

19th CPC NATIONAL CONGRESSPeople:
Delegates
inspired by
Thought

on their way to school.

He said he felt some relief learning that the local government has taken measures such as installing a steel ladder to help the students.

In late 2012, immediately after becoming general secretary, he visited a poor village in Hebei province and presented villagers with relief materials such as cooking oil, quilts and winter coats.

Xi did not just talk with the poor families but always took a look at the pans in their kitchens and what kind of food they ate every day. He also asked about their income, their expenses and whether they could afford medical costs with health insurance.

In June, during his inspection tour of Kelan county, Shanxi province, Xi visited families in poverty-stricken villages, talking with them about the causes of their poverty and how to increase their incomes. He also went to the fields to inspect how their crops were growing.

When he was deputy Party chief of coastal Fujian province in 1997, Xi made a trip to the Ningxia Hui autonomous region, where he expressed deep concern about the living conditions of the poor people. Fujian was designated by the central government to assist the development of poverty-stricken Ningxia at the time.

In July 2016, Xi revisited Ningxia and called for no one to be left behind regardless of geography or ethnic group as the nation strives to comprehensively build a moderately prosperous society by 2020.

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Hai Guobao, a villager in the township of Minning in Ningxia, recalled that Xi went into his kitchen to check his access to water and to lift a pot lid to see what they were having for dinner. Xi also checked on whether Hai's *kang*, a traditional brick bed that can be heated from the bottom, worked well.

Qu Xiaoli, a delegate to the 19th National Congress and also Party secretary of Hongqiao district in Tianjin, said that Xi's report, reflecting deep feelings for the people, has expanded the close link between the Party and the people.

“We will follow the guidelines of the report of the congress and make efforts to meet the people's demands in such areas as education, health and culture,” she said.

Tao Wenzhao, a professor of politics at Renmin University of China, said Xi's deep feeling toward the people originates from his personal experiences. Xi lived in a poor village in Yan'an, Shaanxi province, from 1969 to 1975. He led the villagers in digging wells, building dams and setting up the province's first methane-generation pit.

From 1982 to 1985, he served first as deputy secretary and then as secretary of the CPC Zhengding county committee in Hebei province. At the time, he worked to diversify the economy of the agricultural county, helping farmers increase their incomes.

“The president's true feelings toward the people come from his long bond with the people, and it's the tradition of the Communist Party of China to forge close links with the grassroots,” said Tao, the professor.



Central government officials take questions from reporters at a news conference about people's livelihoods on Sunday. They are, from left, Guo Weimin, vice-minister of the State Council Information Office; Yin Weimin, minister of human resources and social security; Chen Baosheng, minister of education; Huang Shuxian, minister of civil affairs; Wang Menghui, minister of housing and urban-rural development; and Li Bin, minister of the National Health and Family Planning Commission. EDMOND TANG / CHINA DAILY

Nation to reduce disparity in pensions, expand jobs

Minister: Training, startups to be encouraged, retirement funds coordinated

By HU YONGQI
huylq@chinadaily.com.cn

What they say



Financial funds that governments at all levels granted for social assistance have increased to 250 billion yuan (\$37.8 billion) this year through sustainable growth from 180 billion yuan in 2012. The central budget for serious natural disaster responses and subsidies for disaster relief and post-disaster reconstruction have increased dramatically or even doubled.



Huang Shuxian, minister of civil affairs



The availability of medical resources in China has increased in the past five years, with people at the grassroots having better access to healthcare facilities. By the end of last year, the number of medical institutions in China reached 980,000 and the number of health workers exceeded 11 million.

Li Bin, minister of the National Health and Family Planning Commission



China's property market is expected to continue stabilizing in the fourth quarter of this year. The market will stick to the idea that housing is for people's residential purposes, not for speculation, and we have been launching a slew of city-specific measures to ensure stable and steady growth of the market.

Wang Menghui, minister of housing and urban-rural development

Recent years have seen a slowing in the growth of the Chinese economy, but the country has managed to keep creating new employment opportunities. More than 13 million new jobs were created every year in the past five years in urban areas.

The government will also encourage business startups by promulgating favorable policies in loans, financing and the use of land, he said. “Meanwhile, we will provide high-quality services in employment, especially in internet-based services, to provide help to everyone who wants to find a job,” he said.

According to the State Administration for Industry and Commerce, about 16,000 enterprises are registered each day in the world's second-largest economy, enlarging employment.

Journalists at the news conference also asked about retirees after hearing about the minister's blueprint to increase jobs for the younger generation.

The country's pension insurance fund has an accumulated surplus of more than 4 trillion yuan (\$605 billion), but differences among provincial regions make it necessary to coordinate programs,

Yin said.

