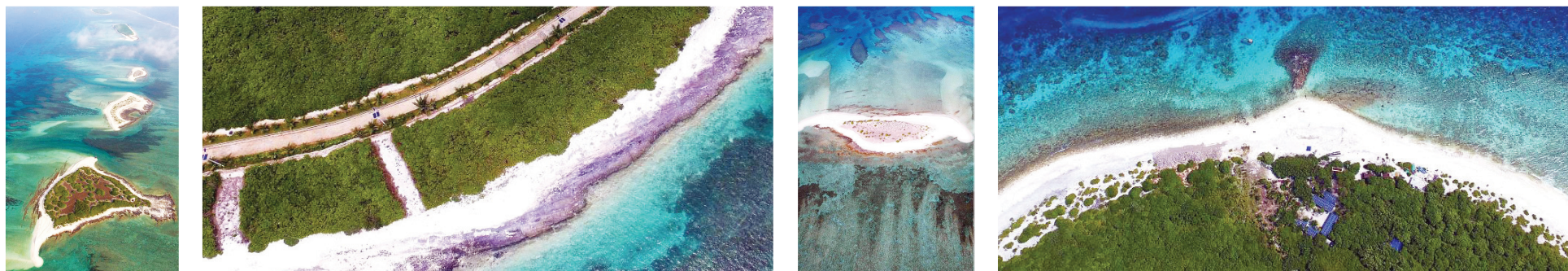


# SNAPSHOTS



**FROM LEFT:** The Qilanyu Islands of the Xisha Xuande Islands; Zhaoshu Island of the Xisha Xuande Islands; The Beishazhou Islet of the Xisha Xuande Islands; Ganquan Island of the Xisha Yongle Islands.



**ABOVE:** A boat sails near the Jinqing Island of Xisha Yongle Islands in South China's Hainan province on April 23.  
PHOTOS BY GUO CHENG / XINHUA



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** A boat is seen near the Ganquan Island of Xisha Yongle Islands on April 23; the Nandao Island of Xisha Xuande Islands; the Xishazhou of Xisha Xuande Islands.

Sansha's distinctive geography and infrastructure update give it new status on ancient Silk Road trade route

**S**ansha, in South China's Hainan province, is the southernmost city in China. Xisha, Zhongsha, Nansha Islands and their waters are under its jurisdiction. With an area of more than 2 million square kilometers, Sansha is the largest city in China by measurement of its sea area, but the smallest, if calculated by its land area. It has the smallest population — about 1,500 — among prefecture-level cities. With the gradual improvement of infrastructure, supply security, transportation and emergency rescue, Sansha will become one of the most important posts on the new Maritime Silk Road, part of the China-led Belt and Road Initiative to revitalize the historical trade routes.