



Aerial photo taken on April 1 shows Anxin County, north China's Hebei Province. China announced on April 1 it would establish Xiongan New Area in Hebei Province, as part of measures to advance the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region. (XINHUA)

## Brand new start

By Yuan Yuan

Three small counties resting in the middle of north China's Hebei Province had stayed silent for years until breaking news, released on April 1, brought them all the way to the front stage to sparkle in the spotlight.

The three places, Xiongxian, Anxin and Rongcheng, under the jurisdiction of Baoding, Hebei Province, will form a new development zone, the Xiongan New Area, to parallel the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone and the Shanghai Pudong New Area, China's successful test beds for reform and opening up. The new area will initially occupy 100 square km and eventually 2,000 square km.

### Why there?

The decision to establish the new area, about 100 km southwest of downtown Beijing, is part of a greater strategy, which China initiated in 2014, to jointly develop Beijing, the port city of Tianjin and Hebei Province to improve the region's economic structure, environment and public services.

The distance of the new area from both Beijing and Tianjin is

about 100 km, the same as that from Beijing to Tianjin, which makes the interconnected area resemble an equilateral triangle.

"The site of the new area was carefully chosen," said He Lifeng, Minister of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), during an interview with Xinhua News Agency on April 5. "The choice is based on practicality after rounds of comparison and rigorous research by experts. The new area is part of measures to advance the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region."

The transportation connections of the new area, according to He, will be very convenient, with Beijing, Tianjin and Shijiazhuang, capital city of Hebei, all within a half-hour's commute.

The Baiyangdian Lake, the largest freshwater lake in north China, is located in the zone, which will make the zone ecologically healthy with a relatively strong environmental capacity.

Beijing now is home to over 21 million people, and the number is expected to reach 23 million in 2020. Traffic congestion, soaring property prices and excessive

burdens on resources are all severe "urban ills" of the huge capital. The root of these issues lies in the capital taking on too many "non-capital functions," and Beijing has long been considering curbing population growth and relocating industries and other non-capital functions to Hebei in the coming years, said the NDRC head.

Nie Huihua, a professor of economics at Renmin University of China, told Caixin, China's leading financial and investigative news organization, that now the picture is becoming clearer: Many of Beijing's metropolitan functions will be transferred to its Tongzhou District and the Xiongan New Area will shoulder part of Beijing's non-capital functions, such as the development of hi-tech industries. Tongzhou and Xiongan are now like Beijing's two wings.

Beijing will focus on its "capital functions," which means serving as the country's political center, cultural center, and center for international exchanges and science and technological innovation.

Another major task of the Xiongan New Area, Nie said, is to promote Hebei's economic

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and social development and help develop the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region into a world-class metropolitan area.

Xinhua stressed the development of Xiongan as the country's "big millennial plan," a term that has rarely been used before, which shows both the strategic significance of this project and the difficulty of assessing its success in the short term.

### New way ahead

On April 1, Xu Qin, former Shenzhen Mayor and Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Shenzhen Municipal Committee, was appointed as deputy secretary of the CPC Hebei Provincial Committee. Many people expect him to make use of his nine years of experience in Shenzhen to aid the development of Xiongan.

However, Xiongan will not be able to compare economically with Pudong or Shenzhen in the near future, said He Lifeng, Minister of the NDRC, on April 5. Instead, Xiongan may prove to be a place where the Central Government can focus on its experiments with urbanization, supply-side reform and even governance models.

Xiongan will be an answer to China's growth conundrum: Breakneck urban sprawl must give way to a strategy of balanced and inclusive development.

Protecting the local ecology will be a priority, as the authorities do not want to repeat the outdated practice of "pollution first, treatment later." Pollution will live in a cleaner and safer environment.

Master and detailed blueprints of the new area and a plan on the ecological conservation of the Baiyangdian region are among the first plans to be mapped out, He told Xinhua.

The NDRC chief pointed to reform as a key to development, saying that new administrative, investment and financing models will be tried in the new area.

Innovation will be the fundamental driver in building and developing the Xiongan New Area, and policies will be put in place to bring innovative elements to the area, said He.

Xu Kuangdi, head of the expert advisory committee on the collaborative development of Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei, suggested that the construction of the Xiongan New Area should focus on technological and innovative industries and the region should attract high-end innovative talent and resources.

He emphasized the point by saying that the new area will create a favorable environment for innovation and attract innovative talent and teams to help build it into a "high ground" for innovation and a new science and technology city.

