

# CHINA

## Govt calls on delivery companies to go green

Guideline from Post Bureau says sector should reuse more packaging materials

By **HOU LIQIANG**  
houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn

Concerns about the country's mounting trash problem prompted the State Post Bureau to publish a guideline for green development of the express delivery industry, aiming to reduce the generation of waste and to encourage recycling and green packaging.

China's booming express delivery industry used about 17.9 billion plastic bags, 8.6 billion cardboard boxes and 330 million rolls of adhesive tape in 2016, the bureau said.

That number is likely to have risen, given the number of deliveries in the country jumped from 31.35 billion in 2016 to more than 50 bil-

lion last year. This year it's expected to hit 60 billion.

Experts said making the industry green is necessary to curb pollution, because many of the materials currently used are not recyclable. But they also said the goal would be difficult to achieve without enhanced awareness of the importance of environmental protection among members of the public.

Express delivery enterprises should have containers to collect reusable packaging at their service outlets, according to the guideline, which was issued in December.

They should also avoid using single-use, woven plastic bags and increase the use of reusable bags and boxes. The big bags used in

**60 billion**

deliveries are expected in the country this year, compared with 31.35 billion in 2016 and more than 50 billion last year.

parcel transportation should be reused at least 20 times, it said.

About 3.2 billion such big woven bags were used in 2016.

The guideline also said green packaging materials, such as those printed with environmentally friendly, water-based ink should be given priority.

Disposal of waste remains a challenge for the express delivery industry, said Li Tianjiao, an expert on green action with Cainiao Network, Alibaba's logistics arm.

A green logistics report pub-

lished by the China Environmental Protection Foundation last year said paper packaging, which had a recycling rate of about 90 percent in 2017, is the most-recycled waste generated by the express delivery sector. However, many of the plastic products it uses must be incinerated — generating power — or disposed of in landfills.

The State Post Bureau said waste from the express delivery industry accounted for about 93 percent of the growth in domestic waste in big cities.

"Under the circumstances, it's imperative to promote green packaging," Li said.

He also noted the importance of developing and researching cost-efficient green models. Although Cainiao and its partners had been piloting the application of different green packaging solutions since

2017, the increased cost associated with lowering environmental impacts remained a challenge.

The guideline also called for the increased use of biodegradable plastic packaging, saying consumers should be offered the option of using green packaging for their deliveries.

Ba Ning, executive deputy director of the China Post Research Institute's testing center, said this would help to greatly reduce the environmental impact of plastic packaging used in express deliveries.

Under natural conditions, it takes about 200 years for the common plastic packaging currently used in China to degrade. But more than 90 percent of the materials in biodegradable plastic packaging could degrade in just six months under certain conditions.

With favorable humidity and

temperature, biodegradable plastic packaging could degrade into carbon dioxide and water within a year, Science and Technology Daily quoted Ba as saying.

However, Ba said, using biodegradable plastic bags could more than double the cost of plastic packaging, which would be a challenge to the development of the express delivery industry.

Increased environmental protection awareness among the public was needed to help address the cost challenge because consumers with such awareness would be willing to pay more for green delivery.

The cost of biodegradable plastic packaging could be 30 percent more than common plastic, Chen Shunfeng, general manager of a ZTO Express branch in Shandong province, was quoted as saying by China Economic Herald.

## Woman from US enjoys her 7th Spring Festival in China

**GUIYANG** — In the eyes of 26-year-old Amanda Raman from the United States, the Spring Festival celebration this year retained its essence — family reunions — even as it highlighted the drastic changes China has undergone.

It was her seventh Spring Festival in the country.

Six years ago, Raman was invited to celebrate in Xiaohewan village, in Anshun, Guizhou province, the hometown of her Chinese friend Chen Xuelian.

"I bought Chinese couplets and red lanterns and prepared red envelopes for the children before the trip based on what I knew about Spring Festival," she said.

