

## DIPLOMACY

# Beijing says it would welcome a Ramos visit

Ex-president of Philippines now midway through 'ice-breaking' Hong Kong trip

By AN BAIJIE in Beijing and DENG YANZI in Hong Kong



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Hua Chunying, spokeswoman for the Foreign Ministry

Beijing is looking forward to former Philippine president Fidel Ramos' visiting China as a special envoy and wants him to come as soon as possible, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said on Wednesday, the third day of the former leader's "ice-breaking trip" to Hong Kong.

"China sticks to an open attitude toward all means of contact between China and the Philippines, and welcomes Mr Ramos to China," Hua said.

The spokeswoman called on the two sides to make joint efforts to improve bilateral ties, restore dialogue and cooperation, and push forward the healthy and stable development of China-Philippines ties.

Ramos, 88, started a five-day trip to Hong Kong on Monday. He said he would meet "old friends" with links to officials in Beijing.

Ramos told reporters on Tuesday that he planned to meet with Wu Shicun, who heads the National Institute for South China Sea Studies, a think tank on Hainan Island. He gave no other details of his itinerary.

Ramos defined the trip as "ice-breaking", after bilateral ties were jeopardized by an arbitration case initiated by President Rodrigo Duterte's predecessor, Benigno Aquino III.

During Ramos' time as president from 1992 to 1998, the two countries eased tensions caused by confrontations over the Meiji Reef.

Delia Albert, former secretary of foreign affairs of the Philippines, told China Daily that she thinks the relationship could make progress with the meetings in Hong Kong.

"I'm very happy to see Ramos visiting Hong Kong, because he has many

good friends there and he is also the main promoter of the Boao Forum. More contact is very good," she said.

Richard Heydarian, assistant professor of political science at Manila-based De La Salle University, said the Philippines is looking for investments from China for its domestic development, but the current relationship is "extremely toxic".

This visit "hopefully brings some normalization to it", he said.

Chen Qinghong, a researcher in Southeast Asian and Philippine studies at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations in Beijing, said that China and the Philippines can start communications on some easier topics first to create an atmosphere for dialogue on sensitive issues.

However, he added that China's stance on sovereignty will not be changed, since sovereignty is not a kind of commodity to trade.

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## Photos: New exhibit will be devoted to images of Shanghai

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"The family rose in importance in Shanghai from the late Qing Dynasty into the 20th century and went through more than 70 years of ups and downs until 1950," he said.

"The groom, Nie Jigui, served as Shanghai's governor from 1890 to 1893. He died in 1911 and was buried in Hunan, while the bride, Zeng Jifen, died in 1942 and was buried in Shanghai."

Watt says Zeng Jifen was his great-grandmother.

The display of Child's work was the first time that US-based collector Stephan Loewentheil had shared the original images of life during the Qing Dynasty in Peking, now known as Beijing.

Building on the success of the *Qing Dynasty Peking Exhibition*, Loewentheil will showcase another rare col-

lection of prints in London in November. The collection, which will feature images of Shanghai, will be on display at the China Exchange cultural center in the heart of London's Chinatown from Nov 3 to 11.

"Last year's show connected Raymond Watt to his family history when he recognized his family members in a portrait — a historical exchange," said Freya Aitken-Turff, CEO of China Exchange.

The new exhibition will be the first devoted to the work of William Saunders, a British engineer who became a photographer after traveling to China in 1860. He is now recognized as one of the most important photographers of 19th-century China.

The images portray people, occupations and customs of Shanghai at the time.



## Edgy performance

Ji Jinyu, a 55-year-old folk acrobat, walks barefoot on a giant sword in front of onlookers at a cultural event in Duyun, Guizhou province, on Tuesday. The 18-meter-long sword weighs 2.3 metric tons and is said to have a sharp edge. QIAO QIMING / FOR CHINA DAILY

## ENERGY

# Nuclear processing site suspended

By CANG WEI in Nanjing [cangwei@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:cangwei@chinadaily.com.cn)

A coastal city in eastern China on Wednesday backed away from its selection of a site for a Sino-French nuclear waste processing plant, after days of protests by residents.

Since Saturday, thousands of people concerned about safety took to the streets of Lianyungang, Jiangsu province, to protest the proposed 100 billion yuan (\$15 billion) plant.

The local government said on its website on Wednesday that the city would "suspend the site selection and preliminary work on the nuclear recycling project". No other details were given.

French nuclear fuel group Areva and China National Nuclear Corp signed a deal for the project in 2012 for processing spent fuel produced by nuclear power plants.

Construction is scheduled to start in 2020, with completion by 2030. But the location has yet to be decided.

A media report on July 26 said that a deputy director of

**People have a right to worry about their safety and demand that the dangerous material is not in their backyard."**

Chen Yong, teacher at Huaihai Institute of Technology

the State Administration of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense, accompanied by CNNC executives, were inspecting Lianyungang as a possible location for the plant. The report drew huge public attention and local people protested.

"The final site will be decided by the central government after being scientifically researched, released to the public and supported by the local government," Xue Weiming, general manager of the CNNC's Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing Co, was quoted as saying by Science Daily on Wednesday.

