

Xing's lofty ideals cost him every cent he made and left him bankrupt.

Page 9



Mountain streams, rocky cliffs, waterfalls, ancient villages and trees combine to create a harmonious picture of heavenly beauty.

Page 16



A Glimpse of the Western Xia Dynasty creates a vivid picture of this mysterious dynasty and its people.

Page 10



BEIJING TODAY

FRIDAY JANUARY 7 2005

NO. 188

CN11-0120

HTTP://BJTODAY.YNET.COM

Addressing a Confusing Issue

City's building number system ready for overhaul

By Annie Wei / Pan Hao

Sometimes, an address is just not enough. Anyone who has lived in Beijing for long is most likely familiar with the frustration of trying to give, or follow, directions to get somewhere that really should be easy to find.

Taxi meters tick over and time is wasted ... and why is A so often not next to B!

The construction boom in Beijing, while streamlining many streetscapes, has added to the mess somewhat, with new streets appearing and old ones vanishing on an almost daily basis. Factor in the issue of damaged, unclear, out of date or even missing address signs on many older buildings, and you have recipe for confusion.

"You invite your friends to come to your house-warming party, but you have to give directions like, 'Ask the cab driver to take you to the Kentucky Fried Chicken in XX street. Send me a message when you get there and I'll come to collect you!'" Gabriel Warren, an American employee of Lenovo Info said to *Beijing Today*, "You might end up coming down seven times in chilly weather like today, because your apartment building 10 is next to building 1, not building 9."

An article posted on the Beijing government's official website announced that the Public Security Bureau started the task of reviewing building address plaques throughout the city on January 1 this year. Any resident can apply for a brand new plaque, which will at least help solve the problem of missing or damaged signs.

Since the founding of the PRC, the Beijing government has revised the city's address plaque system on numerous occasions. A survey in 1962 found there were 220,000 such plaques in Beijing Municipality, 3,000 of which were within the urban area.

In 1965, along with many streets being renamed to reflect the anti-feudalism sentiments of the day, the first name plaque regulation was issued. According to this regulation, address plaques should be 14.8 by 8.4 centimeters, with white characters written on a red background, replacing the earlier version which used white characters on blue. Street numbering was supposed to run from east to west and north to south, and single and double numbers were to be used to identify different sides of the street.

Many street names were changed during the Cultural Revolution, for instance, Dongjiaomin Xiang became Fandi Lu, and Huangchenggen was renamed Lixui Beilu. In 1972, 377 hutongs (lanes) officially reverted to their original names. Two years later, 50,000 damaged house number and door plaques were replaced.

In 1980, the current system of identifying buildings with numbered plaques was established. The government launched the door and building plaque system to further develop the house number system. A universal building plaque was specified as 60 by 110 centimeters, with both Chinese characters



Taiping Tianguo era door plaque from Lishui Museum, Zhejiang Province.

What's in an address?

Some streets have gone through several name changes over the years, sometimes because of the changing political situation, sometimes because of changing sensitivities. Gangmian Hutong was renamed Weixing Street during the Cultural Revolution, and then later reverted to its original name. Yabao Lu, used to be called Yaba (mute) Hutong, and Piku Hutong once was Pigu (bottom) Hutong. These street names, given by residents, date back centuries. They were changed to a more polite form based on their pronunciation.

House plaques in China can be traced back to Yuan Dynasty (1206-1368). During the Taiping Rebellion (1851 to 1864), yellow paper door plaques listed the names of the family members and the building's address.



The implementation of a new address plaque system will require a considerable amount of work and cooperation between numerous government departments.

Photos by Li Shuzhuan



ters and Pinyin used to meet the needs of the increasing number of foreign tourists.

Liang Congjie, president of local environmental NGO Friends of Nature, told *Beijing Today* that he even found it difficult to find his own home in Gannian Hutong after some old houses were demolished and replaced by a high-rise apartment block. "The familiar guide is gone. Even I missed my home sometimes," he said.

Regarding the dramatic transformation Beijing has been undergoing these past several years, Liang said it was vital to complete the process of the urbanization by giving the right identification to a building. "Personally I'd prefer the old street, building and hutong retain the same name, provided that they retain the same overall appearance. However if they are completely replaced by something new, then it is not necessary to keep the old name. The key function of the street and house number plaque is to guide people to find the place they are seeking," he said.

The basic reasons to have

appropriate building addresses seem simple: the management of household registration, the postal system, and need for fire, ambulance or other emergency vehicles to be able to quickly find a given address. However there are other, less obvious reasons. The inconvenience might deter people from visiting parts of the city they are not familiar with. With a simple, easily understood address, a business need not waste advertising space with maps detailing how to get to the store. Also, a clear address system is a requirement for a modern lifestyle, which utilizes modern supply and delivery by retail businesses.