Next year, the central government will fine-tune pensions among different regions as the first step to coordinate regional disparity, he said.

Eight provinces have entrusted the National Council for Security Fund to invest 400 billion yuan from their pension funds, as approved by the State Council, to maintain and increase their value.

More State-owned assets will be allocated to the social security fund to enlarge the scale of pensions, the minister added.

CPC congress a 'global event', overseas journalists say

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China has attracted worldwide attention thanks to its openness, according to journalists and observers.

“China's role in international affairs is becoming more important in all directions, especially in economic and political fields,” said Andrey Kirillov, Beijing bureau chief of Russia's Tass news agency.

More than 3,000 journalists are in Beijing to cover the congress. Among them, 1,818 are from overseas, including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, 67 percent more than at the 18th CPC National Congress.

Foreign reporters come from 134 countries, 19.6 percent more than at the previous congress, according to the congressional press center.

All these issues are of great importance, including changes in China's economic approach, formation of a new economic development mod-

el, changes in society, poverty relief and political issues such as a new leadership, he said.

“Journalists are also interested in China's foreign policy,” he added.

The Chinese currency has joined the elite reserve currency basket of the International Monetary Fund, or the Special Drawing Rights basket. It is an important shift for the yuan to become a currency unit used not only in trade inside China, but also in international financial operations, he said.

For all these reasons, according to Kirillov, decisions made at the congress will be very important not only for China but for the whole world.

“Now China has a strong voice in foreign affairs, including politics and economics. This is connected with the policies the country

takes. So it is interesting to know what decisions about foreign policy and approaches to the world's market development will be made at the congress,” Kirillov said.

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Words: Xi a leader 'who will make a big difference' for China

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School of Advanced International Studies, went for “leaders” as well as “complicated” and “expectations”.

“Leaders matter and I think with Xi we are seeing the rise of a leader in China who will make a big difference,” he responded.

Sir Gerry Grimstone, chairman of Standard Life, the UK insurance company, and former chairman of The CityUK, a trade body for the UK's financial services sector, stressed “opportunity” as well as “exciting” and “powerful”, because of the potential for UK-China business following Xi's state visit to the UK in October 2015.

The visit marked an improvement in the relations between the two countries and the beginning of a new “golden era” of cooperation, he responded.

Steve Mollenkopf, chief executive officer of Qualcomm, the US semiconductor and telecommunications giant, chose “green” alongside “innovative” and “collaborative”.

Environmental sustainability and the creation of a “Beautiful China” was one of the messages in Xi's report to the congress in the opening session.

“The Chinese government has attached great importance to ecological protection. During my recent visits to China, I have been impressed by the considerable efforts toward improving the environment.”

Jeremy Hunter, chief executive of the Chinese branch of Henkel Corp, the German chemical and consumer goods company, had almost identical choices, varying only by noting “sustainable” rather than “green”.

“China has prioritized sustainable development as an important part of its national agenda and is making progress toward balancing economic development and sustainability.”

“China has really turned the corner from being a manufacturer and consumer of technology products and services invented by others to one that is developing real breakthroughs and real value that is relevant to the rest of the world.”

Colin Mackerras, a Sinologist and emeritus professor at Griffith University in Australia

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“We usually hear the official words from officials of the Foreign Ministry, but here at the congress, we get to hear the voices of grassroots CPC members,” Watanabe said.

Zhang Xixian, professor with the Party School of the Central Committee of CPC, said that one of the reasons the congress has drawn so much global attention is that China's “comprehensive national strength” is rising.

“China's contribution to world economic growth and its power in leading world development are on the rise, and the world is beginning to shift its focus to China,” he said.

“The 19th CPC congress is one that is open and transparent to the entire world, and it accepts acclaim as well as criticism,” Zhang said. “Such openness has a big impact on the world.”

The advantages of the CPC political system are gradually

local partnerships to serve Chinese consumers and share our experience of managing a truly international business in more countries and regions than there are members of the United Nations.”

Part of China's commitment to globalization has been the Belt and Road Initiative, which Lord Sassoon, chairman of the China Britain Business Council, said has been “transforming” and “influencing.”

“It has China's biggest achievements of the past five years and it provides extensive opportunities for engagement,” he replied.

Angel Gurria, the former Mexican foreign affairs and finance minister and now secretary-general of the Paris-based OECD, emphasized “innovative” as well as “dynamic” and “flexible”.

“One of the most visible changes in China is the abundance of internet-based services, including mobile payments and shared economy services,” he responded.

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(Xi) stands out among contemporary world leaders for his rationality and common sense.”

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XINHUA