

First lady shares love with HIV/AIDS children

By SHAN JUAN
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Youngsters at a school for HIV/AIDS patients share a common mom they know as "mother Peng".

"Dear children, we haven't seen one another for a while but you are always in my mind," China's first lady Peng Liyuan wrote in a letter to the 25 students at the Red Ribbon middle school in Linfen, Shanxi province.

The school caters to children with the disease who have lost at least one parent to the virus.

The letter, inscribed "your loving mother Peng", was delivered

by officials from the National Health and Family Planning Commission on her behalf on June 26 to mark the school's 10th anniversary.

Peng is the commission's image ambassador for the control and prevention of HIV/AIDS and the World Health Organization's ambassador in the fight against the virus.

Peng visited the school, the only one of its kind in the country, in November 2011. The children were delighted as she talked and sang with them, said headmaster Guo Xiaoping.

Guo is also the head of the Linfen Third Hospital, which specializes in the treatment of

infectious diseases. Peng's trip produced other benefits besides smiles on young faces.

Just days later the school was integrated into the local education system, which meant it began to receive government financing, said Wu Jianing, a division director at the hospital.

"Peng first met the children at a TV show gala in Beijing in 2009 and since then has constantly sent regards and gifts to them," he added.

The 16 children she met then will become high school students in the new semester. Several of them appeared in a series of AIDS public service announcements that featured Peng.



Be optimistic and enthusiastic to face the reality, to embrace the future, to pursue the dream, and to strive to fulfill the dream."

PENG LIYUAN
FIRST LADY OF CHINA

In her letter, she said: "You are unfortunate to get infected with HIV/AIDS, but you are lucky to have so many people from the whole society care for and support you.

"Be optimistic and enthusiastic to face the reality, to embrace the future, to pursue the dream, and to strive to fulfill the dream."

Wu said: "We appreciate all her efforts, especially in fighting HIV/AIDS-related discrimination and stigma, which are still rampant even today.

"The ultimate goal is to strive for a society free from discrimination where such children can easily attend normal schools with healthy children."



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First lady Peng Liyuan talks with children suffering from HIV/AIDS at Red Ribbon middle school in Linfen, Shanxi province in November 2011.

Flood threat persists in southwest

By WANG QIAN in Beijing
and LI JUN in Guiyang, Guizhou province

Torrential rain and floods that have battered southwestern China since Friday will continue, according to forecasters.

At least 32 people have died in weather-related incidents, which have included toppled buildings and traffic chaos. Tens of thousands have been forced to leave their homes.

Zhang Fanghua, chief forecaster at the National Meteorological Center, warned that local authorities should make full-scale preparations for geological disasters that could be triggered by rains in Guizhou, Hunan, Hubei and Yunnan provinces and in Chongqing.

The center issued multiple warnings for flash floods and heavy rains on Wednesday.

Fenghuang county, a resort area in Hunan province, has been submerged since Monday, with about 115,000 residents and tourists evacuated to higher land.

Direct economic losses are estimated at about 305 million yuan (\$50 million), according to the county government.

Rainstorms caused the Tuojiang River through the county to swell on Tuesday, with the water level reaching 307 meters, 1.5 m higher than its historic record. Water and power supplies have also been cut off in the county.

All scenic resorts in the ancient town were closed after a 230-millimeter downpour on Monday.

Tian Renyou, who lives near the river, had two sleepless nights since Monday, worrying that his home could be submerged at any moment. His furniture was soaked in water about 30 centimeters deep.

The water receded to some extent on Wednesday morning.

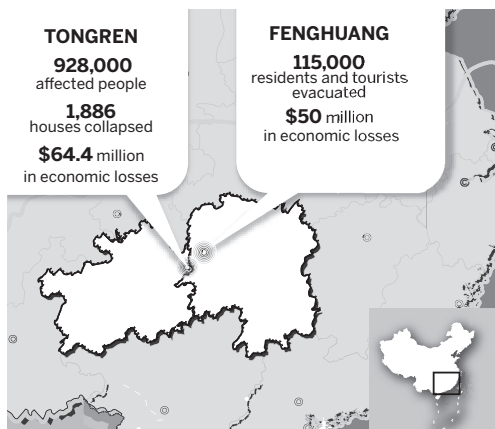
Southwestern China has experienced several severe rainstorms this year. Tang Guozhu, a 39-year-old villager in Shiqian county in Guizhou province, abandoned his home three times.

"We could only live in an abandoned coal plant now where many homeless peo-



Shop owners clean up the mess after floodwaters receded in the ancient-town resort of Fenghuang in Hunan province on Wednesday. Heavy downpours hit a large part of southwestern China, killing at least 32 and displacing tens of thousands.

AREAS HIT THE HARDEST



Source: China Daily

GUILLERMO MUNRO / CHINA DAILY

ple have to stay together. The crowded space is depressing," Tang said.

The county was hit by three rounds of rainstorms since May.

From Tuesday to Wednesday, heavy rain slammed 14 counties in Guizhou, the local meteorological bureau said. A maximum alert was issued by the bureau on Monday.

In Tongren, the worst-hit city, 928,000 people were affected by the storms as 1,886 houses collapsed and direct economic losses totaled nearly 400 million yuan.

The downpours also stranded many passengers at railway stations in Guizhou and Yunnan provinces, with many trains delayed or suspended on Wednesday.



LIU YONGGANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Firefighters rescue stranded vehicles in Tongren, Guizhou province on Wednesday.

A passenger surnamed Liu who took the train from Chengdu, in Sichuan province, to Guiyang, Guizhou province, departing on Tuesday afternoon, was told that the train would be delayed more than 6 hours because of the storm.

