

Briefly

Clinics to boost rural healthcare

State-owned Power Construction Corp of China announced on Oct 12 it has completed work on three school clinics in Jianchuan county of Southwest China's Yunnan province. The clinics are part of its ongoing cooperation with the China Red Cross Foundation to combat poverty. The clinics are part of the Fraternity School Clinic project, which is launched by the China Red Cross. Aiming to improve healthcare services at schools in less-developed areas, the project has been seeking funding and offering students proper medical services. The project also plans to design a series of healthcare lessons and aid training at schools in which it has established clinics.

Shaanxi receives Hope donations

Northwest China's Shaanxi province announced it had received donations of over 67.5 million yuan (\$9.72 million) for its Hope Project by Sept 20. That was just one year after the province launched a three-year plan to attract donations valued at 100 million yuan to help students living in poverty. The money will be used to establish new schools, libraries, kitchens, and help with medical treatment for over 300 children diagnosed with diseases like congenital heart disease.

FAW backs music training program

Automaker China FAW Group Co Ltd announced it will cooperate with the China Foundation of Culture and Arts for Children to launch a 10-day music training program for elementary and middle school teachers from Tongdao county of Central China's Hunan province. The program invited four professionals invited by the foundation to teach modern music theories and teaching methods. Staff from the foundation said they hope to create a better music learning atmosphere for students from less-developed areas through their efforts.

Suning launches mobile classrooms

Chinese environmental protection organization GoalBlue (Shenzhen) Low Carbon Development and Promotion Centre is aiming to encourage commuters out of their cars, and instead find healthier, more environmentally friendly ways to travel to work. To assist, the NGO has launched its Bluebook for Urban Street Development, proposing a number of technical solutions to help people feel more comfortable



A primary school student, who has received help from the food donation plan launched by General Mills and Green Food Bank, at a school in Shanghai. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

General Mills program looks to bring succor for underprivileged families

By SHI JING in Shanghai
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General Mills, the multinational manufacturer of branded consumer foods, has teamed up with Shanghai-based nonprofit organization Green Food Bank to provide healthy food to underprivileged people in Shanghai.

The food donation plan, jointly released by the two organizations in mid-October, will be worth at least 300,000 yuan (\$43,302), and will provide food such as Yoplait-branded yogurt and Wanchai Ferry-branded dumplings.

The food donation program will last for one year, covering Shanghai's low-income families, elderly people living on their own, and the children of migrant workers.

According to the municipal government's regulations in

2017, low-income families include urban households with a personal disposal income of less than 1,940 yuan every month.

The food donation program marks the beginning of General Mills' new series of charity activities in China. The company has so far provided more than 233 million meals to the world's hungry population.

Chen Xi, managing director of General Mills China, said that by working with Green Food Bank, the company will be able to provide more safe, healthy and tasty food to people who need help.

"As a world-leading food company, we would like to shoulder our social responsibility and always consider giving back to society our most important mission," she said.

Green Food Bank is the first nonprofit food bank on

\$100 million

contribution to corporate social responsibility that General Mills made in its most recent fiscal year

around the world.

"We have a long-lasting cooperation with General Mills. We are honored to work with them in China to provide nutritious quality food supplies to underprivileged families in the Chinese community," said Li Bing, director of the Green Food Bank.

Operating for more than 150 years, General Mills now manages over 100 globally well-known brands, such as the cereal brand Cheerios and ice-cream label Haagen-Dazs.

In its most recent fiscal year, ending May 27, 2018, General Mills contributed around \$100 million to its corporate social responsibility activities.

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NGO promotes healthier, safer commuting

By ZHENG YIRAN
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Chinese environmental protection organization GoalBlue (Shenzhen) Low Carbon Development and Promotion Centre is aiming to encourage commuters out of their cars,



People ride bicycles in Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province. Bicycle riding is gaining popularity among urban residents as it is beneficial not only to the environment, but also to their health. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

and instead find healthier, more environmentally friendly ways to travel to work.

To assist, the NGO has launched its Bluebook for Urban Street Development, proposing a number of technical solutions to help people feel more comfortable

moving about cities.

One concept is called Shared Streets, which are low-speed urban roads, where the boundaries between the road and pavement are deliberately blurred, and pedestrians enjoy priority rights over cyclists and motor vehicles. The idea has been trialled around the world, and aims to make streets safer by forcing drivers into slowing down, and paying closer attention to their surroundings.

Richard Liu, regional director at the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, said: "We hope that the Shared Streets can not only meet the needs of people traveling, but more importantly, make the public willing to walk on the streets and enjoy the process. In the past, pedestrians were afraid of walking on the streets

because of the crowds and the potential danger."

May Mei, executive director of GoalBlue, said: "Green commuting is not only a way of traveling, but it is also a way of sustainable life and urban management," adding that the firm was looking to promote "a sustainable and low-carbon lifestyle" among commuters.

The Bluebook was released to coincide with World Car Free Day, a campaign that encourages citizens to leave their cars at home and travel by foot, bicycle and public transportation every year on Sept 22. The campaign hopes that some who try green commuting for the day can be encouraged into making a lasting change.

