

# CHINA



People dressed in Miao ethnic costumes cheer as a high-speed train runs through Xingwen county in Yibin, Sichuan province, on Monday. HE HAIYANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

## High-speed railway further cuts time between Guiyang, Chengdu

By HUANG ZHILING in Chengdu and YANG JUN in Guiyang

Ji Fang is a regular traveler from Guiyang, Guizhou province, to Chengdu, Sichuan province.

The middle-aged Sichuan native works in Guiyang from Monday to Friday. Calling it a day on Friday, she takes a train heading for Chengdu where her home is. On Sunday, she arrives in Guiyang by train.

"It usually takes four hours to reach Chengdu from Guiyang by train and vice versa," said Ji, an office worker.

On Monday morning, the Yibin-Guiyang section of the Chengdu-Guiyang High-Speed Railway started operation, marking the opening of the entire railway. Passengers on the railway can spend two hours and 58 minutes reaching Guiyang from Chengdu and vice versa.

"It is nice — a new high-speed railway from Chengdu to Guiyang has cut the travel time by over one hour," Ji said.

The railway starts in Chengdu, passes Meishan, Leshan and Yibin cities in Sichuan, and runs through Weixin and Zhenxiang counties in Zhaotong city in Yunnan province and Bijie city in Guizhou before reaching Guiyang.

With a length of 648 kilometers,



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Length of the Chengdu-Guiyang High-Speed Railway, which has a top speed of 250 kilometers per hour

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"The Chengdu-Leshan section of the railway started operation at the end of 2014, and the Leshan-Yibin section started in June this year," said Zheng Weitai, an information

officer with China Railway Chengdu Group Co. "The newly-opened Yibin-Guiyang section is 372 kilometers long, and the initial operating speed is 250 km/h."

The Chengdu-Guiyang High-Speed Railway connects other high-speed railways, including the Chengdu-Xi'an and Chengdu-Chongqing railways.

"It creates a fast passenger transport channel from Sichuan, Chongqing and Guizhou to the Pearl River Delta and Yangtze River Delta and other developed coastal areas," Zheng said. "It will speed up the development of tourism and mineral resources along the line, which is of great significance to poverty alleviation efforts."

The railway has two stops in Dafang and Qianxi counties in Bijie city in Guizhou. Dafang and Qianxi are impoverished State-level counties.

Southwest China, which includes Sichuan, Yunnan and Guizhou provinces and Chongqing, abounds in world-class tourism resources.

Sichuan alone boasts sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List such as Jiuzhaigou, Mount Emei, Leshan Grand Buddha, Dujiangyan, Mount Qingcheng and the giant panda habitat.

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## Directive targets sexual misconduct on campus

### Primary, middle school instructors who accept gifts also face added punishment

By ZOU SHUO  
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Teachers who sexually harass students will pay a heavy price and education authorities will continue to expose their misconduct and punish them according to relevant regulations, the Ministry of Education said on Monday after teachers at two top universities were fired over sexual misconduct.

Ren Youqun, director of the ministry's Department of Teacher Education, said that the ministry has zero tolerance for teachers sexually harassing students and it will intensify its efforts to hold violators accountable.

Teachers should not engage in inappropriate relationships with students, and they should not molest or sexually harass students under any circumstances, he said.

University teachers who sexually harass students or commit academic misconduct will be removed from teaching positions and have their teaching credentials revoked, according to a new guideline on Monday.

Primary and middle school teachers who take gifts and money from students and parents will face

similar punishment, said the guideline, issued by the ministry and six other departments.

Teaching ethics is the most important criterion in teacher evaluations, and serious offenders will be banned from teaching for life, the guideline said.

All students pursuing education degrees should take teaching ethics courses, and all teachers should receive ethics training every year, it said.

An online platform will be built to publicize teachers who have violated teaching ethics, and schools should publish hotlines and email accounts to gather reports of misconduct, it added.

Peking University recently fired an associate professor for professional misconduct after online posts alleged that he was having inappropriate relationships with various women at the same time, some of whom were students.

