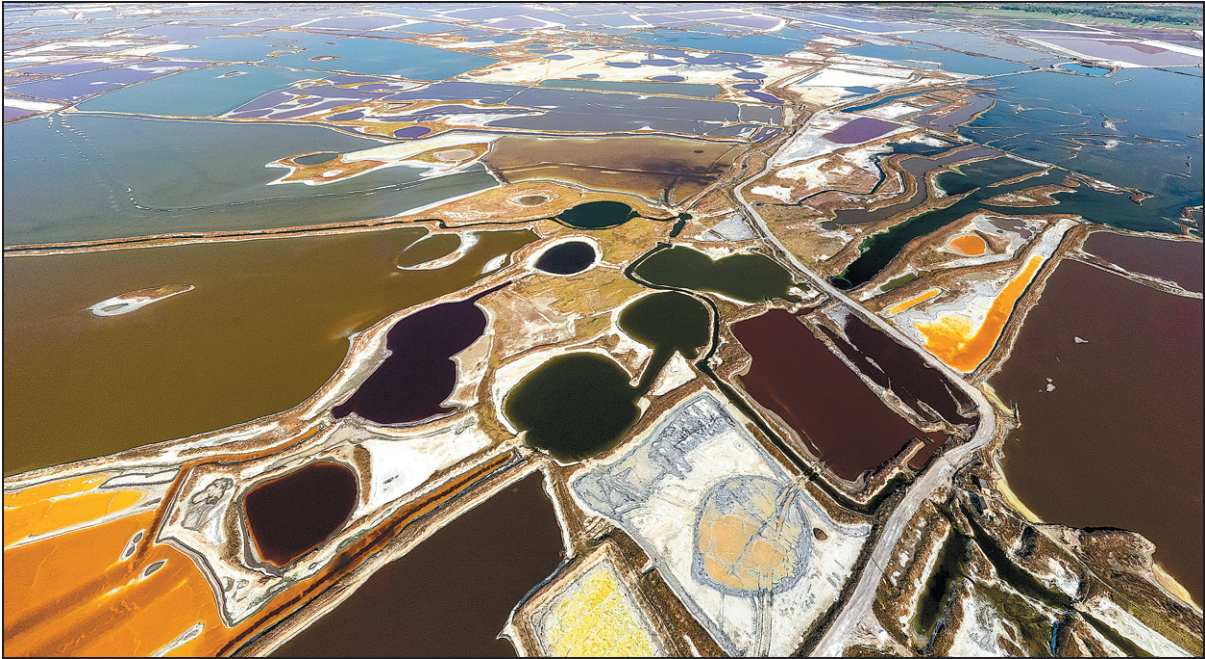


Hotter weather brings out lake's true colors



As temperatures rise in early summer, the multicolored Salt Lake close to Yuncheng city, southern Shanxi province, becomes a bustling attraction for tourists. Scientists attribute the rich colors of the lake to the propagation and growth of halophilic algae and brine shrimp in warmer temperatures. The organisms change color at various temperatures, turning the lake into a huge painter's palette. Salt Lake in Yuncheng is one of the three largest sodium sulfate lakes in the world. It is also called the Dead Sea of China due to its salt content being similar to the Dead Sea in the Middle East. SHI YUNPING / FOR CHINA DAILY

Shanxi medical teams helping to battle coronavirus in Africa



Province's doctors head to Cameroon, Togo and Djibouti

By YUAN SHENGGAO

After the successful completion of its mission in Hubei province in March, Shanxi's medical sector is now focusing its attention on assisting countries in Africa that have been hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Cameroon, Togo and Djibouti are three African countries that have been receiving medical assistance from Shanxi for a long period of time, and they have not been spared from the highly contagious disease. Their poor medical systems have posed a big challenge for epidemic prevention and control. Statistics from the World Health Organization show that there were 2,265 confirmed cases and 108 fatalities caused by COVID-19 in Cameroon by May 7. The figures were 1,124 and three in Djibouti and 128 and nine in Togo. Shanxi's medical teams, using their rich experience and advanced equipment, are among the major forces in local epidemic prevention and control. Che Xingxing, a doctor from



