

## EDITORIAL

## Draft pact shows progress possible without interference

Senior officials from China and members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations announced on Thursday in Guiyang, Southwest China's Guizhou province, that the two sides have completed the first draft of a framework for a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.

This landmark document reflects their shared determination to build the South China Sea into a sea of peace, cooperation and friendship.

Since last year, tensions over the South China Sea disputes have abated remarkably thanks to the restraint and diplomatic efforts of the parties concerned. This has helped usher in a cordial atmosphere for talks on a Code of Conduct, thus paving the way for full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea agreed in 2002.

It is heartening to see the South China Sea issue has been brought back onto the right track of dialogue and consultation after last year's turbulence. One important consensus has been that interference by outside forces will not bring peace and stability, but instead only creates uncertainties and undermines the interests of both China and the ASEAN member states.

The latest breakthrough was made during the 14th Senior Officials' Meeting on the Implementation of the DOC between China and ASEAN.

The 23rd Senior Officials Consultations will convene in Guiyang on Friday, and the first bilateral consultation between China and the Philippines on the South China Sea is also scheduled for Friday in Guiyang.

These interactions and exchanges between China and members of the regional bloc, conducted just a few days after Beijing hosted the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, prove that ASEAN is a top priority in China's good-neighborly diplomacy.

China has always supported ASEAN taking center stage in regional integration and playing a bigger role in international affairs. It has vowed to throw its weight behind ASEAN's commitment to build an economic community and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025.

In fact, ASEAN's development strategy can dovetail with China's Belt and Road Initiative in many ways. ASEAN countries are situated where the land and maritime Silk Roads converge, and China sees ASEAN as an important partner in promoting the initiative, which will create huge development opportunities for ASEAN countries to seize.

The China-ASEAN relationship has maintained a healthy trend in recent years and is surging ahead along a fast track of development. The convergence of ASEAN's development plan and China's Belt and Road Initiative, which is based on the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, will inject even more vitality into their reciprocal cooperation.

## TO THE POINT

## 'Challenge' plumbs new depths

In response to the spread of the "Blue Whale Challenge", a sinister social media "game" that encourages youngsters to undertake dangerous dares and inflict self-harm, even end their lives, the Chinese internet regulator recently launched a precautionary check and scrutiny campaign along with internet companies.

The 50-day challenge, which is believed to have originated in Russia and reportedly led to 130 suicides in six months in that country, assigns a taskmaster who entices participants to complete tasks that range from listening to music to causing self-harm, and ultimately commit suicide.

The internet should facilitate people-to-people contacts and exchanges, but there are also many social butterflies in cyberspace who are unable to interact with others in the real world. The courage these people lack in real-world social interactions is what online games such as the Blue Whale Challenge seem to offer. Such games make players feel they are of value, understood and accepted.

Yet all these are illusory feelings that the games have created. Unfortunately, this means some players can become deeply addicted to such games and cannot break away.