The university also revoked the teaching credentials and academic title of Feng Renjie, 36, after an investigation found that he "seriously violated professional ethics," it said in a Sina Weibo post on Wednesday.

In another case, Qian Fengsheng, 55, an associate professor at

Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, was fired after one of his students alleged that he locked her in his car and sexually assaulted her.

Qian's teaching credentials and academic titles will also be revoked, the university said in a Weibo post on Dec 9 after it conducted an investigation into the incident.

The student wrote a post on WeChat that contained recordings of her crying in the car and asking why Qian wanted to assault her. She also posted harassing text messages that he had sent her before and after the incident.

Li Meijin, a professor in criminal psychology at Chinese People's Public Security University, said campus sexual harassment has long been a hidden problem in China as most students tend to keep things to themselves, fearing retaliation from teachers or being stigmatized.

"I'm glad to see more students reporting incidents of being sexually assaulted and they have learned to protect themselves by collecting evidence of the incidents," Li said.

Schools and education authorities should deal with these complaints seriously and truly show no tolerance for teachers who engage in sexual misconduct, and law enforcement authorities should also deal with the cases and hold the teachers accountable, she added.

### Guidelines call for lighter teacher workload

China has issued a guideline to reduce the workload of primary and middle school teachers so they will have more time to focus on teaching.

Existing supervision, inspection, appraisal, assessment and unnecessary educational activities for primary and middle school teachers should be reduced by at least half, said the guideline, which was issued by the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and

the General Office of the State Council.

Redundant activities should be consolidated and unnecessary ones should be canceled, the guideline said.

Authorities at all levels should not assign irrelevant tasks, such as holding celebrations or attracting investment, to primary and middle school teachers, according to the guideline.

The guideline asks relevant author-

ities to simplify data reporting, prevent repeated reports, improve the management of databases with advanced technologies including artificial intelligence and share data among departments.

Education authorities should improve the quality of training for teachers to improve their professional skills, but irrelevant training should not be allowed, it added.

ZOU SHUO

## University expels 92 foreign students

By ZHANG YANGFEI  
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Wuhan University in Hubei province recently expelled 92 overseas students for low grades or breaking school rules.

The students, who were pursuing bachelor's and master's degrees, were expelled in late November. A small number of them gave up their studies voluntarily, but the majority of them were expelled because of poor academic performance and violation of school regulations, said Hu Yanchu, dean of the university's School of International Education.

Hu added that the faculty had warned these students many times and arrived at the decision to expel them after careful consideration.

The university has expelled groups of international students over the past few years. According to Hu, 184 students were expelled in 2017, 181 in 2018 and this year so far the university has already expelled 181, including the 92.

The university currently has more than 2,000 international students. Many of the expelled failed to pay tuition, were frequently absent from classes or skipped mandatory school activities without permission.

Hu said it was also an active move to respond to the Ministry of Education's call for improving the quality of international education.

China has become Asia's largest and the world's third-largest destination for students looking to study abroad, with about 492,000 overseas students, according to the Ministry of Education.

However, the ministry noted that some universities tended to focus too much on the quantity of international students while overlooking quality. To improve overall education quality, the ministry released a document in 2018 that set unified standards to regulate the education and examination systems of international students.

In addition, in a notice issued earlier this year, the ministry called for more equal treatment and similar management standards for international and Chinese students, adding that universities and academic institutions should teach Chinese laws and regulations, school rules and safety information to foreign students throughout their education.

The ministry further stated that international students who violate the rules should be dealt with seriously, and those who are suspected of breaking the law should go through legal procedures.

Following the notice, Fudan University in October expelled 12 graduate students — the majority of them foreigners — and the list of expelled undergraduate students

announced by Renmin University of China that same month also included several foreigners.

According to Changjiang Daily, one of the students expelled by Hubei University this year was a woman from Ukraine who called herself Natalia Qiao Liya, a PhD student of modern Chinese literature who became famous after going on one of China's most popular matchmaking reality shows *If You Are The One* in 2014.