Huang Xing is the manager of Beijing Signosign Culture Development. His company provides new concepts and designs for corporation's identification signage. Huang told *Beijing Today* he believes Beijing's building signage is backward compared with that of many other countries, both in terms of house address planning, and building and apartment address signs.

Identification signage should contain sufficient information,

clearly presented, to easily guide people to their various destinations, Huang said. In a city with a well designed address system, a child should be able to give clear directions on how to get to a specific place.

"A scientific system of building numbering can enhance the geographic information system," Huang added, "Places and locations are more easily identified, and people are better connected."

It is not just a question of modern lifestyle, but also a kind of humanism, Huang said. Recently, a client from the US asked him to design some door and house plaques for the US market. Huang found that the Disabilities Act in the US requires house plaques to include braille. "I was very impressed at how detailed and carefully considered the regulations in the US have been made. The door plaque has to be installed at viewing height, and the braille is a little lower, for the benefit of people who are confined to a wheelchair."

Huang has several ideas about how to improve Beijing's address signage. "I hope the government can invite some experts to join in the discussion on improving the system, from the planning of building addresses to the design and production of address signs."

Some cities in China have already taken steps to improve the situation. According to an article on People.com in April last year, Changchun, the capital of Jilin Province had begun updating its house numbering system. The new system takes the end of a street as its starting point, and the number of the house is the distance between it and the start of the street. For example, Jilin Forestry Survey, Design and Research Institute's number is 4,756 Renmin Dajie, which means the institute is 4,567 meters from the starting point of Renmin Dajie. The article said that the renumbering was due to be completed by the end of last year.

Research is underway in Beijing to implement a better address system. The new system should be sustainable and require fewer revisions as new buildings are constructed. It should also make it easier for emergency services, postal workers and others to locate individual addresses.

However implementing change is easier said than done. The municipal design committee is only in charge of the names of an area, location, street or alley, while building and apartment numbers are under the jurisdiction of local police departments.

Another issue is that there are no specific laws governing how addresses are designated. For example some new buildings are numbered by the real estate developers instead of by the local government department.

Solving the problem will require cooperation between several government departments, and is likely to take many years to complete.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: JIAN RONG
EDITOR: HOU MINGXIN
DESIGNER: PANG LEI



Medical staff at the Beijing Hospital of Gynecology and Obstetrics deliver a baby boy named Zhang Yichi yesterday, designated China's 1.3 billionth citizen.

Xinhua Photo

China's Population Hits 1.3 Billion

By Qiu Jiaoning/Zhou Ying

The population of China has reached 1.3 billion according to an announcement by the National Bureau of Statistics yesterday.

The birthrate has dropped from 21.06 per thousand in 1990 to 12.41 in 2003 and the population growth rate has decreased

from 14.39 per thousand to 6.01 in the same period, however, China will encounter new and severe challenges with its population hitting 1.3 billion, an official from the State Commission for Population and Family Planning told Xinhua Monday.

China's population is expected to increase by about 10 million

people annually to reach a peak of 1.46 billion in the mid-2030s, population experts predicted as quoted by Xinhua last year.

At the end of 2003, the total world population stood at 6.27 billion people, according to the World Bank. With 1.29 billion people, China had the biggest population, followed by India,

with 1.06 billion; the United States, with 291 million; Indonesia, with 214 million; and Brazil, with 177 million people, Reuters reported Tuesday.

The population of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, which are also Chinese territory, are not included in the latest population figures.

Beijing to Issue Food Safety Index

By Xu Chuanmei

The Beijing government will release a Food Safety Index this year. The measure is aimed at evaluating risks involved in the food markets of Beijing's 18 administrative districts, director of the Beijing Administration for Industry and Commerce (BAIC), Zhang Zhikuan said at the administration's 2005 working conference Tuesday.

The Food Safety Index, the first such index in China, will cover every key category of food products, including rice, flour, edible oil and meat. It will be based on a comprehensive analysis of data from reports by consumers and food quality inspections by the government, food makers themselves as well as retailers. Each administrative district will have its own index, with 100 set as the highest possible score. As a reference for people to select safer food from the market, the index will be updated regularly.

A "credit record," an indicator of the degree of safety, will be established for each specified category of food products. As an effort to improve supervision and food safety systems, food quality supervision sites will also be set up at large department stores, supermarkets and large-scale wholesalers, Zhang said.