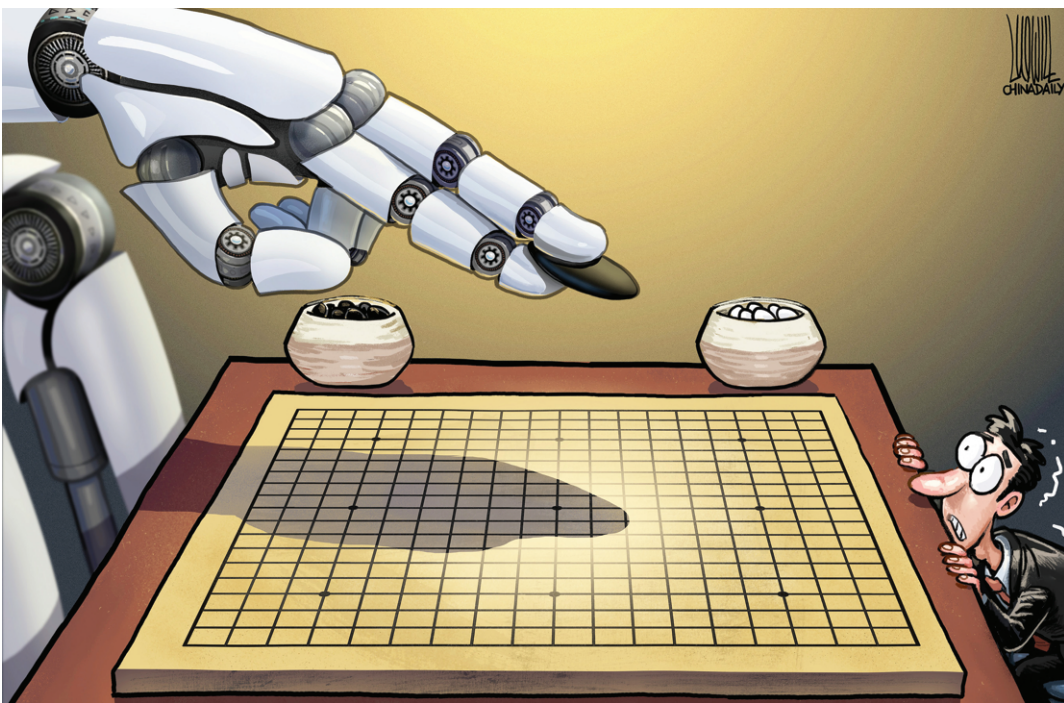
A fast-developing society and enormous social transformations have caused social exchange discomfort among some, especially adolescents. All people, especially educators and parents, should pay enough attention to the psychological health of young people.

However, it is not only adolescents that need help in learning how to deal with the fast-changing world. For many, the internet does not inevitably bring loneliness, but loneliness increases their addiction to cyber activities.

The whole of society should work together to create a healthy internet environment and transform cyberspace into a medium for the dissemination of positive energy.

— PEOPLE'S DAILY

Luo Jie



## OPINION LINE

## Lack of professional sports setup root cause of stars' pay disputes

**LIN DAN**, the Chinese badminton superstar and two-time Olympic champion, has accused his Super League club, which ranked seventh in the eight-team league in the 2016-17 season, of failing to pay him and six other teammates. Beijing News commented on Thursday:

Hailed by some as the all-time best badminton player, the 33-year-old told his 3.6 million followers of his micro blog that he was "utterly disappointed" and considering taking legal action against the Guangzhou Yueyu badminton club.

According to Lin's contract with the club, he was supposed to receive 4 million yuan (\$581,000) for the season, which ended in February. The Guangzhou club's overdue payment did not come to light until Lin posted his complaint, which stressed that the whole team had worked hard to keep the club from relegation despite not getting paid. His head coach said the club did not pay the coaching staff and its other Chinese players either.

Lin is not the only sportsperson to go public about not being paid. Other renowned athletes have also resorted to public exposure to try and get their overdue pay. Their celebrity status may help solicit atten-

tion, but there is no guarantee that it will help them get the money they are owed.

The root cause of the problem is the insufficient professionalization of sports in China. Ostensibly, the Chinese soccer and badminton leagues have all it takes to appear professional and modern — clubs, sports associations, and a set of rules on deposit management and transfer of players — but many "top designs" are yet to be fully realized.

For instance, unlike their counterparts in mature soccer leagues such as the German Bundesliga, Chinese soccer players, if denied compensation, have to fight on their own, such as by going on strike. The lack of legal assistance and counseling they receive makes it even harder for them to demand unpaid salary.

Hopefully Lin's anger could help expedite a reform of Chinese sports to make them more professional.

## Exam focus creates testing times for parents

**LAST WEEK**, the municipal education bureau of Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, announced that several branches of the national extracurricular training agency Xueersi were involved in improper activities in the city, and required them to temporarily close and correct the wrongdoings. Southern Metropolis Daily comments:

The Chengdu municipal education bureau has listed the wrongdoings of Xueersi, namely entrusting other agencies to hold exams and organizing academic competitions without the approval of the local government.

These activities are against government policies that promote quality education and call for cutting pupils' academic workload, and Xueersi deserves to be penalized for its wrongdoings.

However, many such agencies nationwide reportedly hold unauthorized academic competitions for pupils. The fact that Xueersi has grown so big as to be listed on the New York Stock Exchange shows how big the market is.

That phenomenon sounds absurd, but it has its own logic behind it. For ordinary people, the national college entrance exam remains the only path for a better life for their children. As schools cut the workload for pupils, many parents seek the help of extra-

curricular training agencies to improve their children's academic performance.

