# CHINA

## Early detection vital to tackling cancer burden

By **WANG XIAOYU**
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new cancer cases occurred in China in 2024 while 2.58 million people died of cancer, according to the survey led by the National Cancer Center.

China faces a rising cancer burden, with lung, female breast, thyroid, colorectal and liver cancers ranking among the most common types in 2024, according to the latest national cancer survey.

An estimated 5.15 million new cancer cases and 2.58 million cancer deaths occurred in China in 2024, according to the survey led by the National Cancer Center and recently published in the Chinese Journal of Oncology.

"Compared with data from previous years, the burden of malignant cancer among the Chinese population continues to show a worsening trend," the study said, noting that population aging is a significant contributing factor.

Despite the rising burden, China's age-adjusted cancer mortality rate has declined by an average of 1.3 percent annually, the study found.

"Through the control of risk factors, the implementation of screening, early diagnosis and treatment, and standardized treatment, China has achieved significant outcomes in cancer prevention and control, but overall efforts still face a long and challenging road ahead," it said.

Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer cases and deaths both worldwide and in China, particularly among people aged 60 and above, the study said.

Gastrointestinal cancers, including colorectal, liver and stomach cancers, remain a major health threat. Incidence rates begin rising rapidly after age 40, while mortality rates start increasing after age 50.

Thyroid cancer, meanwhile, is concentrated largely among younger people, ranking as the most common cancer among those aged 20 to 39.

"This pattern is consistent with the epidemiological trends observed in many countries worldwide and may be closely related to the widespread adoption of neck radiological imaging surveillance techniques in clinical practice and routine health examinations," the study said.

To avoid overdiagnosis, thyroid cancer screening is recommended only for high-risk individuals rather than the general population, it added.

The study also highlighted the growing number of younger women diagnosed with breast cancer. The disease is the leading cause of cancer deaths among women aged 20 to 39 and the second leading cause of cancer deaths among those aged 40 to 59.

The findings underscore the need for targeted screening and early diagnosis and treatment strategies tailored to high-risk groups, the study said.

Han Baohui, a chief physician at Shanghai Chest Hospital, said at a news conference that people at high risk of lung cancer include those with a long history of smoking or who live with heavy smokers, patients with lung diseases, workers exposed to toxic substances such as asbestos and people with a family history of malignant tumors.

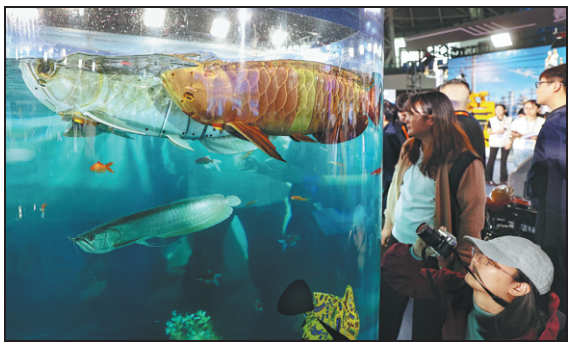
"These individuals are recommended to undergo annual low-dose spiral CT screening after reaching 50 years of age," he said.

Wu Aiwen of Beijing Cancer Hospital said people are advised to undergo their first gastroscopy at age 45, particularly those with risk factors such as smoking and alcohol consumption. A first colonoscopy is recommended at age 40.

Wei Wenqiang, a researcher at the National Cancer Center, said the five-year survival rate for some cancers detected at an early stage, including breast, colorectal, esophageal and gastric cancers, can exceed 90 percent.

"Many early-stage tumors show no symptoms, so it is essential to adhere to regular, standardized screening," he said.

## Robotic fish



Biomimetic robotic fish attract visitors at an exhibition of robotics applications at Southeast University's Jiulonghu Campus in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, on Tuesday. The exhibition features more than 100 robots in various designs developed by over 50 technology companies from across China.
YANG BO / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

## Rocket launch at sea

Galactic Energy's Ceres 1 carrier rocket lifts off from a sea-based platform off the coast of Rizhao, Shandong province, on Wednesday, carrying a large remote-sensing satellite into low-Earth orbit at an altitude of about 541 kilometers. CAI JIAHONG / YANGCHENG EVENING NEWS

# SPC issues judicial accountability order

### Regulation will hold court personnel responsible for procedural violations

By **CAO YIN**
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China's top court issued a 47-article regulation on Wednesday holding court personnel accountable for procedural violations in case handling, while safeguarding their lawful rights and interests.

