

## CHINA

# Employment situation stable for college graduates this year

Pandemic caused students to face tough challenges

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China's new college graduates have enjoyed stable employment this year thanks to joint efforts by central and local governments, universities and enterprises, a senior education official said on Monday.

The country had a record 8.74 million graduates this year, 400,000 more than last year, according to the Ministry of Education.

They have been faced with "unprecedented challenges" due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors, and it has been "extremely difficult" to ensure stable employment, said Wang Hui, director of the ministry's department of college student affairs.

More than 2.8 million students have found jobs in the public sector, including in government institutions, State-owned enterprises, public schools, grassroots service and rural areas, up from 2.1 million last year, he said at a news conference.

To ease the employment pressure on new graduates, the ministry plans to increase the enrollment of master's degree students by 189,000, while the country's bachelor's degree programs strive to admit an additional 322,000 junior college students.

More than 400,000 fresh college graduates are expected to work as teachers at kindergartens and primary and secondary schools this year, according to a notice issued by six departments in May.

The ministry launched a 24-hour online campus recruitment service in late February to help graduates



People wait in line at a job fair in Beijing earlier this month for students who are about to graduate next year. HAO YI / FOR CHINA DAILY

find jobs amid the epidemic, Wang said.

The free service is available on the ministry's campus recruitment portal and nine leading job-hunting websites in China, all of which have designated special webpages for the project, he said.

Around 15.2 million job postings have been published on the portal, with 6.69 million graduates registering at the site and submitting resumes 37.3 million times, he added.

Huang Xiongbiao, deputy director of the education department of the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, said 222,800 university graduates had found jobs by Sept 1,

accounting for 81.3 percent of university graduates in the region.

Guangxi has offered subsidies for small and micro-sized enterprises that have hired new graduates as well as those who have finished their studies within the last two years, he said.

The number of students pursuing higher degrees has increased to 43,000 this year, and the number of students joining the military is up 20 percent from last year, he added.

Yu Hanyu, student counselor at Hunan University in Changsha, said many of her students have suffered anxiety while looking for jobs due to the epidemic.

By Feb, 31 of them had not found

work. She set up records on the employment demands of all her students, she said.

"I talk with them every day through video chats or phone calls to encourage them not to give up and attend more online job fairs," she said.

She also opened an account at video-sharing website Bilibili, which offers guidance for students looking for jobs, Yu said, adding that the website's five livestreaming career guidance courses have been viewed more than 20,000 times.

All but one of her students has found jobs, and that one is waiting to hear about a position with the local government, she said.

## POVERTY ALLEVIATION | YARKANT COUNTY

# Passion for marigolds plants roots of success

By CAO YIN in Yarkant, Xinjiang  
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Recalling the old days when he went everywhere to find work but earned little money, Alimjan Arken's eyes filled with tears.

"My past life was so unstable that I didn't know where I would be the next day," said the 24-year-old Uygur man in Yarkant county, in southern Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region's Kashgar prefecture.

Before June 2016, Alimjan did many part-time jobs, including growing crops, picking cotton and guarding a reservoir.

The most difficult time, Alimjan said, was in 2015, when he only had 50 yuan (\$7.30) in his pocket after failing to find a job in Korla, a city in Xinjiang. He clearly remembered spending 48 yuan to buy a train ticket from Korla to Kuqa, another city in Xinjiang's Aksu prefecture. He also recalled spending 1 yuan for a nang, the staple wheat bread of the autonomous region, and 1 yuan for a bottle of water.

"It was my darkest day," he said. "Leaning on a sycamore tree, I was shedding tears while eating the nang. I felt life was miserable."

Then in 2016, Alimjan accidentally came to work for a Hebei-based company that cultivates, processes and promotes marigolds.

"I was deeply fascinated with the golden flower, and I couldn't stop lying on piles of marigolds that had just been picked by workers in the sun. At that moment, I felt I was the happiest man in the world," he said.

While enjoying the sunshine and smelling the flowers, he heard some workers talking about the profits from growing marigolds. He then got a job loading and carrying flowers.

Alimjan also learned flower planting techniques from the company, such as seeding, spraying and picking, "because my dream was to cultivate marigolds by myself," he said.