In 2013, Raman entered Guizhou University to learn Chinese. Upon graduation this year, she decided to stay in China. She found a job as an English teacher in Kunming, in neighboring Yunnan province.

The morning she set out with Chen, she was astonished by the hectic crowds in the train station.

"It feels like every Chinese person is here," she recalled. "I was in complete shock and struggled through the crowd to the entrance."

However, she was deeply touched by what she saw when they arrived at Anshun West Railway Station.

"People returning home were hugging and talking to their families and friends with great excitement. At that moment, I came to understand why Chinese people travel great distances home for Spring Festival," she said.

On Lunar New Year's Eve, all members of Chen's family gathered from near and far and sat together around a stove. At the reunion dinner, they watched the holiday gala on TV and recounted their experiences as migrant workers in distant cities.

Although she understood only a little of what they were talking about, Raman could sense the strong connections in their joyful smiles and the festive atmosphere.

"A Chinese saying says that 'We don't go home just to celebrate Spring Festival; it is the homecom-

“High-speed trains are fast and cost less than the trains in my hometown.”

**Amanda Raman**, a 26-year-old US citizen living in China

ing that is the traditional celebration. I finally understand what it means now," she said.

For this year's Spring Festival, Raman paid another visit to Chen's hometown.

"We can take the high-speed train this year," Chen had told her.

Last year, a high-speed railway line connecting Guiyang and Anshun was put into operation. Technologies such as facial recognition and big data have also been applied to ensure safer and easier trips.

At Anshun West Railway Station, it takes a passenger three seconds to pass the ticket gate by scanning their ticket or ID card and looking into the facial recognition screen.

"It's a real miracle! High-speed trains are fast and cost less than the trains in my hometown," Raman said.

Now, it only takes half an hour for them to arrive at Chen's hometown. Six years ago, it took four.

When arriving at Chen's home, Raman found the village familiar but also different: It had become an attractive place for tourists.

Two-thirds of the households there now operate inns and agritourism resorts, while 90 percent of the local young migrant workers have returned to start their own businesses, pursuing their dream of living a better life.

"The travel rush is not only a marvel of transportation but also the epitome of the rapid development of China," Raman said. "But with the drastic developments, what remains the same is Chinese people's yearning for reunions with their families during Spring Festival."

XINHUA



A firefighter works on a mountain near Erhai Lake in Dali, Yunnan province, on Sunday. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## Firefighters extinguish mountain blaze in Yunnan

By **HOU LIQIANG** in Beijing and **LI YINGQING** in Kunming

More than 500 firefighters largely extinguished a blaze on a mountain near Erhai Lake in Yunnan province early on Sunday after an all-night battle, though some hot spots remain.

Many firefighters remain on standby, as high winds have fanned some smoldering areas into renewed flames. Helicopters have been mobilized to help control the fire because of the rugged terrain.

A preliminary investigation

blamed the blaze on a short circuit in high-voltage lines, the city government of Dali said in a news release on Sunday. The blaze started on top of the mountain in Haidong township at 1:25 pm on Saturday. No injuries have been reported.

The fire-control work was complicated by strong winds that switched direction, and it spread rapidly to three areas, according to a report in Spring City Evening News quoting Wang Yuqi, deputy head of Haidong.

Wang, who was among the first

group of people to arrive at the site on Saturday afternoon, said at least 50 residents from nearby villages participated in the firefighting work, which lasted until dawn.

Helicopters dispatched by local emergency management authorities played a major role in preventing the fire from spreading by fetching water from the lake, the Dali government said.

