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Yang Huizhen, teacher at Xingguo Kindergarten in Xiamen, Fujian province

# Company probed over rabies shots

Records falsified; health authorities say alternatives should be chosen

By CHINA DAILY

China's top health authority issued a statement on Wednesday in response to a rabies vaccine scandal involving a company that fabricated production records. It urged people to seek rabies vaccines manufactured by other companies.

The National Health Commission said that under the regulations on preventing exposure to rabies, people can choose injections produced by a mix of companies to complete the full vaccination course.

The commission is keeping a close eye on the situation and communicating closely with the State Drug Administration, which made the incident public on Sunday, said Mao Qun'an, the commission's disease control chief.

The administration, the nation's top drug authority, is conducting the investigation, the statement said.

The company being probed is Changchun Changsheng Bio-tech Co in Changchun, Jilin province. During an inspection by the administration, it was found to have serious irregularities, including fudging production records for freeze-dried rabies vaccines for human use.

The company said on Tues-

day that all products involved in the inspection had been sealed off and all vaccines of the same type have been recalled from the market.

After the media exposure, the Shanghai Center for Disease Control and Prevention stopped using rabies vaccines that were produced by the company, according to a statement issued on Monday. Henan province had sealed 140,000 doses of the vaccine as of Tuesday, China National Radio reported.

Some cities in Hainan and Guangdong provinces have announced they will discontinue the company's rabies doses, the CNR report said.

"A person should get five doses of rabies vaccine, with one dose injected right away and additional doses on the third, seventh, 24th and 28th days," said Zheng Dongyi of the vaccine department at First Hospital of Tsinghua University.

"It's OK to substitute doses from different producers if the vaccines are of the same type. Ideally, we suggest using vaccines produced by one company during the course of treatment," Zheng said. "The same applies to other vaccines, such as hepatitis B vaccines."

Wang Xiaoyu contributed to this story.

# Former official gets 15 years for bribery

By ZHANG YI

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Yu Haiyan, former vice-governor of Gansu province, was sentenced to 15 years in prison and fined 6 million yuan (\$893,000) for bribery in No 1 Intermediate People's Court of Chongqing Municipality on Wednesday.

Between 1998 and 2016, Yu took advantage of various posts — head of Jiuquan Iron and Steel Co in Jiayuguan, Gansu; vice-governor of Gansu; and Party secretary of Lanzhou, Gansu — to seek benefits through product sales, project contracts, real estate development and personnel arrangements and promotions, the court said in a statement.

He accepted money and gifts worth more than 65.6 million yuan (\$10.3 million), either personally or through his wife, Li Yanhua, the statement said.

The court said Yu pleaded guilty and provided facts the court had not known before. He also expressed remorse, and his bribes were all recovered, so his punishment can be lenient under the law.

Yu said he accepted the verdict and would not appeal.

Yu, who was born in 1961 in Yiwu, Zhejiang province, joined the Communist Party of China in 1987. He was put under investigation by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection for serious violations of Party discipline in January last year.



## Keeping cool



A giant panda chews iced bamboo shoots at the Jinan Zoo in Jinan, Shandong province, on Tuesday. The zoo has adopted various strategies to help the animals stay cool, as scorching and stuffy heat continues in the city. HUANG ZHONGMING / FOR CHINA DAILY

# Chemical firm ignored law before blast

By HUANG ZHILING

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The Ministry of Emergency Management called for penalties for those responsible for an explosion at a chemical company in Sichuan province that killed 19 people and injured 12 on July 12.

The incident pointed to ineffective supervision and a lack of a sense of safety development from the local government.

The explosion, which occurred at Yibin Hengda

Technology Co in Yibin's Jiang'an county, was the result of the company's disrespect for the law and regulations, the ministry said.

After the incident, the Sichuan government launched an investigation and paid compensation to the victims' families, according to the provincial information office.

The investigation found that the owner of the company began building the factory in July 2017 without approval from the local government, said Sun Guangyu, an official at the ministry.

The Yibin work safety bureau asked it to stop and go through the proper application procedure pertaining to the production of dangerous chemicals, but the company did not do so.

The bureau deemed the company's safety facility design substandard, but the company ignored its order to stop. When the explosion occurred, the main buildings of the factory had been completed, though most safety facilities had not yet been built, the investigation found.

There were no safety management systems in place at

the factory when the explosion took place, the ministry said. Of the 19 dead, 16 were workers who farmed near the factory and lacked basic knowledge of safe production in the chemical industry, it said.

The deputy chief of a workshop had only studied for three years in a primary school, it said. He started working in the factory in February and was promoted to deputy chief of the workshop in June, even though he did not know all the chemical elements, the ministry's Sun said.

# Typhoon Son-Tinh crashes into Hainan

By MA ZHIPING in Haikou

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Typhoon Son-Tinh, the ninth of the year, made landfall on Hainan Island early on Wednesday, bringing torrential rain and high winds, according to the Hainan meteorological observatory.

The typhoon landed at Wanning on the southeastern coast of the island at around 4:50 am on Wednesday, packing winds of up to 82.8 kilometers per hour. It was accompanied by rain and wind that affected parts of Guangdong and Fujian provinces.

Son-Tinh is moving westward at 30 km/h and was expected to reach the southern sea areas of the Beibu Gulf on Wednesday afternoon and



A bicyclist passes a fallen tree in Qionghai, Hainan province, on Wednesday. Typhoon Son-Tinh made landfall on the island province at around 4:50 am that day. YANG GUANYU / XINHUA

land in northern Vietnam on Wednesday night.