## The Three Counties in the Xiongan New Area

The Xiongan New Area comprises Xiongxian, Rongcheng and Anxin counties and their neighboring area in Hebei Province.

### Xiongxian:

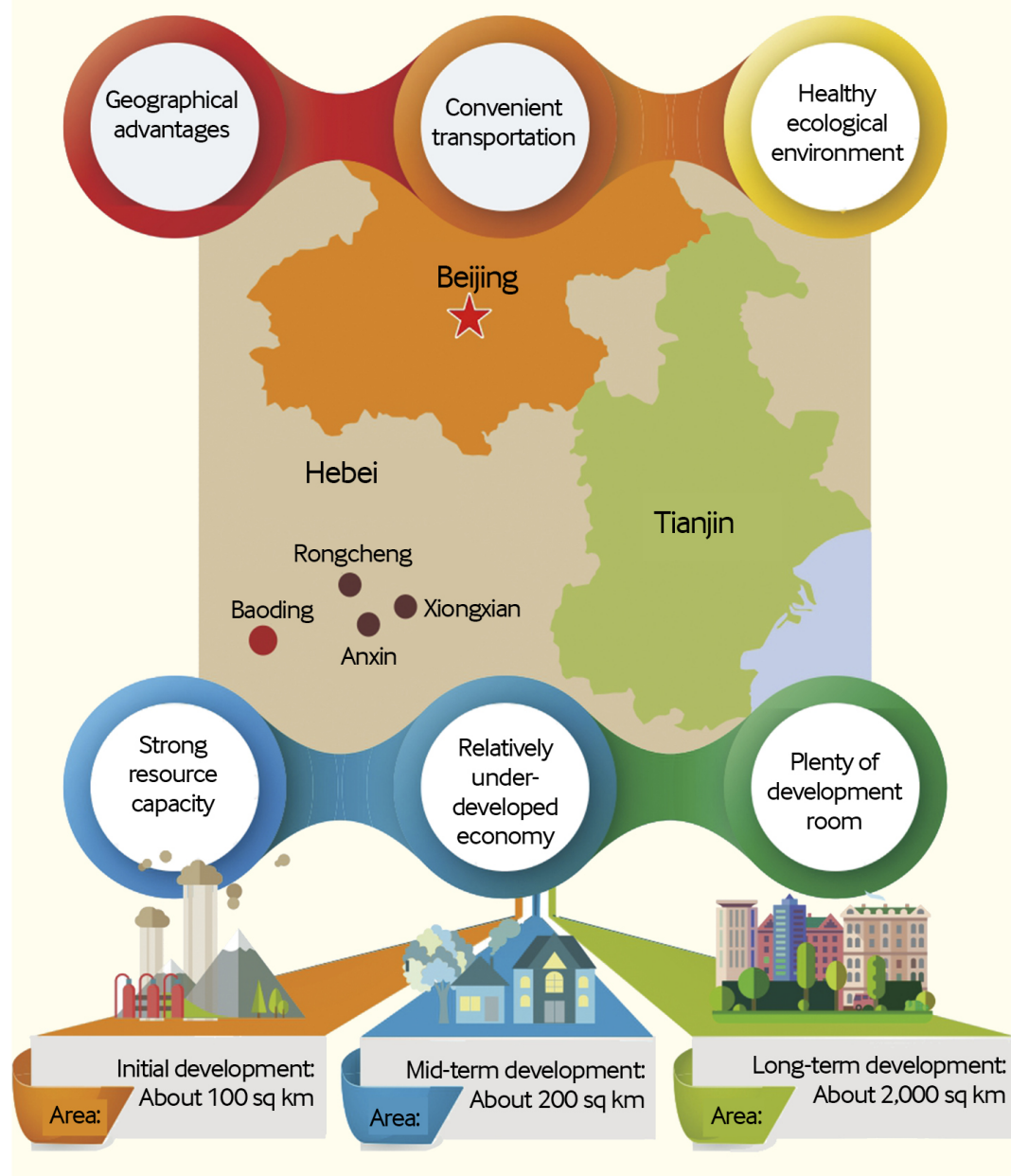
Distance to Beijing: 108 km  
Total area: 524 square km  
Population: 380,000  
2016 GDP: 10.114 billion yuan (\$1.49 billion)