The regulation issued by the Supreme People's Court requires accountability for judicial personnel who fail to file cases that meet legal requirements, handle cases in violation of legal procedures, or conceal, forge, alter or destroy evidence and case materials.

Sun Zhenping, head of the Political Department of the SPC, stressed the importance of fulfilling judicial duties and strengthening oversight of court personnel to uphold justice nationwide.

"Whether it involves case filing, trials, judgment enforcement, or trial supervision and management, any intentional violation of duties or gross negligence leading to serious consequences will result in accountability," he said.

The regulation, which took immediate effect, also stipulates that judicial personnel are subject to lifelong accountability for their conduct in handling cases, meaning responsibility can extend to those who have retired, been transferred, resigned or been dismissed, Sun said. He added that implementing the regulation is crucial to promoting judicial fairness and strengthening public trust in the judiciary.

A case cited by the SPC involved a former judge surnamed Liu, who delayed proceedings and submitted falsified documents claiming to have completed 24 cases between 2017 and 2024. Liu also failed to deliver rulings promptly in 70 cases. In 2025, Liu was removed from the judicial team and subjected to disciplinary punishment by the Communist Party of China.

While emphasizing the need for judicial personnel to conduct themselves properly, Liao Xiangyang, head of the Discipline and Supervision Department of the SPC, said they should not be held accountable for circumstances beyond their control.

"Judicial workers performing their duties should not face accountability for wrongful cases if their rulings are later overturned or corrected," he said. This includes cases in which factual changes result from a litigant's actions, new evidence emerges, or laws or policies are revised.

The regulation also requires courts to work with relevant authorities to promptly address and rectify reputational damage suffered by judges as a result of false reports, malicious accusations or defamation, and to hold those responsible accountable.

In another case cited by the SPC, a litigant surnamed Chen, dissatisfied with a court ruling, conspired with his nephew Li in December 2023 to deceive a judge surnamed Yan. Although Yan rejected their advances, Chen and Li transferred 30,000 yuan ($4,492) to the judge, who immediately returned the money.

Chen and Li then falsely accused Yan of accepting bribes and filed false reports with local authorities. Chen also posted defamatory content about Yan online. Videos related to the allegations received more than 200,000 views, seriously disrupting the judge's work and personal life. In 2025, Chen and Li were criminally charged with making false accusations and framing the judge.

Ye Jian, deputy head of the Political Department of the SPC, said the court would work with other authorities to ensure judges receive institutional support and a safe working environment, enabling them to focus on handling cases.

"We will also step up efforts to enhance public awareness of the importance of respecting court rulings, upholding judicial authority and protecting judges' lawful rights and interests," he added.

# China to pilot thesis-free post-graduate degrees in five disciplines

By **ZOU SHUO**
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China will pilot the use of practical achievements as an alternative to dissertations for professional postgraduate degrees in translation, agriculture, clinical medicine, accounting and art, according to a policy issued on Monday by the Office of the State Council Academic Degrees Committee.

The move responds to the country's growing demand for high-level applied talent, which has driven the steady expansion of professional degree programs, a senior official from the office said. Traditional thesis-based assessment has been seen as too narrow to fully reflect professional degree students' practical innovation and contributions, the official said.

The legal foundation for the reform was laid in April 2024, when the Academic Degrees Law for the first time explicitly allowed graduate students to apply for degrees through either a thesis defense or a defense of practical achievements.

In September 2024, basic requirements for engineering doctoral candidates to obtain professional degrees through either route were released on a trial basis, with positive results.

Since the trial began, more than 140 students in pilot programs for specialized engineering master's and doctoral degrees have applied for degrees based on practical achievements, providing new cases and replicable experience for the reform, according to the official.

The latest reform remains at the trial and exploratory stage and will be rolled out in batches, the policy document said.

For the five newly added disciplines, professional degree education steering committees will formulate basic requirements for master's and doctoral programs, specifying the sources, forms, content structure, writing standards and evaluation criteria for different types of practical achievements.

Degree-granting institutions will use these requirements to develop their own implementation rules and comprehensive guidelines covering topic selection and rationale, supervision throughout the research process and evaluation, the document said.

