

# TOP NEWS

## Li supports bolstering growth

Premier on tour of Chengdu before hosting meeting of leaders of China, Japan and ROK

By XU WEI in Chengdu  
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China is considering further cutting the reserve requirement ratio of banks and boosting their relending and rediscount quotas to reduce actual interest rates and financing costs for small and micro businesses, Premier Li Keqiang said on Monday.

Li's remarks came as he made an inspection trip to Chengdu, Sichuan province, where he is hosting the eighth China-Japan-Republic of Korea leaders' meeting on Tuesday.

The country is further researching measures such as across-the-board reserve requirement ratio cuts or targeted cuts of RRR — the proportion of cash that banks have to set aside as reserves — to solve the difficulties and high costs of financing faced by small and micro businesses, he said during a visit to a branch of Chengdu Bank.

He pledged greater support to small and medium-sized banks, which offer direct services to small and micro businesses, saying that the sharing of information on businesses will be promoted to facilitate more loans.

The evaluation mechanism for banks will be refined, and a proper mechanism for work division among big, small and medium-sized banks will be established, he said.



Premier Li Keqiang, visiting a construction site on Monday in Chengdu, Sichuan province, talks with migrant workers after climbing up a scaffold. He asked them about their monthly earnings and the length of their workday. He also asked whether their wages are paid on time and in full. YAO DAWEI / XINHUA

He also voiced his hope that small and medium-sized banks will further boost lending to small and micro businesses, a key pillar for job creation.

The premier visited an online administrative service center and was briefed on the development of the free trade zone in the province as well as the Tianfu New Area.

There is immense potential for growth in the western region, and unleashing the potential for growth requires greater strides in reform, opening-up and refining the business environment, he said.

The key is to further reform to streamline administration and bolster compliance oversight and services, he added.

He said the services offered by staff workers should be warm as the sunshine, and they should help develop the area to a new height in offering more accessible services to businesses and individuals.

Li underlined bettering the environment for starting businesses and making innovations as he visited a park for entrepreneurship and innovation.

The abundance of human resources

and a rich supply of talent have been China's unique edge in development, and more measures must be adopted to stimulate market vitality and social creativity and to incentivize more people to start successful businesses, he said.

The premier also learned from some migrant workers at a construction site about their wages and living conditions.

Migrant workers should be given full credit for the country's development, and the government must ensure that their wages be paid in full and on time, he said.

## Moving 1.88m huge anti-poverty victory

By DU JUAN in Beijing  
and YANG JUN in Guiyang

Guizhou province had relocated 1.88 million people by November as part of a poverty relief project set up for the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20), the provincial government said on Monday.

About 82 percent of those relocated were poverty-stricken, officials said.

Xu Min, deputy head of Guizhou's ecological migration office, said the Guizhou relocation has been an unprecedented task and the largest relocation in China.

With great effort, the task was completed, and the creation of infrastructure to support the new residents, as well as providing a good welfare system, is ongoing.

The Chinese government pledged in 2014 to enact more supportive policies to lift the country's poorest 70 million people above the poverty line by the end of 2020.

Relocating people who live in virtually uninhabitable places, such as deep in the mountains and deserts, is one of the methods to help people break the cycle of poverty.

The residents of Ameiqituo, a small town in the province, were moved from the village of Sanbaoxiang two years ago. Up to 59 percent of Sanbaoxiang's population of 5,850, from 1,274 families, were extremely poor in 2014.

Wen Anmei, a villager and dancer in Sanbaoxiang, said her family now has a much better life.

"There is convenient transportation in Ameiqituo. Hospitals and schools are all near home," she said. "I got a job in a tourist company in town with a monthly salary of 3,800 yuan (\$542), which would have been hard to imagine in the past."

"Even my mom and dad both got their jobs thanks to the local government."

She said her mom became a

cleaner with a salary of 1,800 yuan a month and her dad is a forster ranger with monthly income of 800 yuan.

The local government has been making efforts to help all the immigrants find jobs. In the past two years, the authority has been developing farming, chicken breeding and herbal cultivation to employ all the impoverished from the village.

The government has introduced eight companies into Ameiqituo. The companies started skill training for local people and organized recruitment locally, providing choices for the residents.

The tourism industry was also cultivated with the help of the government.