A total of 198 Chinese cities have promised green commuting since China joined the initiative in 2007.

Food delivery firms further green push

Leading platforms encourage public to recycle and reduce plastic waste

By CHENG YU
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Food delivery platforms in China are looking to reduce and recycle the cutlery and packaging waste mounting up as online takeout orders soar.

With 300 million Chinese people using online delivery companies to order food last year, 14.6 billion food boxes and 12 billion plastic bags were used to deliver meals around the country, according to market consultancy Qianzhan Institute.

With the waste piling up, Meituan-Dianping, the country's largest online food delivery platform by market share, has announced a new plan to cut waste. The company's Green Hills plan involves gathering 100 partners by 2025 to make packaging more environmentally friendly, aiming to promote the circular economy. It will cooperate with 100,000 restaurants on its platform to encourage the shift toward green packaging.

The Beijing-based company will also establish a special fund to reduce online delivery-related waste, with the first investment amount totaling 3 million yuan (\$433,000).

Star.Ele.me, formerly known as Baidu Waimai, another online food deliverer, has joined moves to protect the environment by allowing users to opt out of disposable cutlery.

Ele.me will give customers that choose not to use disposable cutlery virtual points, which they can use to buy small gifts such as environmentally friendly bags.

Wen Zongguo, professor at the school of environment at Tsinghua University, said reducing and recycling in the online food delivery segment is important as the industry is developing rapidly.

The size of the Chinese online delivery market was expected to exceed 360 billion yuan this year, rising from 297 billion yuan last year, according to Meituan-Dianping's Catering Report 2018.

"To combat the waste problem, joint efforts are needed from cutlery producers, online food delivery companies, as well as consumers," said Wen.

He said recycling is equally important during this process, as many alternative options are not popular among consumers and restaurants, because plastic cutlery is light, waterproof and cheap.

To this end, major online food delivery platforms are working on innovative methods to recycle the waste produced from online food delivery.

Meituan-Dianping is exploring the idea of manufacturing bicycle mud guards by recycling waste materials from disposable food boxes. The mud guards would be used on Mobike's shared-bicycles, a company that Meituan acquired last year.

"Our mission is to help people 'eat better and live better'. A sound environment is the basic foundation for that. We will unite more forces to make every meal environmentally friendly," said Wang Puzhong, senior vice-president of Meituan-Dianping.



A Meituan-Dianping deliveryman rushes out of a restaurant in Beijing. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

New foundation to help schools

New Horizon Charity Foundation celebrated its establishment on Oct 12 in Beijing. The NGO aims to bring high-quality educational resources to less-developed areas in China. The ceremony featured discussions on education in villages with limited transportation networks, and outlined the foundation's plan to tackle the issue. The plan covers three areas, including enhancing education facilities, promoting reading projects, and encouraging art and sports-related events.

By ZHENG XIN
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China National Petroleum Corp, the nation's largest oil and gas producer by domestic annual output, has pledged to continue to invest in poverty-stricken regions to help lift people out of poverty.

The company has invested 890 million yuan (\$128 million) in 850 poverty relief projects in 16 regions across seven provinces and regions nationwide since 1994, including Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region and Southwest China's

Tibet autonomous region.

CNPC has taken advantage of its nationwide gas station network to boost sales of agricultural and ancillary products from poverty-stricken regions, according to Wang Yilin, chairman of CNPC.

He made the comments during the centrally administered State-owned enterprises poverty alleviation forum held in Beijing on Oct 17, marking China's fifth Poverty Alleviation Day.

At the end of last year, China had 30.46 million people in rural areas categorized as

living below the poverty line, according to official data. SOEs have been mobilized to help poverty-stricken villages lift locals out of poverty, as part of the government's promise to eradicate poverty nationwide by 2020.

According to the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development, another 85 counties have been officially taken off the country's list of impoverished areas, marking further steps toward its goal of eradicating poverty by 2020, the largest number of

counties to shake off poverty since China vowed in 2015 to win the tough battle against poverty.

CNPC's nationwide gas station network has been the best sales channel to promote local products from poverty-stricken regions, according to Wang.

For years, the company has helped promote local specialties and products, including dried fruits from Xinjiang, kudzu beverages from Jiangxi province and alcohol from Guizhou province, setting up a special industry while raising brand reputation, generating

tax revenue and employment, he said.

The company's efforts have helped Guizhou province to expand sales channels for its various products. The province is famous for *baijiu*, the fiery spirit distilled from fermented sorghum and wheat with a history of over 5,000 years.

CNPC's initiatives resulted in sales of more than 40 million yuan worth of *Xi Jiu*, a local *baijiu* brand with a rich distilling tradition.

To ensure higher future sales, CNPC has also launched

six e-commerce training lectures for local residents, helping them to gain access to e-commerce giants such as Alibaba Group Holding Ltd and JD, so that agricultural and other ancillary products are made available to more customers through the online marketplace.

According to Wang, boosting local tourism is another targeted strategy to lift people out of poverty.

The company has invested 50 million yuan in the past three years to set up tourism projects in Taiqian and Fanxian counties in Henan province and Xishui county of Guizhou, developing boutique guesthouses and establishing guesthouse management companies, he said.