### Anxin:

Distance to Beijing: 146 km  
Total area: 724 square km  
Population: 393,113  
2016 GDP (Q1-Q3): 4 billion yuan (\$590 million)

### Rongcheng:

Distance to Beijing: 110 km  
Total area: 314 square km  
Population: 260,000  
2016 GDP: 5.94 billion yuan (\$870 million)



# Leave no one behind

By Lu Yan



Song Tao with foreign guests at an exhibition on poverty relief



Song Tao, Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, addresses the event on April 27



Chen Hao, Secretary of the CPC Yunnan Provincial Party Committee, delivers a speech at the event on April 27

At heart, Li Naluo feels she is a farmer. But her current role belies such a humble background. Now, she is the vice chairwoman of a performing arts company that promotes the distinctive traditional culture of the Lahu nationality, an ethnic group that exists mainly in mountainous areas in the south of China's Yunnan Province. So, how did she make the transformation from poor minority villager to leader of an enterprise?

"Thanks to the policy made by the Communist Party of China (CPC), people like me can shake off poverty by singing and dancing," Li said, as she shared her story at a seminar held by the International Department of the CPC Central Committee in Beijing on April 27 as part of a series of events entitled Stories of CPC Targeted Poverty Alleviation.

Nearly 400 foreign politicians, senior diplomats in China and international organization representatives attended the seminar with a theme of Leaving No One in Poverty. Taking Yunnan as an example, the event presented what China has achieved in poverty alleviation and development in order to enable the international community to better understand China's targeted poverty alleviation policy.

While sharing her story with the foreign guests, Li was a bit nervous. She said she received just a primary school education and does not know much, but she can feel the progress in recent years in her hometown, Lao Da Bao Village, a base of the Lahu people and culture.

A decade ago, local per capita annual net income was only 1,715 yuan (\$249), while the national average of rural people was 4,140 yuan (\$601). With the implementation of national poverty relief policies and plans, the local government, under the guidance of the Central Government, began to acquire capital and human resources to turn the underdeveloped Lao Da Bao village into a cultural tourist attraction with Lahu ethnic characteristics, especially performing arts. Li, a pioneering local figure, motivated fellow villagers to learn Lahu traditional songs and dances. Local people with outstanding artistic skills were organized for commercial performances.

"In the daytime, we do farm work, and when night falls, we put on makeup and costumes, pick up our musical instruments and play," Li said.

Since its establishment in September 2013, the performing arts company has put on over 300 performances, generating total income of over 2.5 million yuan (\$363,000). More than 480 people have escaped poverty and are earning a decent living through the endeavor, which, besides creating pecuniary benefit, also disseminates awareness and knowledge about Lahu culture.

Li Naluo's tale was just one of the stories shared by people from Yunnan at the seminar on April 27. It is also just a drop in the ocean of China's fight against poverty.

"Eliminating poverty is a common cause for parties and governments worldwide," said Song Tao, Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, during his introduction at the seminar.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the CPC Central Committee, with Xi Jinping as its core, has brought into full play its powerful organization and mobilization mechanism, accumulated a rich working experience, and found a feasible way to alleviate poverty with Chinese characteristics, Song said.

"Yunnan is a good example of the achievement," he said.

According to him, China's national effort had reduced its impoverished population by over 55.64 million between 2013 and 2016. Each year over 10 million rural citizens were able to escape poverty.

"This practice has proved that a targeted approach to alleviating poverty is key to China's achieving its target," Song said. "The CPC would like to share its experience with the international community and help its neighboring countries and developing countries worldwide find their own way to alleviate poverty."

Located in southwest China, Yunnan is home to 26 ethnic groups. It is one of China's most poverty-stricken provinces, having the largest number of people living in poverty and the highest degree of poverty persistence in rural areas.

By the end of 2016, the province still had 88 poverty-stricken counties and 3.65 million impoverished people. Eliminating poverty is a strong desire shared by all ethnic groups in Yunnan as well as the most challenging aspect of pushing forward leapfrog development of the province.

The Central Committee of the CPC, with Xi Jinping as its core, is continually concerned about the economic growth and social development, in addition to the well-being, of ethnic groups in Yunnan. "No ethnic group will be left behind in the drive to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society by 2020," General Secretary Xi Jinping said when meeting officials and residents of Gongshan Drung-Nu Autonomous County in Kunming, capital city of Yunnan, in January 2015.