This year, his dream has come true. He contracted 0.67 hectare of marigolds with his savings from the job and picked the flowers for processing. He estimated he could earn about 30,000 yuan from it.

Shi Shuzhang, vice-president of the company, said matured marigolds can be animal food after being purified and extracted, adding they located the branch in Xinjiang because the region's abundant sunshine can cultivate high-quality flowers, meaning higher value.

Since 2012, when the branch was opened in Yarkant, about 80,000 local households have started growing marigolds, and many of the farmers have been lifted out of poverty through the cultivation, he said.

Nurali Mehmet was one of them. He came across the company's technicians when growing crops in 2015 and he followed them to learn techniques, even though he was unaware of the flower.

"I was not sure whether the cultivation was profitable, but I like trying new things," the 27-year-old said. "To minimize economic loss, I just grew 0.07 hectare of marigolds at the start. After seeing the profits were higher than for crops, I began planting more and more."

Nurali confirmed mastering the flower planting techniques was not easy, but "no pain, no gain," he said, adding his monthly earnings increased to 8,000 yuan from 3,000 yuan in 2015 after his efforts.

He showed great will to continue the cultivation and learn techniques in the company, "as the stable income and skills make me stronger," he added.

Alimjan agreed, saying the flower not only beautifies his life but also brings him a sense of security.

Besides marigolds, rose cultivation and processing by a company in Yutian county of Hotan, Xinjiang, are also changing lives of local residents and helping them alleviate poverty.

Tohutkhan Roz, for example, is planning to apply planting techniques he learned into his 0.73 hectare of fields, after he found high-quality flowers could bring more value. Tohutkhan, who is responsible for packing processed roses in the company, said he is confident about the cultivation.

Mao Weihua contributed to this story.

# Forum celebrates Confucius' birthday, philosophy

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A ceremony was held on Monday to commemorate the 2,517th birthday of Confucius in Qufu, Shandong province, the home province of the great Chinese thinker.

"The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic triggered us to be introspective about what people should do to respond to disasters and irresistible crises. We need to draw lessons from the wisdom of ancient civilizations," Kong Deli, a 77th generation descendant of Confucius, said at the ceremony.

The ceremony is a part of the 2020 China (Qufu) International Confucius Cultural Festival and the sixth Nishan Forum on World Civilizations, both of which ended in Nishan township of Qufu on Monday.

Scholars from 17 countries and regions, who attended the forum in person or via video channels, agreed that people around the world should respect differences and seek common benefits.

The current world needs to learn from the profound wisdom of ancient civilizations to eliminate misunderstanding among different countries and people and to tackle

problems and challenges in a bid to build a blueprint of mutual respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation, according to the common views released at the closing ceremony of the forum.

Chen Lai, a professor at Tsinghua University in Beijing, said ancient Chinese philosophers had proposed values for different civilizations.

"Respecting and learning from different civilizations is the basis of building a community with a shared future for mankind," he said.

More than 300 people joined the event, hailing from Beijing, Changsha in Hunan province,

Changchun in Jilin province, Wuwei in Gansu province, Quzhou in Zhejiang province and Dangjin in South Korea.

People around the world can log onto an online platform, where they can complete the 10 procedures of commemorating the sage, such as presenting flowers.

Confucius (551-479 BC), lived in the Spring and Autumn Period (770-476 BC). At a time when Plato and Aristotle were spreading philosophies on ethics in the Western world, Confucius was having a major impact on the social, political and philosophical structure of China.

## XIAOKANG@GRASSROOTS

# Preservation effort helps protect traditional houses

By PALDEN NYIMA  
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Sonam Tsering, 70, gives a thumbs-up to the washroom and shower in his new home, amenities that he didn't have before.

A traditional village protection project in Tsogo village in Tsogo town, Nyingchi city of the Tibet autonomous region, is contributing both to preserving culture and improving livelihoods.

Surrounded by snow-capped mountains and forests, Tsogo is located 10 kilometers away from the Baksum Co Lake, now one of the region's most famous tourist sites.

With an investment of more than 93 million yuan (\$13 million) by the Kongpo'gyada county in Nyingchi in 2018, a new resettlement was built beside the old village, and Sonam Tsering moved to the new area with 106 other households by the end of 2019.