In the past four years, 10,090 villages were relocated, according to the provincial government, and that is just the first step.

Xu, the deputy head, said 2.5 billion yuan was invested in restoring and building new kindergartens and primary and middle schools, as well as setting up healthcare centers and residential care center for the aged.

"This huge project will change the entire lives of people who have spent their years in remote villages. The fate of their offspring was also changed," Xu said.

Up to 95.2 percent of the migrants were relocated to cities and towns, which has raised the urbanization rate of Guizhou by 5 percentage points. That population will create consumption demand in cities and towns, which will boost the local economy.

At the same time, the areas where they used to live will be reforested, which is beneficial for the natural environment, she said.

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## Death penalty upheld for gang leader in rape cases

By CAO YIN  
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Twenty-one years after being sentenced to death for rapes and other crimes, Sun Xiaoguo had his death penalty upheld by the Yunnan High People's Court on Monday. The court said he had been given an improper early release from prison and sentence reduction.

In 1998, Sun, then 21, was sentenced to death by the Kunming Intermediate People's Court in Yunnan for rape, intentional injury, insulting women and disturbing public order. But the sentence was reduced to death with a two-year reprieve by the Yunnan High People's Court in 1999, and in 2007 was then further cut to 20 years in prison.

Sun was freed in April 2010 after serving 12 years and five months in prison in what courts later called a miscarriage of justice.

In October, the high people's court began reconsidering Sun's 1998 case after a series of investigations, reviews of files and materials and visits to people involved in the case suggested the law was wrongly applied in its previous rulings.

On Monday, the court confirmed the wrongful application of the law,

saying the judicial misconduct had to be corrected and the original conviction and sentence given by the lower court upheld.

The high people's court released some details about Sun's offenses in the late 1990s after the latest decision. It found Sun raped four girls, including one under the age of 14, between April and June 1997.

In November of that year, Sun seized two 17-year-old girls in public places and violently assaulted them, seriously injuring one of them, the court found. In July and October 1997, Sun also disturbed public order and assaulted and injured three other people, the court said.

"Sun ignored the law, offended several times with extremely cruel means, and his behavior brought great damage to society," the court said. "The ruling made by the intermediate people's court should be kept, as the conviction was correct and the death sentence was reasonable."

The court also had discovered that Sun had been sentenced to three years in prison for rape in 1995 by a different court in the province, but he served only about eight months of the prison term.

Sun's record after being freed in 2010 also caught up with him. Dur-

“We'll learn a lesson from Sun's case and increase supervision in dealing with cases to improve the quality of our hearings and further uphold justice.”

Yunnan High People's Court

ing the rehearing by the high people's court, the Yuxi Intermediate People's Court sentenced Sun to 25 years in prison for organized crimes committed between 2013 and 2018.

Considering Sun's multiple crimes in 1998, not serving his complete sentence in 1995 and crimes after leaving prison in 2010, the high people's court combined the punishments and sentenced him to death. The court also ordered that his private property be confiscated.

Sun attracted national attention in April when a Yunnan media outlet reported that several gangs, including one led by Sun, had been

broken up during a crackdown on organized crime in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province.

His case triggered widespread concern over corruption in the provincial judicial and prison systems, as follow-up stories showed that Sun had escaped the death sentence handed down in 1998 after he was found guilty of multiple criminal charges and had been living as a free man.

The high people's court said, "Sun has not received the punishment he deserves for his frequent offenses over the past 20 years, and judicial corruption in his case also challenged the bottom line of the public and the law."

An investigation this year found judicial corruption that led to convictions of 19 people, including Sun's parents.

"We'll learn a lesson from Sun's case and increase supervision in dealing with cases to improve the quality of our hearings and further uphold justice," the court said.

Under China's Criminal Procedure Law, a death sentence handed down by a lower court must now be submitted to the Supreme People's Court, the country's top court, for review. The sentence can be carried out after it is approved by the top court.

## Tariffs: Reduction conducive to high-quality development

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The reduced numbers led to soaring pork prices, which in turn fueled consumer inflation to 4.5 percent in November.

"China has taken various measures to restore hog production to ensure that pork supply and market prices are basically stable. Tariff reduction is another vital policy tool," said Yang Weiyong, an economics professor at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

Economists predicted that as pork supplies rebound thanks to government efforts, consumer inflation is likely to moderate in the second half of next year.