Chen Hao, Secretary of CPC Yunnan Provincial Committee, said the committee, as a facilitator of the CPC Central Committee's strategic deployment in "doing a good job in poverty alleviation," regarded this as a matter of primary importance in its development and livelihood project.

Yunnan gave top priority to helping the minorities among all poverty alleviation works and established a series of favoring policies to ensure "no ethnic group was left behind," said Chen.

Actions have been taken and the numbers are convincing. From 2012 to 2016, the impoverished rural population in Yunnan has dropped from 8.04 million to 3.63 million. "Despite all the difficulties, we have faith that poverty can be eradicated," Chen noted.

After the main seminar, two sub-seminars on poverty alleviation were held. During the two sub-seminars, local CPC members in Yunnan, together with representatives from ethnic groups and related companies, conducted communication with foreign guests.

"From the pictures, I can see a very big shift [in Yunnan]," said Michael Milli Hussein, Ambassador of the Republic of South Sudan, commenting on a related photo exhibition.

With the aim of sharing China's poverty reduction practices and experiences in various provinces with members of the international community, a number of seminars and photo exhibitions, collectively forming the Stories of CPC Targeted Poverty Alleviation series of events, will take place in Beijing.



A foreign diplomat asks a question at the seminar



A UN delegation visits Yunnan

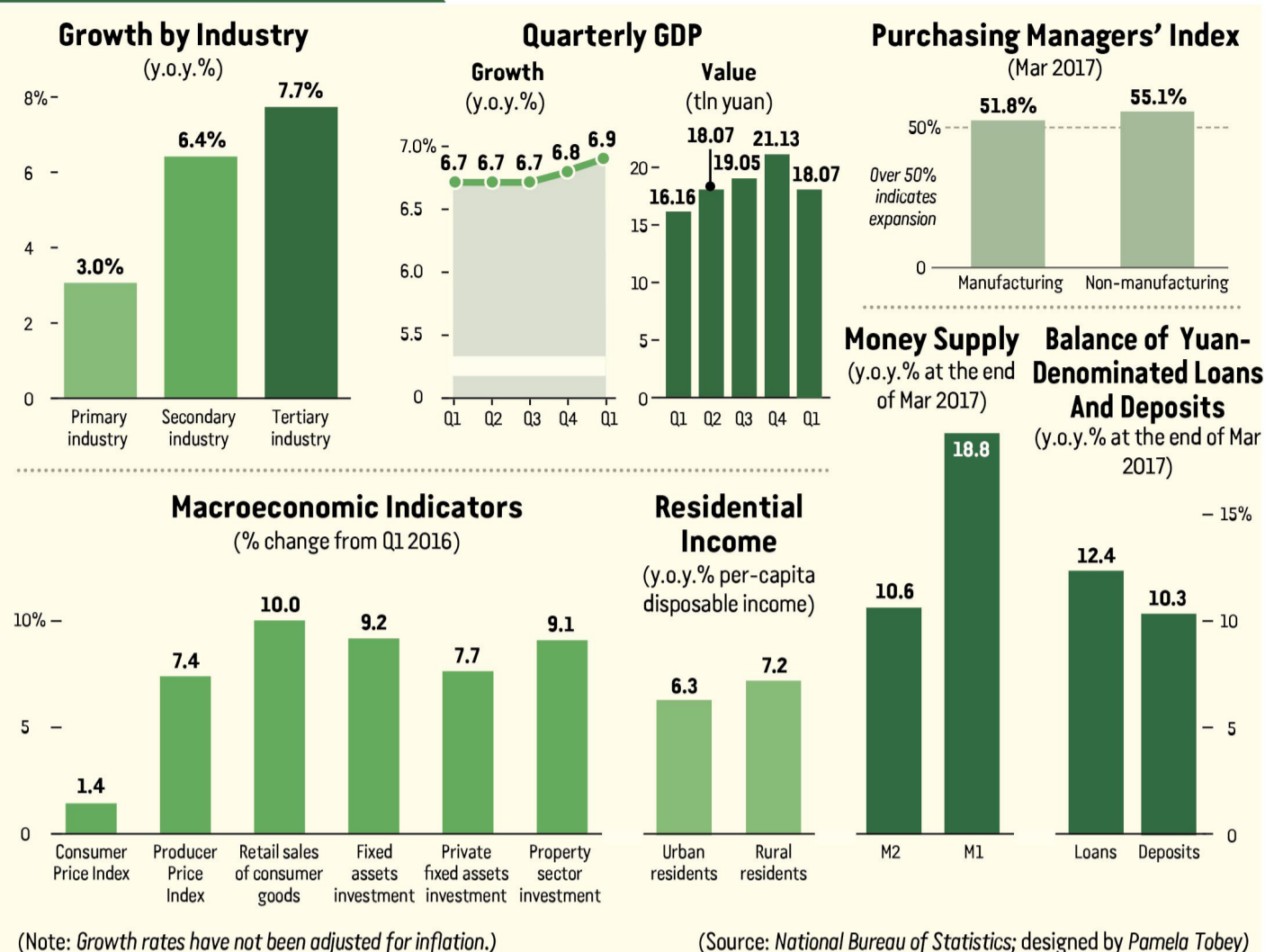


A delegation of Uruguay's Broad Front coalition visits Yunnan

# A sustained economic upswing

By Deng Yaqing

## China's Economy in Q1 2017



The Chinese economy grew by 6.9 percent in the first quarter of 2017, a result widely attributed to industrial expansion, booming consumption and soaring exports.

"China's economy continued to undergo stable growth in the first quarter, with major indicators scoring much better than expected. This bodes well for future developments for the rest of the year," said Mao Shengyong, spokesman of the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), at a press conference held on April 17.

More specifically, the added value of major industrial enterprises rose 6.8 percent in the first quarter, one percentage point greater than the figure recorded in the same period last year. Moreover, price levels were generally stable, with the consumer price index (CPI) and producer price index (PPI) increasing 1.4 percent and 7.4 percent, respectively, year on year. The employment sector's robust expansion was also a good sign, with 3.34 million people entering the workforce in urban areas — an increase of 160,000 people from the same period last year. Also, according to statistics from the NBS, the international balance of payments has improved, with the surplus in goods trade exceeding 450 billion yuan (\$65.35 billion).

