



INSPIRING THE DREAMS OF OUR FUTURE



Pretty as a picture



On World Hemophilia Day a volunteer paints the face of a child. More than 35,000 participated in a charity walk on April 15 in Beijing, to raise funds for children at 93 schools and those from disadvantaged families.

LI WENMING / FOR CHINA DAILY

China's threatened sturgeon swim on

Critically endangered, nationally protected fish being boosted by ongoing repopulation program

By ZHENG XIN

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Some 500 Chinese sturgeon were released on April 8 into the Yangtze River in Hubei province in central China, as part of the ongoing repopulation program to boost the critically endangered species' flagging numbers in the wild.

The sturgeon — belonging to a strictly protected species in China whose origins stretch back to the dinosaur era — were released by the Chinese Sturgeon Research Institute in the river along the city of Yichang, also the site of the world's biggest hydroelectric project, the Three Gorges Dam.

The fish were all raised by the institute, founded in 1982 by the China Three Gorges Corporation to study the artificial propagation of the species which was on the verge of extinction.

Experts said the sturgeon released this year, up to 110 centimeters long and weighing 5.5 kilograms, were released when they are three to six years old to maximize their viability in the wild.

Chinese sturgeon, nicknamed "aquatic pandas", are under strict protection in the mainland due to deteriorating environment and human activities. Ever since researchers with the institute succeeded in artificially inseminating and spawning Chinese sturgeon in 2009, numbers have been released into the river every year to save the species from extinction.

It's the 33rd year that the corporation has released sturgeon and five million of them have been released into the Yangtze River by the institute since 1984, said the corporation.

Gao Yong, deputy head of the Chinese



A Chinese sturgeon being released into the Yangtze River in March, 2016. XINHUA

Sturgeons Research Institute, said in a previous interview that the species should keep breeding naturally every year to maintain numbers and the group would fail to survive if they could not breed for several generations.

Overfishing and water pollution are other factors that challenge the species, said Gao.

Every spring less than 100 Chinese sturgeon swim upstream to spawn at the mouth of the Yangtze, which illustrates that the species is facing an extremely challenging situation.

The only Chinese sturgeon spawning site in the country has failed to detect any signs of the fish reproducing for three consecutive years, starting 2013.

The number of migratory sturgeon is less than 100 at present, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

Under the circumstances, to set free human-bred Chinese sturgeon plays a significant and complimentary role, said Jiang Wei, deputy head of the water ecological restoration office in the institute.

The institute has implanted sonar transceivers into 40 selected sturgeon to trace and monitor their movements.

Poverty alleviation gets a high-tech reboot

By MA SI and ZHENG YIRAN

Poverty alleviation measures have been updated with more big data technology and cloud computing systems in Guizhou province in southwestern China — to better target those in need.

The poverty alleviation cloud system, introduced in Guizhou on December 2015, aims to facilitate local government in managing information on low-income people in a more scientific and more dynamic manner.

Shandong-based Inspur Group Co Ltd, the server manufacturer, has been working on a big-data platform, to assist local poverty alleviation officials in aiding poverty-stricken families through innovative measures.

By following the data — such as educational background, occupation, as well as

income, and conducting related analyses — the local government is able to decide on what type of subsidies and assistance to help the less advantaged people and provide more precise and targeted support, said Wang Xiangcheng, a chief technologist at Inspur's big-data poverty alleviation department.

"The priority of poverty alleviation is to identify those in need," he said.

Zhou Xing, from the Poverty Alleviation and Development Office of Guizhou province, said the big data system could better locate targeted groups.

He said the platform follows visits to every interviewed family and conducted investigations into the collected data.

The big-data platform involves an evaluation system with up to 84 indicators. After analyzing the data, it displays distributions

to the poverty stricken families, their levels of poverty, and offers specific plans to those in need in Guizhou province.

As of last year, the platform was tracking 6.23 million impoverished residents in Guizhou, living in about 9,000 villages around the province.

Inspur hopes its technology can play a role in helping track the funding during the process. Thus, it could be useful in clarifying responsibilities, accurately monitoring and evaluating the use of poverty-relief funds.

This is part of the tech group's broader efforts to assist the country's efforts and goals in lifting up 70 million people out of poverty by 2020.

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