Worse, as more parents send their children to extracurricular training agencies, those who insisted on not doing so fear their children might lag behind, so they end up sending their children to training agencies as well.

Many parents have openly expressed their anger about Xueersi and similar extracurricular training agencies, but they have no choice other than to use them if their children are to compete with their peers.

That is why, when the bureau said it had got clues from people's complaints, many analysts guessed it was the parents that had blown the whistle.

However, the solution to the problem lies in better regulating the extracurricular market and changing the mindset of parents that only higher education leads to success.

## Good example set for protecting rights of senior citizens

**DRAFT RULES** on protecting the rights and interests of senior citizens in Yunnan province state they have the right to remarry, and, for the first time, should they do so their children should not interfere in their family life. An article on scwmw.gov.cn comments:

This is the first time that administrative rules at the provincial level include such an article. It is a necessary step to respect the legal rights and interests of senior citizens, and also a step forward to persuade the legislature to write the article into relevant laws.

China's population above the age of 60 will reach 250 million in 2020 and more than 300 million in 2025. The remarriage of those senior citizens who lose their spouse will become more common.

A recent survey shows 41 percent of respondents supported their aged parents remarrying if they lost their partner, and 26 percent said they would respect their parents' decision. That is a significant change from previous surveys, which revealed that most respondents said old people should live alone or with their children if they lost their spouse.

The main reason for this was that the children were concerned the new-comer to the family would inherit what they considered to be their inheritance. The draft rules issued by the Yunnan authorities say that senior citizens can obtain prenuptial agreements to allay their children's fears and avoid fraud.

Senior citizens are the same as anyone else in their pursuit of love and happiness. Their independence, freedom and property are protected by the law, which cannot be breached by anybody including their offspring.

In other words, young people have no legal justification for interfering with the personal lives of their aged parents.

## CONTACT US

**China Daily**  
15 Huixin Dongjie Chaoyang, Beijing 100029  
News: +86 (0) 10 6491-8366; editor@chinadaily.com.cn  
Subscription: +86 400-699-0203; subscribe@chinadaily.com.cn  
Advertisement: +86 (0) 10 6491-8631; ads@chinadaily.com.cn  
Phone app: chinadaily.com.cn/iphone

**China Daily USA**  
1500 Broadway, Suite 2800, New York, NY 10036 +1 212 537 8888  
editor@chinadailyusa.com

**China Daily Asia Pacific**  
**China Daily Hong Kong**  
Room 1818, Hing Wai Centre 7 Tin Wan Praya Road Aberdeen, Hong Kong  
+852 2518 5111  
editor@chinadailyhk.com  
editor@chinadailyasia.com

**China Daily UK**  
90 Cannon Street London EC4N 6HA  
+44 (0) 207 398 8270  
editor@chinadailyuk.com

**China Daily Africa**  
P.O.Box 27281-00100, Nairobi, Kenya  
+254 (0) 20 522 3498 (Nairobi)  
editor@chinadailyafrica.com  
enquiries@chinadailyafrica.com  
subscription@chinadailyafrica.com

## HOT WORDS

## Trans-provincial real estate control

跨省调控  
(kuàshěng tiáokòng)

Tongzhou district in Beijing is to jointly establish a real estate management working group with Wuqing district in Tianjin and Langfang, a city in Hebei province.

This is the first trans-provincial real estate control mechanism nationwide. It is expected

to set a good example for real estate management in urban agglomerations surrounding the big cities.

The Tongzhou district authority also announced it would intensify the crackdown on violations in the real estate market, and plans to deal with 150 real estate developers and agencies that have violated the rules this year.

The local government of Langfang said recently that it has enhanced its control over real estate around Beijing and Xiongan New Area to curb speculation and the rocketing housing prices in these regions.

Wu Diandong, deputy director of Tongzhou

district commission of housing and urban-rural development, said Tongzhou, Wuqing and Langfang will share their real estate monitoring data and jointly crack down on speculation in the real estate market. In particular, the working group will jointly deal with trans-provincial sales offices and the trans-provincial distribution of commercial sales leaflets.



Online  
Scan it for  
more hot words.