"Credit for these improvements should go to structural adjustments in various sectors brought about by the supply-side structural reform," said Wan Zhe, chief economist of the International Cooperation Center of the National Development and Reform Commission, in an interview with China News Service.

Besides that, hi-tech and equipment manufacturing industries saw their added value rise 13.4 percent and 12 percent, respectively, and online retail sales hit 1.4 trillion yuan (\$203.3 billion), up 32.1 percent year on year.

"Furthermore, a tentative global economic recovery has shored up global demand, and thus fueled the rapid growth of China's exports. The close contact and pragmatic cooperation between China and the U.S. as well as China's efforts in pushing forward collaboration with countries along the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road are also positive factors," said Liu Dewei, a research fellow with the research institute of China Minsheng Bank, in an interview with China News Service.

### Propping up the economy

In the first quarter, the manufacturing industry witnessed a year-on-year increase of 6.4 percent in added value, 0.5 percentage points faster than the same period last year, and contributed 36.1 percent to GDP growth, 1.1 percentage points more than the same period last year, according to statistics from the NBS.

The growing contribution of consumption in GDP growth is another encouraging sign in the first-quarter figures. Consumption contributed 77.2 percent to economic growth, 2.2 percentage points more than that in the same period last year, according to the NBS. Total retail sales of consumer goods stood at 8.58 trillion yuan (\$1.25 trillion) in the first quarter, up 10 percent year on year.

Beyond that, there was a substantial increase in the contribution of exports to economic growth in the first quarter.

"Though goods trade surplus went down 35.5 percent year on year in the first quarter, when taking the service trade into consideration and getting rid of the price factor, the net export of goods and services contributed 4.2 percent to economic growth in the first quarter," said Mao.

What's worth noticing is the achievements made in the supply-side structural reform, said Mao.

The rate of capacity utilization in China's major industrial enterprises was 75.8 percent in the first quarter, 2 percentage points higher than that in the fourth quarter last year, with their debt-to-asset ratio falling to 56.2 percent at the end of February.

In the first quarter, investments in ecological protection and environmental governance, public facility management, agriculture and water conservancy management — weak areas of the Chinese economy — increased 48.1 percent, 27.4 percent, 24.6 percent and 18.3 percent respectively, much faster than the total investment growth of 9.2 percent, according to the NBS.

### Challenges

"China's economic development is on the way toward more stability," said Mao, noting that stable growth doesn't necessarily mean no fluctuations or quarter-on-quarter growth, otherwise it's not in line with economic rules.