Shanxi doctor He Guolin trains medics in Yaounde, Cameroon, in surgical techniques. XUE LIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Shanxi now working at a hospital in Mbal Mayo, Cameroon, was among the first to take action. Che said he is experienced in emergency rescue and familiar with the operation of ventilators and other equipment. "I've carefully studied the guidelines for COVID-19 treatment released by China and I'm confident that I can play a role in treating patients while protecting myself well," Che told Shanxi Daily, a newspaper based in Taiyuan, capital city of the province. Also fully prepared is He Guolin, a Shanxi doctor now stationed in Yaounde, capital city of Cameroon. "I'm serving as an instructor, teaching local medics how to prevent the disease from spreading among medical staffers," He said. In Shanxi, the provincial commis-

sion of health has established a specialist team to provide training and instruction to Shanxi's medics in the three African countries via online platforms. "To date, we have attended 10 online training sessions organized by the State and Shanxi's health authorities, especially in the areas of contagion prevention, psychology and emergency response," An Buyue, head of the Shanxi medical team in Cameroon, told Shanxi Daily. While enhancing cooperation and communication with local medics in treating Cameroon's patients, the Shanxi medical team also paid special attention to disease prevention and control among Chinese expatriates in the country, according to Che. The doctor said his team members have frequently visited Chinese diplomatic missions and Chinese

businesses in the country to offer supplies and suggestions for epidemic prevention. The team is working with local medical institutions, helping them set up complete systems and procedures for disease control and treatment. Practices such as testing, making space for patients to be checked and proper use of face masks, goggles and protective clothing are now standard in hospitals in Yaounde, thanks to the guidelines offered by the Shanxi medical team, according to Che. Che and his colleagues are members of the 20th medical assistance team from Shanxi to work in Cameroon. According to the Shanxi Commission of Health, this year is the 45th anniversary of Shanxi's medical assistance in African countries. Since the mid-1970s, the province has dispatched 58 teams and 1,254 medical workers to Cameroon, Togo and Djibouti. During the past four decades, medics from Shanxi have made special contribution in areas such as ophthalmology, gynecology, obstetrics and contagious disease control. A total of 51 medics from Shanxi are currently working in Africa, including 25 in Cameroon, 20 in Togo and six in Djibouti. According to the Shanxi Commission of Health, no infection cases of COVID-19 and other diseases have been reported among the 51 members. Xue Lin and Guo Yanjie contributed to this story.



Jingle Mayor Wang Xin (center) introduces quinoa products in a livestream on April 17. ZHANG GUOQING / FOR CHINA DAILY

Mayor entertains more than 900,000 viewers in bid to tackle poverty

By YUAN SHENGGAO

In the wake of the novel coronavirus outbreak, sales of local produce have become a pressing issue for many local governments in China. This is no exception in Jingle, a county in northwestern Shanxi province. On April 17, a middle-aged man appeared in a courtyard in Wangruizhuang village. He was trying to help sell local grains and handicrafts by livestreaming on the Pinduoduo e-commerce platform. The man was Wang Xin, mayor of the county. Jingle is renowned for coarse cereals such as corn, quinoa and millet, as well as handicrafts like paper-cutting. Wang first made some paper-cuts by himself, telling his audience that the handicraft is a state-level intangible cultural asset. After that he showed some corns, saying that readily made corn products can be eaten raw or cooked because they are produced and processed in an environmentally-friendly and safe manner. After this he showed the local millet and quinoa products. "Our yellow millet was a gift to royal families in history due to its prime quality. And quinoa is good for diabetes and hypertension patients," Wang added. The mayor then told netizens how to cook millet in a way to keep it at its most nutritious state. "Don't put the millet in the cooker when the water is still cool. Put it in when the water is about to boil," Wang said. He added that only by cooking it this way can the nutrition and best taste of millet be kept. In addition to Mayor Wang's presentation, a local folk song and dance troupe joined in the livestream. By 10 pm, the livestreaming

Thanks to the netizens, their orders are a great contribution to our poverty-relieving efforts."