> "Under the proposed approach, the practical achievement for translation students will take the form of a translation practice report."
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> **Hu Dan,** deputy director of the Australian Studies Center at Beijing Foreign Studies University

Practical achievements must be completed independently by students under the guidance of their supervisors, or students must have undertaken the core work as principal contributors.

Institutions will also revise rules on degree conferral, supervisor selection and intellectual property rights to ensure quality control throughout the process, according to the policy.

The reform builds on earlier pilot programs that demonstrated how practical achievements can serve as an alternative to traditional dissertations.

At China University of Petroleum (Beijing), master's student Zhang Baichuan defended a practical achievement in May 2025: a drilling fluid additive developed during nearly two years of research conducted in collaboration with a company.

A panel that included three industry experts unanimously recommended awarding him an engineering master's degree, giving his work an "excellent" rating.

At Shandong University, Wang Qian became the university's first student to earn a master's degree through a practical achievement last year.

During an internship at Goertek Inc, a virtual reality equipment manufacturer, Wang developed an optical lens bonding process and submitted a 45,000-word research report along with a design video.

For translation programs, the shift addresses a long-standing tension between academic requirements and professional training.

Hu Dan, deputy director of the Australian Studies Centre at Beijing Foreign Studies University, said requiring professional master's students to situate their work within a theoretical framework "not only departs from the original purpose of professional degree programs but also disconnects from students' curricula and employment outcomes".

"Under the proposed approach, the practical achievement for translation students will take the form of a translation practice report," she said. Students generally select around 30,000 words of English source material, translate it, and then document and analyze the difficulties they encountered, along with the strategies and methods they used to address them, Hu added.

Although the report includes discussion of translation strategies, students will not be required to write a thesis-style paper based on a purely academic theoretical perspective or framework, she said.

# Nation to strengthen emergency response, prevention

By **CHENG SI**
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China has made significant progress in emergency management in recent years, and more resources will be allocated to the sector over the next four years to strengthen the country's ability to prevent and respond to emergencies and help the public better protect themselves from risks, senior officials said on Wednesday.

Song Yuanming, vice-minister of emergency management, acknowledged the progress while noting that challenges remain in workplace safety and natural disaster prevention.

"Global warming and El Nino, a natural climate phenomenon, have increased the frequency of typhoons, torrential rains, floods and mudslides, posing new challenges to our work," Song said at a news conference in Beijing. "The 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30) is a key period for improving the emergency management system."

According to the ministry, China will shift toward a more prevention-oriented approach to emergency management by strengthening safety training for local government officials, business operators and workers, while improving production facilities and manufacturing processes.

The ministry will also invest more resources in strengthening the capabilities of rescue personnel and developing intelligent equipment, including drones and robots, to handle increasingly challenging missions in high-altitude areas, deep-sea environments and other extreme conditions where internet access or electricity may be unavailable.

"We will improve disaster prevention and management capabilities at the grassroots level during the 15th Five-Year Plan period," Song said. He added that the disaster relief mechanism would be optimized and the distribution of emergency supply warehouses improved to ensure that people affected by disasters receive timely assistance within eight hours.

Earthquake and fire prevention were also highlighted at the news conference.

Zhang Qin, deputy director of the China Earthquake Administration, said efforts would be made to improve earthquake early warning capabilities through artificial intelligence-assisted analysis. China also plans to establish State-level laboratories to conduct in-depth research into earthquake generation, seismic patterns and the mechanisms through which earthquakes cause disasters.

The country will organize public education programs on earthquake preparedness and encourage content creators to incorporate relevant knowledge into literary works, films and television productions, Zhang said.

A more intelligent and modern earthquake monitoring and early warning system will also be developed, leveraging advanced technologies to extend coverage and deliver alerts through mobile phones, television, radio broadcasts and loudspeakers.

Zhang said efforts would also be made to ensure that information disclosure channels comply with relevant regulations.

Song Shuxin, deputy head of the National Fire and Rescue Administration, said China would step up efforts to crack down on illegal activities that could cause fires and use advanced technologies, including AI and big data, to strengthen fire monitoring and early warning capabilities.

He also emphasized the importance of equipping the public with practical fire prevention and response skills.

"Education should not be limited to slogans but should involve practical training, such as fire evacuation drills and self-rescue techniques," he said.