"The robust economic growth had something to do with the violent surge of the real estate market last year. As regulators took measures to crack down on the skyrocketing property prices, this growth engine will be weakened to some extent," said Wan, who also predicted that price rises of upstream products caused by de-capacity efforts would gradually come to a halt.

The prospect of domestic investment growth is uncertain, and private investment is still inactive, said Zhao Xijun, Associate Dean of the School of Finance with Renmin University of China, suggesting that stimulating economic vigor would be a major challenge for the rest of the year. Aside from that, the prospect of global economic growth is still uncertain, especially since U.S. monetary policy will have an impact on emerging markets like China, Zhao warned.



People stand next to an electric vehicle at an auto fair in Changchun, capital of northeast China's Jilin Province, on July 18, 2016 (XINHUA)

# A matter of life and death

By Yuan Yuan



Liu Peng, Director of the Department of Cardiovascular Surgery & Electro-chemotherapy in the Beijing-based China-Japan Friendship Hospital (COURTESY OF CHINA-JAPAN FRIENDSHIP HOSPITAL)

Six operations a day, more than 30 years in a row, no vacation, no spare time. Meet Liu Peng, who has been working as a cardiac surgeon in the Beijing-based China-Japan Friendship Hospital since 1984.

“I come to the office at 8 a.m. and start operating right away,” Liu, Director of the Department of Cardiovascular Surgery and Electro-chemotherapy in the hospital, who is also a member of the Communist Party of China, told Beijing Review. “It is normal [for me] to leave the operation theater at 8 or 9 o’clock in the evening every day, including the weekends. This is my routine schedule.”

“There’s almost no spare time for my family and myself.”

The overpowering workload is common for many medical staff in China, especially those in hospitals in big cities as patients swarm the leading hospitals in big cities for specialty treatment.

## Risk and reward

“My patients normally have major cardiac and vascular problems. Each operation is a matter of life and death,” the 55-year-old said.

Five years after he started to work in the hospital, Liu was assigned to the Nihon University in Japan for further studies. He spent five years there, acquiring advanced medical knowledge and operation skills.

While studying abroad, Liu noticed that even though many senior citizens in foreign countries have hyperlipidemia-high levels of fat in the blood, they rarely get strokes. Then he learnt that it is because when such people are diagnosed as having blocks in their arteries, they undergo an operation to have it removed. The operation is called carotid endarterectomy.

In China, with the rise in living standards in recent times, high blood pressure, high blood sugar and hyperlipidemia — called the “three highs”- have become common. But as no doctors did the operation in China at that time, there was a high incidence of such strokes.

Liu, who returned to his Beijing hospital in 1994, performed the first carotid endarterectomy in the hospital in 2000. The whole process took over two hours, following which the patient recovered. Since then, Liu has done more than 1,000 such operations with his team.

Patients with problems in the carotid arteries mostly have problems in their coronary arteries as well. But two separate operations would make patients face higher risks. After checking the physical conditions of a patient who had problems in both sets of arteries, Liu, who had by then become proficient in carotid endarterectomy, decided to combine the two operations together.

The first operation, done in January 2014, lasted for about five hours. Since then Liu has done more than 70 such operations. “It is very tiring for the doctors but patients don’t have to suffer two operations, which is a big relief for them. Seeing the smile on a patient’s face is my biggest reward,” Liu told *Beijing Review*.



Liu Peng (second left) works on an operation on March 31, 2016 (YUAN YUAN)

## True grit

The man with the courage that drives him to do such daring operations once dreamt of becoming a soldier.

“My dream was to be a soldier but sadly, it never came true,” Liu said. “Operating on patients can be compared to fighting on the battlefield. That’s how great it feels and why I love my job.”

In 2003, when China was in the throes of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Liu led the work in the infectious diseases department, treating SARS patients. It was at an early stage of the SARS epidemic and there was no comprehensive information on how the disease spread. Still Liu undertook the task without hesitation, not leaving the hospital for more than two months.

For him, it was like riding armed to the battle. It was all about responsibility and not turning back.

## Pioneering Act

Liu was the first to perform a minimally invasive operation on varicosity in China. It was in the late 1990s. As he explained, “This was a common operation in developed countries in those days, but in China, few doctors knew about this.

“Describing the operation’s advantages in a TV interview, he said it alleviates the pain and discomfort suffered by people with varicose veins.