He added that radiation risks in the nuclear reprocessing program are low and the

influence on the environment and nearby residents can be controlled.

However, Chen Yong, a teacher at the city's Huaihai Institute of Technology, said it's the transportation process, not the nuclear reprocessing technology, that he is worried about.

"Nobody can give assurances that the spent nuclear waste is 100 percent safe during transportation, as people are needed to lift it, unload it and drive it during the process," Zhang said.

"People have a right to worry about their safety and demand that the dangerous material is not in their backyard," he said. "The government should communicate with the public patiently and

earn their trust on the program."

The city government promised earlier this week that it would release accurate information about the plant to the public in a timely manner. It also said that anyone who fabricates information or spreads rumors will be punished.

Lianyungang, about 500 kilometers north of Shanghai, is a port city with a population of 4.5 million.

Tianwan Nuclear Power Station, with two Russian-designed reactors, is located there. Two more units are being built.

The Chinese mainland now has 34 nuclear power plants in operation, 20 under construction and more planned, according to the World Nuclear Association.

Founded in 2011, Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing Co is responsible for preliminary work in the China-France nuclear recycling program that is supported by both countries. Since 2015, it has researched about 10 sites in coastal provinces, including Shandong, Fujian and Zhejiang.

## BIOTECH

# Facing doubts, scientist submits gene-editing protocols

By SHAN JUAN [shanjuan@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:shanjuan@chinadaily.com.cn)

Chinese biologist Han Chunyu has provided his experimental data to Nature as requested to help peer researchers replicate his work, but the controversy has not gone away, according to the journal's website.

Meanwhile Han has been working to replicate his own work.

The incident now is evolving into a battle between the widely recognized gene editing tool CRISPR-Cas9 and a potentially

better substitute called NgAgo, presented by Han, a geneticist at Hebei University of Science and Technology.

Three months ago, Han reported that the enzyme NgAgo can be used to edit human genes, and an article was published in Nature Biotechnology. However, some researchers said they had been unable to replicate Han's work.

The journal, in response, initiated an investigation and asked Han last week to submit his experimental protocols and original data. The investigation is still underway.

One of the protocols warned that the magnesium level in cells needed to be maintained.

Gaetan Burgio, a geneticist at Australian National University in Canberra, told Nature there was little new in the protocol Han shared.

"That doesn't make any sense to me," he said. Burgio reported on his blog that he had failed to replicate Han's results, which further pushed the controversy into the worldwide spotlight.

A Chinese biology researcher in Beijing who asked for anonymity told China Daily

that Han's updating of his protocol is a good start.

"Science and research is hard and takes time. We should allow for more time and patience," the researcher said.

Lluis Montoliu, a geneticist at the Spanish National Centre for Biotechnology in Madrid, previously recommended in an email to colleagues at the International Society for Transgenic Technologies that any project involving the use of NgAgo for gene editing should be abandoned.

It's to "avoid wasting time,

## ANTI-CORRUPTION

# Liaoning ex-official expelled from CPC

By XINHUA

Wang Min, former top official of Liaoning province and a senior national legislator, has been expelled from the Communist Party of China and dismissed from public office for serious breaches of Party discipline, the country's top anti-graft agency said on Wednesday.

During his time as Party chief of Liaoning, Wang failed to properly supervise

provincial elections and was responsible for serious election fraud including vote buying, according to

a statement by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection.

Wang was accused of using his position and power to assist others in matters including promotions and business in exchange for money and property, or benefits for his family, which constitutes the crime of bribe-taking, the statement said.

Moreover, he had openly protested and violated frugality rules and spent public funds on expensive dinners, and he resisted investigations against him, the statement said.

Wang was vice-chairman of the Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee of the 12th National People's Congress after leaving the post of Liaoning Party chief.

Since he is a member of the 18th CPC Central Committee, the decision to expel him requires approval at the next plenary meeting of the CPC Central Committee, the statement said.

The CCDI announced its investigation of Wang in March.

It was also decided that his illegal gains will be confiscated and his case transferred to judicial departments, the statement said.



## Weavers of heritage

Primary school students learn to weave at a training session in Julu county, Hebei province, on Wednesday. The local weaving technique dates back 1,100 years and awaits approval to be included on the provincial intangible cultural heritage list. MOU YU / XINHUA

## Vietnam: Report called inaccurate

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Vietnam's Foreign Ministry said the information was "inaccurate" but did not elaborate.

Vietnam has illegally occupied 29 of about 50 islands and reefs in the South China Sea.

It has conducted construction and reclamation work on more than 20 of them since the 1980s, and the scale of the reclamation has increased in the past two years.

It also has built infrastructure, including runways and barracks, on the islands and reefs.

Jia Duqiang, a senior researcher on Southeast Asian studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said it is Hanoi's latest effort to tighten its hold on islands in the South China Sea.

"By fortifying the islands with rocket launchers, Vietnam is keeping up its militarization of the region in a more aggressive way," he said.

Xu Liping, another Southeast Asian studies researcher with CASS, said Hanoi is trying to emphasize its determination to strengthen its illegal occupation of the islands.

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