

CHINA DAILY

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Taking a breath of fresh air

Vigorous enforcement effort behind the scenes is tackling pollution by taking aim at regional officials

By ZHENG JINRAN in Beijing, TIAN XUEFEI in Harbin and LI YINGQING in Kunming

Residents in Beijing have already experienced hazardous smog in the early days of the new year, while at least 60 cities in the northern region have adopted joint emergency measures to reduce emissions, including the short-term shutdown of some factory operations.

But there's another effort going on behind the scenes that's making a big difference. The central government has sharpened its supervision of policymakers across the country through high-level environmental inspections, which have grown into a powerful enforcement tool.

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“They play hardball in monitoring the governments, and that has helped the policymakers do better with the environment rather than just promoting economic growth.”

QIN TIANBAO
professor of environmental law at Wuhan University

LI MIN / CHINA DAILY



Sculpting China's changing seasons

By LIN QI and WANG KAIHAO

As spring thunder wakes animals from their winter sleep, sprouting plants breathe an air of freshness into the world. The temperature rises and rain turns the mountains green. When the heat of summer recedes, farmers prepare for the harvest; and as snow falls in winter, the mountains are enveloped in pure white.

The transformation of the landscape brought about by the changing seasons has long been the subject of poems, paintings, nursery songs and other forms of art.

Artist Dong Lin, 25, depicts these climate phenomena in a series of ceramic sculptures, *24 Solar Terms*, which she began a year ago in Jingdezhen, Jiangxi province, China's ceramics capital.

Based on observations of the sun's annual motion, the ancient Chinese created a calendar dividing the year into 24 segments, each given a specific "solar term", or *jieqi*. The system provided a time frame for agriculture, everyday life and festivals.

Dong is now exhibiting the first six ceramics of her ongoing series in a solo exhibition at Beijing's Soka Art Center. She has named each piece after a solar term — such as *Insects Awakening (jingszhe)* and *Grain Rain (guyu)*.

“The idea came to me when I saw a Weibo posting about the solar terms. The names sounded so poetic and inspired my imagination,” she says.

Dong used the *zhan jing pan* technique, a method of creating miniature landscapes used during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220). She molded mountains, rocks and animals, and arranged them in a ceramic pot to portray natural scenery corresponding to a solar term.

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