seize smuggled mink

Border police in the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region said on Monday that they had seized 500 mink pelts smuggled from Vietnam. Five boxes of furs weighing more than 280 kilograms were found last week during a border police patrol in Fangchenggang, according to the city's public security bureau. The police noticed that several people were transporting suspicious goods under a bridge and approached them to inquire. The suspects fled.

JIANGSU Exhibition visitors reach 1 million

More than 1 million people have so far visited an exhibition on the history of the Nanjing Massacre, authorities said on Monday. The exhibition was held at the Memorial Hall of the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre by Japanese Invaders and featured 2,000 historical photos and more than 900 cultural items. The exhibition opened to the public on Dec 14.

XINHUA—CHINA DAILY

Smash-and-grab suspects arrested in HK

By **ASKA CHEONG** askacheong@chinadailyhk.com

Hong Kong police by Monday night had arrested all three suspects they said smashed jewelry shop windows and grabbed goods worth more than HK\$40 million (\$5.1 million) in one of the city's busiest commercial districts.

One man, 39, was arrested earlier in the day 600 meters from the scene, and most of the stolen goods were found, said Sin Kwok-ming, chief inspector of the Police Regional Crime Unit of Hong Kong Island.

The other two, aged 38 and 45, were arrested at Shenzhen Bay Port on Monday night as they were attempting to flee to the Chinese mainland on separate cross-border buses, a police spokeswoman said.

The three had entered Hong Kong on tourist visas, she said.

The robbery took place at around 11 am at the Treasure Jewellery store on the ground floor of Duke Wellington House in Central district.

The glass of the shop's front door was shattered and police found a black backpack.

Other items found in a nearby alley were believed to have been used in the theft, as were more items found in the Lan Kwai Fong area, one of Hong Kong's most popular night life hot spots. Items included a mask, gloves, a black coat and two hammers.

The robbery took less than a minute, the police said.

Connections this case may have to other local smash-and-grab cases will be investigated, according to the police. It was the seventh such case since January 2017.

Last month, three masked Southeast Asian men pocketed around 60 expensive watches worth more than HK\$1 million in Yuen Long.



A robbery suspect (wearing hood) is under police arrest in Hong Kong on Monday. All three suspects who allegedly grabbed HK\$40 million (\$5.1 million) worth of jewelry in the city's Central district were arrested. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

In another late-night incident, in December, a window of a shop in Central district was smashed, and around 14 secondhand designer bags worth HK\$1.44 million were taken.

In September, three thieves fled on a stolen motorbike with diamond

ornaments worth HK\$24 million, after using a hammer to smash the window of a Chow Sang Sang jewelry chain shop in Tsim Sha Tsui.

According to an annual crime report, the police handled 163 robbery cases in the city last year, 37.3 percent fewer than in 2016.