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Farmer academician Zhu Youyong win national honour of China

He shared the results of scientific research with poor farmers

Wearing a straw hat with a dark complexion, holding a sickle in one hand and a rice stalk in another.....During the past 5 years, Zhu Youyong, honorary President of Yunnan Agricultural University, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, has led a team to root in frontier villages in Yunnan, China and use scientific knowledge to help farmers out of poverty. On December 2, he won the title of *Model of The Times*, an honor bestowed by the Publicity Department of the Communist Party of China Central Committee.

"Potato king" harvested in poor mountain village

In 2015, when the Chinese Academy of Engineering was assigned with the task of the poverty-relief work in Lancang Lahu Autonomous County as a science and technology site for its academicians and experts, the 60-year-old Zhu Youyong said, "I am still young. I can do it."

However, at his first visit to the village, Zhu Youyong's tears fell down. "It's truly poor." Zhu Youyong visited farmers' homes and found that many of them had only a few bags of corn and a few chickens, and a fence house through which wind could pass. Lancang is home to mainly Lahu people, many of whom have lived in the mountains for generations. They do not speak Mandarin and are in deep poverty. "As a sci-tech personnel, I feel guilty that the people here haven't enjoyed our scientific achievements."



Zhu Youyong (first from right) works with local farmers. (Yunnan Daily)

Zhu Youyong was aware of that to alleviate poverty, "what should the farmers grow" is the most important issue. He finally found out that with dry and warm winters, Lancang was best suitable for planting the species of winter potatoes. With years efforts, he and his team developed varieties of potatoes which are highly competitive on market.

Actually, growing potato was not accepted by the local farmers at the beginning. In the winter of 2016, the Poverty Alleviation Team led by Zhu talked to a local villager named Liu Jinbao, and suggested him to plant winter potatoes. Liu Jinbao agreed the first day but went to his field and sowed

rape seeds the next day. Zhu Youyong had to plant 100 mu in the collective's field for demonstration. In the spring of 2017, the demonstration field was harvested with an average yield of 3.3 tons per mu. At a purchase price of 3 yuan per kilogram, the average potato yield per mu was nearly 10,000 yuan. The news reached Liu Jinbao's ears, he decided to take out 2 mu of land to plant potatoes to try. In the spring of the next year, the "potato king" of the whole village was harvested from his field, which was 5 kilograms. In the winter of 2018, without waiting for the Poverty Alleviation Team to come, Liu Jinbao planted potatoes

in all of his 10 mu land.

Winter potato was just one try. Zhu created a key technology system for organic cultivation of Sanqi (pseudo-ginseng), the technology can increase its survival rate from less than 10% to 70%. The dry natural organic Sanqi produced by this system can sell for more than 6,000 yuan per kilogram.

Zhu Youyong gave his technology to local farmers and enterprises for free, the only condition was that the promise of not using a single grain of chemical fertilizer and pesticide and 15% of the share income to be used to poverty alleviation work.

Take 1,500 farmers as students

Skill training is an important step in Zhu Youyong's poverty alleviation plan. He initiated training courses of poverty alleviation skills in science and technology of the Chinese Academy of Engineering in China. Academicians and experts were invited to teach farmers in plain language, and guide farmers to plant in the fields until they learned and understood it. Zhu Youyong himself eats and lives together with the trainees and guides them planting, plowing and harvesting.

In addition to organic Sanqi cultivation and winter potato planting, Zhu Youyong and his team provided 24 farming skill classes such as winter vegetables and tea planting, forestry, pig and cattle breeding, and have trained more than 1,500 local talents. Among the trainees, 90% have already lifted themselves out of poverty and 50% have lifted their relatives and friends out of poverty, and some have lifted the entire village out of poverty.

In this November, in order to help expand the market of these local agricultural products, Zhu Youyong and Pinduoduo, a Chinese e-commerce platform, jointly set up a rural e-commerce class to sell the products.

Led by Zhu Youyong, academicians and experts worked side by side with local cadres and masses to reduce the overall poverty rate in Lancang County year by year since 2015. The poverty rate in Lancang

County is expected to drop below 3% this year. Zhu Youyong said, "I am more gratifying to see the results of scientific research come to fruition in the homes of tens of millions of farmers than to receive more money and publish more important essays."

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Zhu Youyong, a famous Chinese plant pathologist, has won more than 20 invention patents and 18 major scientific and technological awards. His "genetic diversity and disease control in rice" technology has been advanced in more than four million hectares in 10 Chinese provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions. It has furthermore been granted first prize in scientific research by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). His technology of agrobiodiversity for pest management has been applied to more than 20 million hectares of dry land crops. Both technologies can reduce pesticide use by 60 percent while increasing yields by 20-30 percent. His research paper "Genetic Analysis of Rice Varietal Diversity for Rice Blast Control" was published as a cover article in *Nature journal*. To date, the result has spread to many Chinese provinces as well as Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia and other countries.