More heavy weather is expected until 8 am on Thursday in the western coastal areas of Guangdong, Guangxi and

most parts of Hainan province, with some places on the island likely to receive rainfall of up to 80 millimeters per hour, the local observatory said.

The Yuehai Railway and

Hainan Maritime Safety Administration confirmed that ferries on the Qiongzhou Strait, which connects Hainan with Guangdong, and trains running between the cities of Haikou, Beijing, Shanghai and Harbin, were halted on Tuesday. Services had been expected to resume at 4 pm on Wednesday.

Passengers who bought tickets for the affected services can change their dates or apply for refunds within 30 days, local railway authorities said.

High-speed train services on Hainan Island were also suspended on Wednesday morning but resumed at 12:23 pm.

By Tuesday afternoon, a total of 23,724 fishing boats had been called back to harbors around the island, according to official reports.

## Briefly

### BEIJING Citizens warned of telecom fraud

The Ministry of Public Security on Tuesday called on Chinese citizens traveling and living abroad to be alert to telecom fraud. Police urged citizens to be vigilant about phone calls, emails and social media contacts demanding their name, family status and bank account numbers or ordering them to transfer money.

### Regions asked to repair land

China's coastal regions were asked to rectify improper and illegal land reclamation practices after inspections exposed issues that could cause damage to marine ecosystems. Inspectors from the State Oceanic Administration reported issues to 11 provincial-level regions including Shanghai and Guangdong, urging them to correct problems such as a high vacancy rate of reclaimed land and improper project approvals. Local authorities also failed to contain pollution near the shore and to protect the marine ecology. Inspectors found a lack of supervision in some polluted areas.

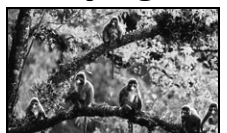
JIANGSU

### 23 seized for online gambling

Police in Jiangsu province have caught 23 people in an online gambling case involving more than 4.2 billion yuan (\$626 million). Thirty-three servers and more than 40 mobile phones were confiscated, and 65 bank accounts have been frozen, police in Zhenjiang said on Tuesday. The gang was busted in late May. It made an illegal profit of more than 700 million yuan since the operation began in 2016, police said.

YUNNAN

### Group of rare monkeys sighted



A large group of at least 320 rare Phayre's leaf monkeys have been sighted in Yunnan province, a local zoology institute said. The monkeys were seen and photographed by researchers from the Kunming Institute of Zoology during a three-month field investigation in the Dehong Dai and Jingpo autonomous prefecture. It is the largest group of the species ever recorded in a single region in China, according to the institute. The species is one of China's most endangered wild animals.

XINHUA

# Robots recruited to help kindergarten teachers nationwide

XIAMEN — "Good morning everyone! I am Keeko. Nice to meet you!" In the classroom, a robot introduces itself before asking a question: "Why are there four differently colored garbage bins in our kindergarten?"

Keeko, a humanoid robot standing 45 centimeters tall and weighing 4.5 kilograms, is the newest recruit at Xingguo Kindergarten in Xiamen, Fujian province.

With help of the robot's artificial intelligence, teacher Yang Huizhen is telling children about the importance of garbage sorting. Before the class started, she worked for

several days collecting information and uploading it to Keeko's "brain".

"I once thought AI robots would steal the jobs of teachers, but my worry turned out to be unnecessary," Yang said. "They will be good teaching assistants. Children are curious about them."

Keeko, which is programmed to interact with children younger than 7, can interact through conversation, games, songs, dancing, reading stories and even mathematics.

In China, robots are not just being used in factories or logistics companies. Now

they are being recruited by kindergartens to help out in the classroom. Robots like Keeko have been used in four classes at Xingguo Kindergarten.

At the He & She Angel Kindergarten in Chongqing municipality, a robot frequently reminds children about developing good habits.

"We should wash our hands before we eat," it says, and, "In scorching heat, don't forget to drink more water."

"With its cute voice and appearance, the robot is easily accepted by children," teacher Peng Liangjiao said. "Our

workload has been reduced a lot." To better serve kindergarten teachers and children, robot developers are trying to improve their products.

"Our engineers are cooperating with kindergarten

teachers, who know what the children really need and how to teach," said Guo Changchen, CEO of Keeko Robot (Xiamen) Technology Co, the creator of Keeko.

"Teachers can prepare the lessons and upload the content

to the robots. As more data is accumulated, the robots will become smarter and more helpful," he said.

So far, robots developed by the company have been used in 672 kindergartens across the country, he said.

Zheng Qinhua, an associate professor of education at Beijing Normal University, is happy to see the trend of robots entering classrooms.

"Using technology such as image recognition and language interaction, AI robots can precisely record and analyze children's behavior while interacting with them," Zheng said.

Zheng believes that AI robots are at least part of the solution to the shortage of qualified teachers.

A study conducted by Southwest University's Center for Education Policy showed that the shortfall of kindergarten teachers and child-care workers in China will likely surpass 3 million by 2021 as the number of children climbs following the adoption of the universal two-child policy in 2016.

"However, while AI technology is a tool for teachers, it cannot replace them," Zheng said. "Teaching requires love, patience and kindness. At least for now, robots cannot give children these things. But I believe in the future, AI robots, like teachers, will be companions and help children grow."

XINHUA



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Zheng Qinhua, associate professor of education at Beijing Normal University