"The basic framework for the capital's food safety control system has already been established, and the current safety state of the food market here is reassuring," Zhang added. In 2004, of the almost 20,000 samples in 18 categories of food products spot-checked by inspection agencies, 94 percent were up to standard. A total of 23 food makers have quit the Beijing market after failing spot checks repeatedly.

Franchise Regulation Issued

By Nie Zhiyang

The Ministry of Commerce issued new rules on commercial franchising last Friday, which gives a clear legal definition on firms bearing the names of other enterprises' brands from home and abroad. The regulation, which will take effect from February 1, requires franchisors to submit franchise agreements and other relevant documents to local authorities for the record and at the same time, release publicly information about their business funds.

According to a Ministry of

Commerce spokesperson, commercial franchising is embodied in the form of a contract signed by the two sides, under which the franchisors are authorized to grant certain privileges such as the use of trademarks, trading companies and operation patterns and within its jurisdiction in return for payment of a fixed fee.

The franchise regulation also requires that information related to funding, finance and operation, as well as details of expenses, special conditions and running capability set

by the franchisors be made available by the franchisee on demand.

In addition, domestic companies involved in such activities should register for the record, while their international counterparts or affiliated companies in China should provide proof of at least two successfully run affiliates outside China.

Apart from these procedural requirements, foreign investors engaged in commercial franchise business activities in China are treated as the same as local companies.

China to Invest 83 Billion Yuan to Harness Loess Plateau

By Qiu Jiaoning

The government will invest 83 billion yuan on building silt retention structures on central China's Loess Plateau to filter sediment from runoff water bound for the Yellow River, Xinhua reported Tuesday.

Under the project, a total of 163,000 soil dams will be built on the Loess Plateau, which will prevent 40 billion tons of silt from entering the Yellow River and allow the replanting of 1.25 million acres of farmland by the

end of 2020. The dams will help prevent flooding in the lower reaches of the Yellow River.

Owing to deforestation and inappropriate land use over a long period of time, some 454,000 square kilometers of the 640,000-square-kilometer plateau is severely eroded. The Loess Plateau, from which an estimated 1.6 billion tons of sediment flows into the Yellow River annually, is regarded as the world's worst area for soil erosion.

An official from the Yellow River Water Conservancy Committee said soil dams are particularly effective when sudden heavy rainstorms threaten to flood the river. The project is expected to benefit 70 million rural residents on the plateau with a total income of 93 billion yuan.

The total fund of 83 billion yuan is made up of a 48 billion yuan investment by the central government and 35 billion yuan from the local government.

China Puts Export Tax on Clothing

By Chu Meng

China has introduced an export tax on textile products starting from January 1 this year, in response to the ending of a system that has restricted international trade in textiles and apparel, the Ministry of Commerce announced last Friday.

According to Lu Jianhua, director of the ministry's foreign trade sector, the tax will be collected according to the volume of exports. The rate will be 0.2 yuan (US \$0.024) per item to 0.5 yuan (US \$0.061) per kilogram. The tax will be levied on 31 kinds of textile products, most of which are clothing, in six categories.

Under the previous quota system, limits were set on the amount of clothing, towels, sheets and other textile items that any country could sell in the US, Europe and Canada. However with the abolition of the quota system since the beginning of this year, countries are free to sell as much clothing as they can around the world.

Pei Changhong, chief researcher from the Chinese Academy of Social Science's Institute of Finance and Trade Economics said to *Beijing Today* Tuesday, "China's low-cost factories will dominate the trade and benefit consumers by providing

cheaper clothing throughout the world. China has become one of the world's major exporters of textile products with an export value reaching US \$77.5 billion from January to October in 2004, behind the US, EU and Japan."

However challenges still exist for China, Pei said. On one hand, though exports are expected to soar, most target middle and low-end markets, thus harming competitiveness; on the other hand, developed countries would inevitably implement a series of non-tariff barriers in order to alleviate their losses resulting from high-cost textile production.

Tsunami Aid Donation Information



Red Cross Society of China

Donation Hotline: 6513 9999

Add: 8 Beixinqiao Santiao, Dongcheng District, Beijing 100007, China

Tel: 8402 5890

Fax: 6406 0566

E-mail:

redcross@chineseredcross.org.cn

Website:

www.redcross.org.cn

Bank Transfer

RMB Account:

Account name: Red Cross Society of China

Account No: 0200 0010 0901 4413 252

Bank: Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, Beijing branch, Dongsinan sub-branch

USD Account:

Account name: Red Cross Society of China

Account No: 7112 1114

8260 0000 209

Bank: Citic Industrial Bank

Jiuxianqiao Subbranch

Postal Remittance

Payee: Red Cross Society of China

Address: 8 Beixinqiao Santiao, Dongcheng District, Beijing 100007, China

Direct Donation

To donate money:

Please send the money to

Red Cross Society of China

or its branches, and provide

your name and address so

that the receipt can be mailed

to you.