XI'S REMARKS

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The goal of poverty-relief for the 13th Five-Year Plan is to ensure that rural poor people are free from worries over food and clothing and have access to compulsory education, basic medical services and safe housing by 2020. The battle against poverty has reached the sprint stage of attacking the hard nut to crack. We must work together with greater determination, clearer thinking and more precise measures and extraordinary strength to achieve the goal of poverty alleviation. Not a single person should be left behind.

—Chinese President Xi Jinping's speech at the CPC central conference on poverty alleviation and development held from November 27 to 28, 2015

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POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Yi girls embroider a new world

Liangshan Township in Yuanmou County of Yunnan province is a Yi nationality inhabited township where Yi embroidery has been passed down generations as a traditional craft. Yu Jincui learned to crochet from her mother and grandmother when she was 8 years old. Later, she learned embroidery and paper-cutting. Almost all the clothes for her family came from her hands.

By chance, Yu Jincui went to Beijing to attend a study in 2007. A foreign friend took a fancy to the hand-embroidered Yi nationality suit on her and bought it for 8,000 yuan. Yu Jincui was excited and an idea of starting her own business came to her mind.

After returning home, Yu Jincui called 12 embroidery ladies and established the Yuanmou Yi Sisters Embroidery Association in her village. She distributed pieces of embroidery to embroiderers to work on and later collected them at the price of 20 to 30 yuan per piece. In that year alone, 246 pieces of embroidery products were sold, achieving an income of 60,000 yuan, forging a new path for local women to make money.

In 2015, with the support of the local government, she registered a Yi Sisters Embroidery Company. The embroidery products were very popular because they have a unique style and exquisite workmanship, so they were sold to Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and

Europe as well as to the United States while orders kept coming in. In addition to embroidery sales, the company has also formed an operation mode of creative planning, new product development, skills training and marketing.

As the company grew, Yu Jincui also set up a Yi Embroidery Cooperative to get more Yi women involved. In 2018, Yi Sisters Embroidery Company absorbed a total of 300 women from Liangshan, Laocheng and Jiangbian Township as full members. The annual Yi embroidery products sales reached tens of thousands of pieces with sales of more than 3 million yuan, and was successfully declared as the county's poverty alleviation workshop.

Under the leadership of Yu Jincui, 126 filed and registered low income households, 64 disabled people and their dependents and 86 poor women earn more than 2,000 yuan a month through manual embroidery. In 2018, the annual income of some low-income people reached 30,000 yuan.

"The workshop is built in front of their houses. People don't need to go outside to find a job and they can make money while looking after their families. Everybody has a happy life." Now, the development of the Liangshan embroidery industry has paved the way for Yi women to live a good life with each stitch of embroidery.

By Zeng Bin

ECOLOGY

Kunming's 35-year romance with seagulls



Tourists are feeding seagulls along Dianchi Lake on a winter morning. Photo by Yang Zheng

Every winter, Kunming—nicknamed the Spring City of China—would welcome the return of tens of thousands of black-headed gulls after their far-flung journeys starting off in southern Siberia. Local residents regard these feathered guests as an unexpected gift of nature. And many of them still cannot forget November 12, 1985—the exact date when nearly 10,000 seagulls appeared on the horizon and hovered around in the sky. It was the first time that these white little birds with orange peaks ever visited Kunming in large quantities. The citizens were appalled and soon mesmerized by such spectacle.

Generally speaking, black-headed gulls arrive in Kunming between October and December in a year, and inhabit around the city with a span up to six months until the end of May. For the past 35 years consecutively, the return of gulls—like an annually-held ritual—has again and again invigorated its urban life, and these

adorable birds, in turn, are reckoned as the synonym of Kunming.

Through investigation, three major migratory routes were mapped out by ornithologists. The first, starting from Kunming to the Bakal area via several parts of China—encompassing Sichuan, Shanxi, Ningxia and Inner Mongolia—is the most known one among the public. The second, instead of traveling all the way up to Russia, halts near two saline lakes in Mongolia, namely Uvs and Khyargas, while the last route indicates that gulls also end their journey around the Bosten Lake in Xinjiang, northwest China, after flying over Sichuan, Qinghai and Gansu provinces.

Today, we can almost say that the decade—long riddle of where Kunming's seagulls come from has been unraveled. "I believe that new data and knowledge will lead us to better understand and protest these lovely 'water pigeons'," said Zhao Xuebing, the secretary-general of Kunming Birdwatching Association. By YDPG

CULTURE

Gejiu: Traditional tinsmithing brought to life

The city of Gejiu is located in the southeast of Yunnan province. Every weekend the tin ware studio in the Tin Cultural and Creative Industrial Park is buzzing with life. Tea ceremonies, incense burning gatherings and flower arrangement events are held here, and they attract tourists and tin ware lovers from all over the country.