A helicopter was dispatched to the site about 10 minutes after the fire was reported around 1:30 pm. As of 6 pm on Saturday, the air-

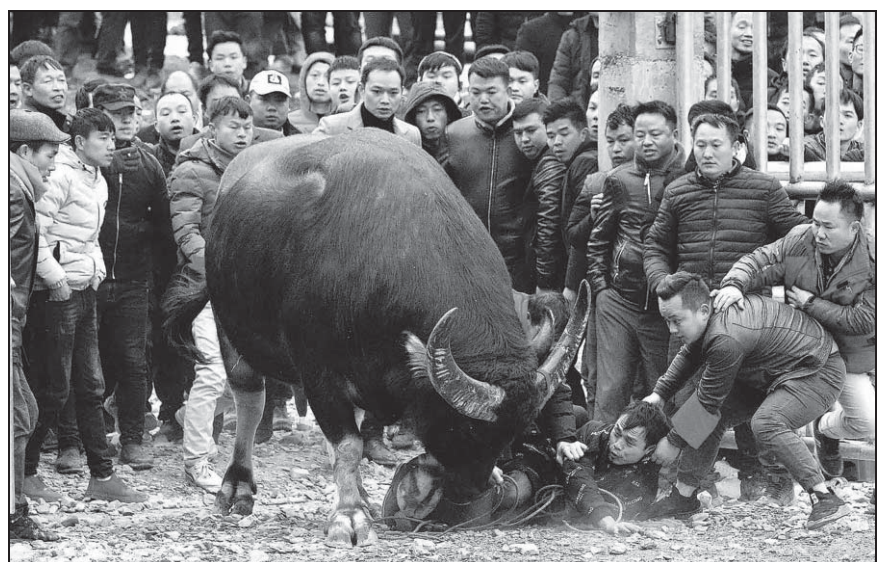
craft had managed to dump 96 metric tons of water on the blaze, it said.

The local firefighting authority said firefighters put out the fire at 8:40 am on Sunday, but high winds caused some flames to reappear in smoldering areas.

Two helicopters had to be dispatched to the site again on Sunday because the rugged terrain made it difficult for firefighters to reach the flames, it said.

Contact the writers at houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn

## Exciting entrance



A bull proves to be a handful for its handler as it enters an arena to fight another bull in Liping county, Guizhou province, on Saturday. The bullfight was part of the Chinese New Year celebration.

QIAO QIMING / FOR CHINA DAILY

## After harrowing rescue of girl, panda base issues a warning: Bears not docile

By **HUANG ZHILING** in Chengdu  
huangzhiling@chinadaily.com.cn

After an 8-year-old girl fell into a panda enclosure on Saturday, the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding in Sichuan province issued a warning: Pandas are not as meek and docile as they appear.

Pandas are potentially dangerous animals, and even their keepers must keep their distance once the animals turn 2 years old, it said. Visitors are required to stay in the designated safety zone.

A video of the incident showed a crowd of people watching five pandas in their enclosure. The video appears to show the girl climbing the fence herself and being accidentally knocked from her perch, falling into a dry ditch on the animals' side. The ditch, which is more than 2 meters deep, serves as a bar-

rier between the pandas and people.

About 20 seconds later, a curious panda slowly walked to the edge of the ditch and looked down at the girl, arousing screams and warning shouts from the crowd behind the fence.

Liu Guihua, a guide, clambered over the fence to a ledge above the ditch and tried to pull the girl out with a bamboo pole normally used for collecting rubbish. The effort failed.

Meanwhile, a second panda wandered over to see what was going on.

As a third panda approached the ditch for a look, Liu abandoned the pole and reached his arm as far down as possible, as others held his feet to prevent him from falling in. This time he managed to reach the girl with a hand and pulled her up, losing his cap in the process. The terrified girl was then reunited

with her parents.

After sending the girl to the base clinic for an initial physical examination, employees sent her to a hospital for further examination, Liu said.

Zhou Mengqi, a 66-year-old photographer from Chengdu who has photographed pandas since primary school, said the animals are not as docile as they appear.

He recalled taking pictures of a panda eating bamboo at the base one day in the early 1990s when the animal suddenly charged him. He said a claw touched his trousers before he escaped through a gate.

A woman from Hong Kong was not so lucky when she entered a panda den at the China Research and Conservation Center for the Giant Panda in Wenchuan county, Sichuan, in the summer of 2005. The panda attacked her and bloodied her arm with its claws.