China Charity Federation

Donation Hotlines:

6608 3191, 6608 3260, 6608

3264, 6608 3194

Website:

www.chinacharity.cn

Bank Transfer

RMB Account:

Account name: China Charity Federation

Account No: 0200 0028

0901 4450 409

Bank: Industrial and Commercial Bank of China

Beijing Branch Xisi Sub-branch

Foreign Exchange

Account name: China

Charity Federation

Account No: 0091 4908

0910 14

Bank: Bank of China Head

Office Banking Department

Postal Remittance

Payee: China Charity Fed-

eration

Address: F7 Xinlong

Building, A33 Erlong Road,

Xicheng District, Beijing

100032, China

Inquiry Hotlines at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Department of Con-

sular Affairs:

010-6596 3511

00669-7700836

00661-8214771

00661-9840658

Chinese Embassy in

India: 0091-98 1126 8632

Chinese Embassy in Indo-

nesia: 0062-81 181 2344

Chinese Embassy in Ban-

gladesh: 0088-01 8921 2903,

0088-01 8925 1518

Chinese Embassy in Sri

Lanka: 009411-268 8610,

009411-268 8611

Chinese Embassy in

Myanmar: 00951-221926

(Day), 00951-221280 (Night)

(Xu Chuanmei)

International Recognition Spreads for Traditional Medicine

By Qiu Jiaoning

The State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SATCM) and Ministry of Health have signed cooperation agreements on traditional Chinese medicine with a further six countries, China Radio International reported Wednesday.

The six countries are Italy, Ireland, Mongolia, Croatia, Norway and Egypt. To date, a total of 67 countries have officially recognized traditional Chinese medicine.

Cooperation agreements are the essential prerequisites for foreign countries to grant legal status for

traditional Chinese medicine. Under the agreement, foreign educational institutions can arrange courses, graduates of which will receive formal academic credentials. In addition, herbalist doctors are qualified to apply to local medical administrations for a permit to practice medicine in those countries.

An official from SATCM said that traditional Chinese medicine products exported to those countries would now be classified as regular medicines, rather than health food, which would help stimulate exports.

Shenzhen Issues Law on Irresponsible Officials

By Chu Meng

The principle of "take the blame and resign" has been set as law for the first time in China by the government of Shenzhen, Guangdong Province.

According to a document released by the local government Sunday, the law aims at making civil servants responsible for their own acts and preventing abuses of power. It covers such actions as misusing one's influence for the benefit of relatives, intervening in local economic activities such as project bidding and real estate development,

and discouraging journalists from carrying out their work. All such abuses will be punishable by dismissal, or in serious cases, prison terms.

Hou Liming, deputy procurator-general of the Shenzhen People's Procuratorate was reported in the *People's Daily Sunday* as saying, "An official has to shoulder responsibility for certain job-related risks in moral, executive, political and other fields, even if he didn't make any direct mistake, commit crimes of misconduct in office or break the law."

CAAC Rules Out Increase in Plane Imports

By Sun Yongjian

Domestic civil aviation authorities announced last Wednesday that China will not allow any further imports of passenger planes before the end of 2005.

Yang Yuanyuan, president of the Civil Aviation Administration of China, said during a regular press conference that no plane imports will be allowed in 2005 on the basis of the

bureau's guidelines.

"The bureau will launch a series of new policies on the aspects of macro-regulatory control and market regulations," Yang said.

"The 147 planes Chinese aviation companies have purchased and will be put to use in 2005 will basically satisfy the need of the market, thus, the bureau will not allow any increase in plane imports," he said.

Changhong Blames US Company for Debts, Files Suit

By Sun Yongjian

Changhong Electronics Co., a leading Chinese television maker, has filed a lawsuit with a court in California against US-based TV sales agency Apex Digital on charges the American firm owes it \$484 million in arrears, the *China Business News* said Wednesday.

The Chinese company announced a deficit of \$460 million on December 28, 2004, which it later blamed on Apex Digital, as *Beijing Today* reported last Friday.

Changhong has charged Apex Digital with turning over 37 bad, or unredeemable, checks in 2003 worth roughly \$700 million, *China Business News* said.

Chinese police had apprehended Apex President David Ji, a Chinese resident, in keeping with this country's laws, an official from the American Embassy in Beijing told some US reporters.

Ji was arrested on charges of fraud by police from Changhong's home province of Sichuan, the domestic *21st Century Business Herald* reported.