"The tin pots, cans, cups and bowls here are exquisite in craftsmanship. They are capable of purifying water and keeping it fresh. We love them so much," said Yang Fei, a tourist from east China's Fujian province who was impressed by his experience at the tin ware studio.

The Tin Cultural and Creative Industrial Park in Gejiu integrates a tin-smithing exhibition, production and creation of tin ware and eco-tourism. It is a national AAA-rated tourist attraction, established in 2011. Its charm also lies in the unique cultural landscapes such as the fiberglass exhibition halls, the French-style experience hall and the imitation steam locomotives.

In the heritage and demonstration centre of multicolored tin ware, an intangible cultural heritage of Yunnan province, a production line extends for dozens of meters. It showcases the processes casting, chipping, lofting, shaping, welding, polishing and cleaning, necessary for tin ware production. "This production line turns out about 10,000 pieces of tin ware every year. Our marketing network covers Kunming, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Yiwu, Chengdu and other places," said Lai Qingguo, principal of the industrial park and a Chinese national master of arts and crafts.

"Our products are artistic as well as practical. We bring culture to life, and inject impetus for sustainable development into traditional craftsmanship," said Lai. The industrial park produces tin ware in the back, and sells it at the front. Visitors can take a tour of the production line and try out the tin ware. This model helps promote the integrated development of culture, tourism and heritage of tin-smithing. By Zhu Hai

IN PICS

Flourishing cultural exchanges between China and India



A tourist gets a Henna tattoo at the India Garden during the "India Day" event at the Beijing International Horticultural Exhibition

People-to-people and cultural exchanges between China and India are flourishing. "Practising yoga, drinking Indian black tea and watching Bollywood movies have become the fashion among Chinese youth. Chinese movie stars such as Jackie Chan are household names in India. People in India enjoy acupuncture, martial arts and Chinese cuisine," said Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong. (By China Daily)

YUNNAN TODAY

Yunnan launches programme to protect minority languages

The languages spoken by eight ethnic groups in Southwest China's Yunnan province will be recorded and preserved for the protection of traditional culture, local authorities said.

The province launched a four-year program recently to establish a language resource library of oral traditions of the ethnic groups of Derung, De'ang, Jino, Nu, Achang, Pumi, Blang and Jingpo, which have relatively small

populations in the region.

The holders or inheritors of oral traditions will be the major participants in the recording work to show their language or oral communication during various folk festivals in

different forms of art.

The works will be recorded through video, audio, photography and written text, according to the publicity department of the province. (By China Daily)

China's new economy creates new jobs

In today's China, each time a new lifestyle of "touching at fingertips" brings new jobs.

On the "Double 11" (shopping festival on November 11) this year, the Tmall platform has surpassed a turnover of 100 billion RMB in only 64 minutes. The daily order volume of Meituan takeout platform alone exceeded 30 million in only one day. Online shopping and ordering food have become the norm for many Chinese, backed by millions of new jobs.

than 40 million jobs while Meituan Comments helped create 19.6 million jobs. China's sharing economy has about 75 million service providers with 5.98 million employees, according to China's State Information Center.

Now, China's industrial structure has shifted from volume of Meituan takeout industry to services. In the first three quarters, the value added of the tertiary industry increased to 54% of GDP. The greater capacity of service sector to absorb labor is particularly true in the new economy.

"New employment is an inevitable trend in the

development of digital economy. It not only expands employment space, but also creates many employment opportunities that were not available in the past, giving people greater choice," said Yang Weiguo, dean of School of Labor and Human Resources, Renmin University of China.

Influence of the new economy goes deep into production, opening a new talent gap.

The 31-year-old Huang Zusheng worked in Yiwu City, Zhejiang Province. His career has ushered in a new spring after seven or eight years, which was

unexpected. Last year, his annual salary jumped from 70,000 yuan to 250,000 and he received offers from over 40 enterprises.

The new position that changed Hang's career is called digital manager. He said that using his expertise, he has helped more than a dozen start-ups set up digital management systems.

Digital managers may sound new, but in fact the number of employees on the job has exceeded 700,000. Thanks to the new economy, a number of similar new jobs have emerged, and the huge market demand behind them has created millions

of new jobs for Chinese employees.

This year, Chinese officials announced 13 new jobs including digital manager and all of them are popular in the market. For example, statistics from the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security show that the total number of current employed e-sportsmen exceeds 500,000. It is estimated that there will be a demand of nearly 2 million in the next five years. The number of employees in the Internet of things and related industries exceeds 2 million, and the demand in the next

five years is predicted to be nearly 5 million. With machines replacing hands, there will be a need for 1.25 million industrial robot system operators and maintainers respectively in the future.

"The emergence of new jobs reflects the vitality and creativity of China's economic life in recent years," said Zhang Bingzi, director of Department of Social Development, Development Research Center of China's State Council.

By Li Jie from People's Daily Overseas Edition