Zhang Haimou, dean of the university's international college, told the newspaper that she had been too busy appearing on television, which severely affected her studies. As a result, she could not successfully deliver a doctoral dissertation after many years in the PhD program.

The proportion of international students is an important indicator for evaluating world-class universities, but the quality of enrollment is equally important, said Xiong Bingqi, deputy director of the 21st Century Education Research Institute.

Xiong said expelling unqualified international students should become routine because "strict adherence to education quality can truly improve the international competitiveness of China's higher education system".

Zhou Lihua contributed to this story.

## Macao satellites to be launched in 2021

By ZHAO LEI  
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The first satellites from the Macao Special Administrative Region will be launched into space in 2021 to carry out scientific missions, according to the China National Space Administration.

The administration said in a statement on Sunday that the Macao Science 1A and 1B are being designed at the State Key Laboratory of Lunar and Planetary Sciences at the Macau University of Science and Technology.

According to the university, the satellites will work in a near-equatorial orbit and are expected to monitor the geomagnetic field and space environment of the South Atlantic Anomaly area and help scientists obtain world-class data related to topics such as geomagnetic reversal, core-mantle interactions and the operational safety of spacecraft.

The program is supported by the Macao government, the central gov-

### 1,500 names

were submitted by over 1,100 participants in a naming contest for Macao's first satellites.

ernment's liaison office in the region and the space administration. Several domestic and foreign institutes including Northwestern Polytechnical University, Harvard University in the United States and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich are involved in the program, according to the Macao university.

Alexis Tam Chon-weng, secretary for social affairs and culture in Macao, said that the satellite program is an opportunity to foster the city's science and technology developments, and the SAR government will give it full support.

Tian Yulong, deputy head of the space administration, said the program will make use of Macao's

advantages in science and technology fields and will boost innovation endeavors in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

According to a media report, the State Key Laboratory of Lunar and Planetary Sciences proposed the satellite program to the space administration around October 2018 and soon received approval. The satellites' designs were completed and approved in February.

The project team held a naming contest in October in Macao in hopes of "enabling the general public to share in the delight of Macao's scientific development and helping raise the communities' awareness of Macao's scientific endeavors", the Macao university said in a statement.

About 1,500 names were submitted by over 1,100 participants.

In another development, the space administration announced on Sunday that its Macao Center for Space Exploration and Science has been established at the university.

## 'Trapped' voted word of 2019 across Taiwan Straits

TAIPEI — More than 12 million Chinese mainland and Taiwan netizens have picked the Chinese character "kun", meaning trapped, as the word of the year for 2019, expecting cross-Straits relations to break free from the Taiwan question trap next year.

The character won more than 1 million votes out of about 12 million in an online poll from Nov 29 to Dec 12, Taiwan-based Want Daily announced in Taipei last week. The poll was jointly hosted by organizations including

Want Daily, Fujian-based Sun News and online news website Sina.

"Kun" beat 35 other characters recommended by participants across the Taiwan Straits. The choice showed that people on both sides have a clear understanding of the difficulties currently facing cross-Straits relations, said Wang Cho-chung, president of China Times and Want Daily, at the announcing ceremony on Friday.

"Let us hope that next year, we will be able to bring cross-Straits relations

out of the trap and into a new beginning," he said.

"The more difficult the current situation becomes, the more necessary it is for us to stay on the right track," said Huang Yubin, president and editor-in-chief of Sun News, addressing the ceremony via video message. "I believe people chose the word 'trapped' not only to express their feelings about 2019 but also to express an aspiration to break out of the current situation."

The event has been held annually

since 2008. Last year's choice was the character "wang", or expectation.

The event reminded people across the Straits of the cultural roots they share, said Lin Gu-fang, chief of Taipei Lecture Hall, an institute promoting traditional Chinese culture, including calligraphy.

"As long as we all use Chinese characters, the essential bond across the Straits remains, and the proof that we have the same origin is there," Lin said.



The character "kun", meaning trapped, is voted word of 2019 across Taiwan Straits. JIN LIWANG / XINHUA

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