At an average altitude of 3,500 meters and enriched with abundant natural landscape and unique Tibetan cultural resources, Tsogo was accredited as a historical cultural village in 2013, and as a traditional Chinese village by the Ministry of Housing and

Urban-Rural Development in 2015.

Thanks to the relocation project, all 63 traditional houses with a history of between 200 and 600 years are now under proper protection.

Tsogo literally refers to "head of the lake" in the Tibetan language, as the air in the village is so fresh and transparent that the snow-capped mountains can be clearly seen from every direction of the village.

Tenzin Dondrub, Party secretary of Tsogo township, said the local government will encourage the villagers to get involved in tourism businesses to generate income.

"The average area of the village's houses was increased from 146 to 228 square meters, equipped with a public plaza and drainage system," he said.

Tenzin Dondrub said the old houses were built hundreds of years ago, and most of them were vulnerable to strong wind and continuous rains, posing threats to lives and property. Moving out of such houses has helped villagers avoid the risk of damaging the architecture, he said.

To enhance the protection of the traditional village, a cultural relics protection team was set up in the



village in early 2019. Each team member is responsible for the protection of three old houses.

Norbu Tsering, a village official, said he was happy about the relocation plan and the measures to protect the traditional cottages.

"The old houses reflect the traditional architectural culture of Tibetan residents, so it's of great value in history studies and traditional cultural exhibition," he said.

By the end of 2018, Tibet had 35 traditional villages enriched with geographical and traditional elements that reflect a particular historical and cultural background as a part of the region's intangible cultural resources.

"With the traditional village and other traditional elements such as songs and dances, tourists can enjoy both the beautiful, heavenly landscape and the local cultures," Norbu Tsering said.

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# TikTok: Update ban would degrade service

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The popular short-video service requested an injunction Wednesday to temporarily block the US Commerce Department's order to ban the app. The order, issued Sept 18, barred Apple and Google's app stores from providing services for the app's downloads and updates starting Sept 20. A day later, the department delayed the ban to give the company an additional week to finalize a deal.

On Thursday, the judge ordered the Trump administration to either postpone its ban or respond to the company's request.

Late on Friday, the Justice Department filed its opposition to TikTok's request, saying the injunction would "infringe on the President's authority to block business-to-business economic transactions with a foreign entity in the midst of a declared national-security emergency."

During Sunday's hearing, TikTok's lawyer described the ban as "unprecedented" and "irrational" and argued that it doesn't make sense to impose the ban when there are negotiations underway.

The Commerce Department also ordered a separate set of technical restrictions on TikTok starting

Nov 12, including halting data hosting within the US and content delivery services.

## 'Political considerations'

TikTok argues the Trump administration's restrictions "were not motivated by a genuine national security concern, but rather by political considerations relating to the upcoming general election."

"It is very hard to separate out these particular actions against TikTok and WeChat from the fact that they are taking place in the context of President Trump's trade war with China, as well as the president's history of anti-Chinese rhetoric and xenophobia," said Hina Shamsi, director of the National Security Project at the American Civil Liberties Union, during a webinar on Thursday.

She argued that the government's concerns over national security are "to say the very least, overstated" when one looks at the facts. The government hasn't provided specific and direct evidence of harm that justifies such a pervasive ban, she said.

Under the terms of the TikTok ban, existing users could still post videos, but no new downloads or updates of the app would be allowed, which could cause outages or glitches.

In separate litigation, three TikTok content creators requested a block on the app's ban. The plaintiffs said they "earn a livelihood from the content they post on TikTok" and that the platform's For You page is unique among social media platforms, because its algorithm allows "little-known creators to show their content to a large audience."

A judge in Pennsylvania rejected the request Saturday, saying that the three had failed to prove they would suffer "immediate, irreparable harm" if new downloads are barred, since the app would remain operational for current subscribers.

Another federal judge, in San Francisco, blocked a similar ban from taking effect on the social media app WeChat. The judge cited "serious questions" about whether the WeChat ban infringed on users' First Amendment rights.

The government has filed a motion in federal court to stay the WeChat ban preliminary injunction pending appeal. The plaintiffs will "strongly oppose" the government's motion, according to the plaintiff's lead lawyer.

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Workers process harvested marigold flowers at a company in Yarkant, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, this month.

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