“People working as teachers or salespeople, professions that demand long periods of standing, are susceptible to this,” he said. “It might not be [always] painful but the network of prominent veins on the legs doesn’t look good, especially for women who want to wear skirts in summer.”

With this operation, patients don’t need to stay in the hospital to recover but can leave right away. The operation soon began to be performed in many other places and the China-Japan Hospital became a major training base. In June 2015, the hospital established the first varicosity clinic in China. Today, patients with varicosity can easily be operated on at hospitals in smaller cities.

But patients have many reasons to come to him — his rich medical experience and operation skills have built up a golden reputation, making him much sought-after.

In five years, Liu will retire from the hospital. But he doesn’t have any detailed post-retirement plan yet. “I think I will have a very good rest first,” he said.

## Getting to Know CHINA through KEYWORDS

### A five-pronged approach

In his speech at Kazakhstan’s Nazarbayev University on September 7, 2013, President Xi Jinping proposed building a new Silk Road Economic Belt by promoting policy coordination, road connectivity, unimpeded trade, currency convertibility, and strengthened people-to-people ties. [More>>](#)

### Mombasa-Nairobi railway

The 471-km-long Mombasa-Nairobi stretch is the first section of a planned East Africa railway network. [More>>](#)

## Major events in April

### April 4: Xi arrives in Finland for state visit

**Keywords:** Xi Jinping, Finland, state visit

Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived on April 4 for a state visit to Finland aimed at advancing bilateral ties, increasing political mutual trust and expanding substantial cooperation.

### April 6: Xi says ready to boost China-U.S. ties from new starting point with Trump

**Keywords:** Xi Jinping, Donald Trump

Chinese President Xi Jinping said in Donald Trump’s Florida resort of Mar-a-Lago on April 6 that he is ready to work with his U.S. counterpart to push forward China-U.S. relations from a new starting point.

### April 10: Xi extends condolences to Egyptian president over terrorist attack

**Keywords:** Xi Jinping, Egypt, condolence

Chinese President Xi Jinping sent a message of condolences to his Egyptian counterpart, Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi, on April 10 over the terrorist attacks that targeted two churches.

### China, Myanmar stress win-win cooperation to advance relations

**Keywords:** China, Myanmar

China and Myanmar on April 10 agreed to uphold the principle of mutual respect and win-win cooperation to promote the sustained, healthy and steady development of bilateral relations.

### April 16: Xi urges strengthened party education campaign

**Keywords:** Xi Jinping, Party discipline

President Xi Jinping has called for further implementation of a year-long education campaign within the Communist Party of China (CPC) to strengthen Party discipline.

### April 19: China’s top court launches campaign to root out corruption among law enforcers

**Keywords:** SPC, corruption

China’s Supreme People’s Court (SPC) on April 19 announced a campaign to expose corruption and other irregularities among law enforcers.

### April 20: China launches first cargo spacecraft Tianzhou-1

**Keywords:** China, cargo spacecraft, Tianzhou-1

China on April 20 launched its first cargo spacecraft, *Tianzhou-1*, into space, a crucial step for the country in building a space station by approximately 2022.

### Xi Jinping elected delegate to 19th CPC national congress

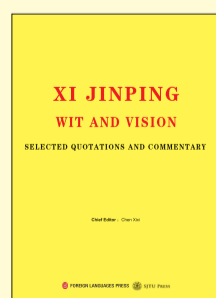
**Keywords:** Xi Jinping, 19th CPC national congress

Xi Jinping was elected delegate to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) by a unanimous vote at the 12th CPC Guizhou provincial congress on April 20.

### April 24: Xi, Trump discuss ties, Korean Peninsula situation over phone

**Keywords:** Xi Jinping, Donald Trump, Korean Peninsula

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump on April 24 discussed bilateral ties and the situation on the Korean Peninsula on phone, pledging close contact by various means to promptly exchange views on major issues of common concern.



## Xi Jinping Wit and Vision

In his speeches, President Xi Jinping explains the profound in simple yet powerful language. This book features distinctive expressions that have been selected and compiled from speeches delivered by Xi Jinping since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. It is divided into three sections: Imagery and Metaphors, Everyday Sayings, and Quotations from the Classics. The book examines the origin and context of these expressions and explains the ideas behind them. It explores their immediate significance and social impact. Readable, memorable, and practical, the book provides insight into the speeches of Xi Jinping from a linguistic and cultural perspective.