"There is no cooked food provided on the train, and we don't know how long we will wait here, which is irritating," Liu said.

At the railway station in Kunming, one of Yunnan province's busiest, 14 trains were delayed or suspended on Wednesday,

and the station suggested that passengers buy tickets for later trains.

While the country's southwestern provinces were hit by heavy rainfalls, Typhoon Rammasun was expected to make landfall in Hainan or Guangdong on Friday morning, worsening the situation in the region.

Guo Anfei in Kunming, Yunnan province; Lyu Chunrong in Changsha, Hubei province; and Liu Xiaoli in Haikou, Hainan province, contributed to this story.

Credit system expected to improve companies' fight against pollution

By ZHENG JINRAN
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The planned government system for measuring companies' environmental protection efforts will spur companies to upgrade their pollution-reduction equipment, the country's top pollution watchdog said.

"The new credit system will encourage companies to make a greater effort in pollution control and help them realize the serious consequences of pollutant emissions," said Zou Shoumin, head of the environmental supervision bureau under the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

Since August, the ministry has been releasing monthly pollution-related supervision reports on its website, with details of the pollution and polluters.

"And we also publicize the companies' representatives," Zou said, adding that the ministry and other authorities can use the extra disclosure of information to hand down certain punishments to polluters, including travel bans and loans denials.

The polluters will realize the ensuing cost and restrictions they will face, he said.

The ministry is drafting the credit system, based on pollution-control performance, with other ministries and departments. Detailed information on the system has not yet been released.

The ministry plans to label companies in four levels. The rating will be an important criterion when applying for loans, administrative licensing and other major certificates, forcing the companies to reduce pollution.

Though the national credit system based on the pollution-

control performance has not been released, some provinces have already implemented regional ones.

Jiangsu province stands out in its anti-pollution efforts. Since 2013, it has released a regulation using such a credit system, covering more than 20,000 companies.

Due to a credit downgrade, the loan to a thermal power plant in Nantong was cut off, forcing the company to install environmental protection equipment, saving it from bankruptcy. Still the jump from a regional plan to a national one is a big one, experts said.

"The credit system can work well in controlling pollution, but it faces many problems in becoming a national system," said Ma Zhong, head of the School of Environment and Natural Resources at Renmin University of China.

The credit system should use a large amount of information on companies' production and pollution. But this is a major obstacle for a national system, he said, adding that the authority has failed to collect much of the needed information.

Using drones for pollution supervision is a good way to collect information, Ma and Zou said.

It's more important to improve the supervision system, making it efficient to control the companies, Ma said.

Wang Dayong, head of Hebei Metallurgical Industry Association, agreed with Ma that improved company supervision is necessary, saying that instead of focusing on drafting a new credit system, the governments and departments need to improve current laws and regulations to ensure that companies and their officials pay a huge price for creating pollution.

Former premier Zhu's fund to help 800 poor students

By SUN LI and HU MEIDONG
in Fuzhou

140,200 dollars

will be provided to more than 800 poor students in five schools in Changting county, Fujian province, by the foundation financed by former premier Zhu Rongji's book sale revenue

A foundation financed by former premier Zhu Rongji's book sale revenue will offer about 870,000 yuan (\$140,200) in the autumn semester to finance more than 800 poor students in five schools in Changting county, Fujian province, the provincial Education Department said on Wednesday.

The Practical Education Foundation, created by Zhu in January of last year, is aimed at helping students from poor families, improving teaching facilities in less-developed regions and encouraging children to perform better academically.

In May, the foundation sent a team to conduct field research in Changting, a State-level poverty-stricken county, and decided to donate money to four primary schools and a middle school in the county's rural areas, according to the provincial Education Department.

The money will be used to provide a nutritious meal — including an egg and a cup of hot milk — during a class break

to students, purchase new desks and chairs, and reward local teachers who are committed and perform well.

Chen Aqing, deputy head of the county, said the project shows the former premier's great support for improving education conditions in rural areas, which she said will inspire more people to join in helping students from poor families.

The county government is inviting bids for providing the

meals, desks and chairs.

A special team combining staff members from the county's education bureau and health bureau has been set up to ensure food security, Chen said.

Zhu, 85, served as China's premier from March 1998 to March 2003. He was noted for launching bold economic reforms of State-owned enterprises and promoting the transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy.

After retirement, Zhu published several books on his remarks and statements during his time in office.

In August, the foundation offered 1 million yuan to

reward excellent teachers and support poor students in the Xiangxi Tujia and Miao autonomous prefecture in Hunan province.

The foundation also donated funds to improve students' food and renovate cafeterias in three primary and middle schools in Jishou, Hunan province.

Zhu Rui, president of the foundation, said it will continue to participate in charitable projects that will spread the former premier's care to students and teachers in poverty-stricken areas.

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The government measures have produced faster growth in industrial output, manufacturing activities, infrastructure investment and export, especially in June, all of which offset the negative impact of the property industry.

But this also stirred up concern whether the recovery is sustainable, especially if no new pro-growth measures are announced.

A report by the Bank of Communications said investment in infrastructure has to surge 26 percent to counterbalance the impact of the sagging property investment.

Gao Yuwei, a researcher

with Bank of China's Institute of International Finance, expected that the total money supply in the second half will not further loosen, as the priority of the central bank will shift toward taming the medium- to long-term interest rate.

NBS's data also showed signs of rebalancing of the economy, something the government has long pursued. Tertiary industry's share of the GDP rose to 46.6 percent, 1.3 percentage points higher than a year ago.

Total consumption contributed to 4 percentage points to the first half GDP growth of 7.4 percent, ahead of 3.6 percentage points from investment.