

China: Strangely, a village has had fire burning on the ground for more than 60 years

The fires have been burning continuously for more than 60 years without going out despite rain or snow in a village in southwest China.

In a small village in Truong Tho district, Chongqing city, China, there is an area of land about 4 square meters but has up to 7 to 8 small holes, all of which contain a fire that burns forever.

This strange land has brought many conveniences to the villagers. Many people come here to boil water to drink, and even bring vegetables and food to cook. This also makes people from all over the world feel especially magical and come to visit the village.



'In the past, firewood was very expensive and we had to go to the western hilly areas to bring back bundles of firewood. But here it's more convenient, we bring pots and pans to cook and line up to boil sweet potatoes and amaranth ,' CCTV+ quoted Wang Mantang, a resident of the village.

Fires burning on the ground appear in many places around the world, from warm places like China to cold climates like Siberia. Geophysics professor Anupma Prakash at the University of Alaska (USA) said: *'Normally they are quite similar, but the cause of the fire may be different.'* The fire can be caused by lightning, human ignition, mining or spontaneous combustion. Once ignited, the fire can burn continuously for decades.

It is known that the reason the land has a fire on the ground is because previously an oil and natural gas exploration team came to drill the land to take samples. Drilling holes causes underground natural gas to vent to the surface and ignite after exposure to air. Although there is a certain amount of natural gas here, it is not worth exploiting. So the exploration team gave up mining but since then, the fire on the ground has remained burning for more than 60 years.

Although people use it for cooking, the harm caused by fires can be much greater than the benefits. *'Due to the burning activity taking place underground, the fires will gradually burn out the coal. When pressured, the ground can collapse into craters, taking buildings with it and sucking in more oxygen to fuel the fire. This can lead to uneven, rough terrain and potholes,'* explains Professor Prakash.

Besides, smoke rising in the air not only worsens climate change by increasing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, but is also harmful to people's health due to having to breathe smoke all year round.

According to Professor Prakash, there are many ways to control fires. Every fire requires three elements: fuel, oxygen and heat. If one of these three factors can be eliminated, humans can extinguish the fire. Some places treat underground fires by pouring a mixture of water and peat on top or using expanded clay to block the oxygen source and extinguish the fire. Liquid nitrogen is also used to put out underground fires.

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