Wang Xin, mayor of Jingle county

45,000 kilograms of corn, millet and quinoa products were ordered by clients at the livestreaming event on April 17

event had attracted more than 930,000 viewers. More than 45,000 kilograms of corn, millet and quinoa, at a total value of 400,000 yuan (\$56,440), had been ordered. Wang said the livestream was targeted at helping poverty reduction in the county. "We required the online dealers to prioritize lower-income households when they purchase grains and other produce," Wang said. "Thanks to the netizens, their orders are a great contribution to our poverty-relieving efforts," Wang added. In Jingle, the planting area of coarse cereals including corn, millet and quinoa is 2,000 hectares at present. It accounts for more than 67 percent of the county's total grain-planting area, according to the county government. Wang said that by launching this livestreaming event, he hopes more of Jingle's farm produce can be sold via various e-commerce platforms. Guo Yanjie contributed to this story.

Village hopes beautiful flowers can blossom into booming tea industry

By YUAN SHENGGAO

When the forsythia flowers bloom in March and April, Caozhuanggou village in Pingshun county, Shanxi, becomes a destination for many sightseeing tourists. The small flowers are not eye-catching when there are one or two trees on the roadside. However, they make a spectacle when vast slopes are covered by such yellow blossoms. For Liu Junping, Party secretary of the village, forsythia is an even bigger industry than mere sightseeing. He said forsythia has been a valuable medical herb for hundreds of years as its seeds, roots, stems, petals and leaves can be used to produce traditional Chinese medicines. Liu has been engaged in the collection, planting and sales of the herb for eight years. "People usually collect the herb in the wilderness," Liu said. However, the village chief decided to establish an artificial plantation this year as the authorities of Shanxi announced it would develop the herbal tea



From left: Pickers harvest forsythia leaves and petals at a plantation in Zezhou county, Jinzhong city. LIU TONG / FOR CHINA DAILY Workers at a tea company in Zezhou county separate forsythia leaves and petals for the production of different herbal teas. LIU TONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

industry as one of its local economic pillars. Lou Yangsheng, Party secretary of the province, and Shanxi Governor Lin Wu attended a promotional fair for local herbal teas in Taiyuan on March 20. They urged for the herbal tea industry to be developed

into one of the pillars of the rural economy in Shanxi to boost growth and help farmers increase their incomes. Lou, who calls himself a "branding envoy" for Shanxi's herbal teas, said he is confident of the market potential of the tea



products of Shanxi because they have a long history and many health benefits. Herbal teas developed from ingredients like forsythia can help clear away heat and toxic substances. They are also good for sleep and digestion, said Wang Cheng,

vice-governor of Shanxi who was also at the promotional fair. Encouraged by this new industrial trend, Liu Junping in Caozhuanggou developed a two-hectare forsythia farm this year. "I want to establish a base for forsythia production," Liu said. He

added that his ambition is to develop a longer industrial chain for herbal tea production, tea culture and sightseeing. Yang Hongping, a local agronomist and deputy chief of the county's committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultation Conference, is helping Liu realize his dreams. Yang's jobs include teaching Liu all the skills and knowledge for domesticating and growing such wild herbs. Yang said he is optimistic about the market potential of the forsythia industry. "The prices of forsythia products have kept growing steadily in recent years," Yang said. He added that the small investment and low costs of operation as well as the preferential policies from the government will bring more benefits to growers. Liu said his small farm is only of a trial nature this year. "Once the operation is successful, more farmers will be engaged in the industry," he said. Wen Yuan and Niu Hui contributed to this story.