According to the customs tariff commission, the government will increase imports of food items to boost domestic consumption. The tariff rate for frozen avocados will be cut to 7 percent from the most-favored-nation duty of 30 percent, it said.

Tariffs on some high-tech components, including semiconductor testing and sorting equipment and parts for automobile transmissions, will be temporarily cut to strengthen such sectors as integrated circuit, aerospace, automobile and telecommunication production, the statement added.

Tariffs on some precursors used in the production of asthma and diabetes drugs will be cut to zero, down from 6.5 percent. Lower tariffs will also be placed on more than 150 types of wood and paper products, the commission said.

The tariff adjustments are conducive to reducing import costs and promoting "the orderly and free flow of international and domestic production factors". The move will also facilitate the country's high-quality opening-up and accelerate the construction of free trade zones to improve the global trade environment, the commission said.

Although sluggish global growth

momentum may continue to create significant headwinds for Chinese exports next year, Louis Kuijs, head of Asia Economics at Oxford Economics, predicted that sequential import momentum will pick up moderately after inventory destocking in heavy industries for much of this year.

Import growth, which was 0.3 percent in November and registered the first positive year-on-year growth since May, is likely to stay in solid positive territory in the near term helped by "quite favorable base effects", Kuijs said.

Most-favored-nation tariff rates on 176 information technology items will be further reduced starting July 1. It will be the fifth such tariff cut since December 2015, when 24 members of the World Trade Organization, including China, the United States and Japan, agreed to expand the covered product range within the Information Technology Agreement.

Under the agreement, tariffs on some IT products will be gradually

eliminated. China had completed four cuts by July, said the Ministry of Finance.

Gao Lingyun, a research fellow at the Institute of World Economics and Politics of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that as China is one of the world's major importers and exporters of IT products, cutting import tariffs on such items can help reduce manufacturing costs for many domestic producers and enhance competitiveness.

It is conducive to the economy's high-quality development and the upgrading of manufacturing in the future, Gao said.

Goods from 11 countries, including New Zealand, Singapore, Australia, Chile and Pakistan, will have even lower levies under their free trade agreements with China and the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement, according to the commission.

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## Tibet: Local residents' incomes greatly increase

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The regional government has undertaken targeted poverty relief measures. Before the latest 19 delistings, 55 counties and districts had declared themselves out of poverty between 2016 and 2018. That was the result of efforts by the government and by people themselves, who made an effort to improve their livelihoods. In all, 470,000 benefited.

To date, all 74 poverty-stricken counties and districts in the region have been lifted out of poverty.

Tenzin Trinley, a resident of Shaitongmon county, one of the final 18, described himself as one of thousands of beneficiaries in the region.

Shaitongmon lies along the northern basin of the Yarlung Zangpo River and about 500 kilometers from Lhasa, the region's capital.

Trinley, 61, lives in a remote herding village in a harsh environment. The average altitude exceeds 4,000 meters above sea level.

Before 2016, his family of 11 people had to share a single big room as a common bedroom in an aging structure. Under the government's poverty alleviation program, the family was given a new house in

2018. All family members now have a bedroom of their own.

"It was not convenient for families to share a single room in the past," he said. "Now we all have our own bedrooms, and share a living room, dining room and storage."

Apart from housing, the local government also assisted with job opportunities.

"My wife and I were given the task of ecological patrols, which brings an annual income of 7,000 yuan (\$998). It's so great. Not only is the environment protected but poverty-stricken people like us also stand to benefit financially using our own hands," Trinley added.

In 2019, the per capita disposable income of his family increased to more than 9,000 yuan, from around 2,000 in 2016.

The extra money came from environmental patrols, subsidies from returning part of this grassland to the government's ecological preservation project, old-age pensions and selling yaks and sheep.

Before 2016, herding was the family's sole source of income, and they had only a few sheep and yaks.

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## That's using your bean



A farmer produces thin sheets of bean curd on Monday at a processing workshop in Taizhou's Xianju county, Zhejiang province. Production has ramped up for the peak sales season for the New Year's and Spring Festival holidays. WANG HUABIN / FOR CHINA DAILY