Changhong spokesman Liu Haizhong declined to comment on the matter when contacted by *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

Yet the case seems more complicated than Changhong's suit might indicate.

"In court documents that are Apex Digital's first extensive response to the accusations, company executives say that the television maker, Sichuan Changhong Electric, falsely stated that Apex had failed to make payments owed Changhong, and that Changhong required Apex's president, David Ji, to sign agree-

ments unfavorable to Apex while held under arrest," the *New York Times* reported.

A lawyer surnamed Huang representing Apex said that while in detention on December 14, Ji was apparently compelled by Changhong staff to sign agreements giving the Chinese company "unfettered access" to Apex's financial records, the report said.

"Mr. Ji was required to sign documents that he had not agreed to and which had not been authorized by the board of directors at Apex," Huang was

quoted as saying.

Changhong's has received a credit extension of 3 billion yuan from the China Agricultural Bank Sichuan branch, according to a company press release on Wednesday.

That brings the total credit extended to Changhong for 2005 to 8.5 billion yuan, all coming from the big four domestic commercial banks, the Bank of China, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, China Construction Bank and China Agricultural Bank, the company said.

Shanghai port, the largest in China, handled 382 million tons of freight in 2004 to push it past Rotterdam, Netherlands in terms of capacity. The port handled 14.55 million containers, a 29 percent increase from the year before, making it the third largest port in the world.



Xinhua Photo

Shanghai Port World's Third Largest

By Sun Yongjian

Chinese state-owned oil firm China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC) stands to get a significant stake in a subsidiary of Russian oil giant Yukos since that company was confiscated by the Russian government, domestic and international media have reported the past week.

New that CNPC could be offered up to a 20 percent share in the large Yukos subsidiary Yuganskneftegaz, as reported by the *New York Times* last Thursday, was confirmed by an

Chinese Company Likely to Get Stake in Yukos Subsidiary

official from the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), *Beijing News* said Wednesday.

"Russian authorities are ready to set up a new company on the basis of Yuganskneftegaz and will allow CNPC to hold not more than 20 percent

of the shares of the new company," the NDRC source was quoted as saying.

Yuganskneftegaz extracted 11 percent of Russia's oil, the *New York Times* said.

Sources from within CNPC's Beijing operations have declined to comment.

"The allowance signals the opening of Russian oil fields to Chinese companies and Chinese investment. The state-owned Russian Gas Corporation no longer has any capability to expand investment after paying to purchase Yuganskneftegaz," Li Fuchuan,

an assistant researcher at the Institute of Eastern Europe and Middle Asia of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

"The 20 percent stake in the new company is very significant for China's oil strategy because the oil fields owned by the new company are the starting points of the Tayshet-Nakhodka oil pipeline, which stretches from Tayshet in eastern Siberia to the port of Pervoznaya, near Nakhodka on the coast of the Sea of Japan," Li said.

Chery Cars Could Appear on US Roads

By Qiu Jiaoning

Chinese carmaker Chery Automobile Co. has reached an agreement with Visionary Vehicles, a US-based company, to market its domestically-made automobiles in America, Xinhua reported Tuesday.

Visionary announced the day before that it would import up to 250,000 Chery-produced vehicles per year starting in 2007, a figure equivalent to three times the Chinese company's total production in 2003. The target was to introduce Chinese-made cars and trucks at prices 30 percent below the standard for comparable models at 250 dealerships in the US, Visionary said in its statement.

"We have an exclusive North American distribution agreement with Chery to bring in five brand-new models for delivery in 2006 to go on sale in January of 2007. Visionary will invest \$200 million in new Chery products for the US market and Allen & Co., an investment company in New

York, will raise the money," Visionary CEO Malcolm Bricklin told the *Detroit News* Monday.

It remains to be seen whether Chery, which ranks as China's eighth leading automaker in terms of sales, will be able to manufacture vehicles up to the quality standards of the US market. Visionary said it had hired Harbour Consulting of Michigan to review Chery's factories. "I will visit Chery's plant in late January for a two-week study of quality and other measures to see whether they can actually do what they want to accomplish," Ron Harbour, president of the firm, was quoted as saying by Bloomberg.

"The North American automobile market is complex, competitive and always changing," Chery President Yin Tongyao said in a written statement. "We are looking forward to working with Visionary Vehicles and taking advantage of Malcolm's expertise."

BOC Hong Kong Names New Execs

By Chu Meng

Bank of China's Hong Kong Holdings Ltd. appointed three senior managers last Friday, after two former executives were suspended and quit following an embezzlement scandal last year, the bank said in a statement on December 31, 2004.

Among the new appointments was deputy chief executive Gao Yingxin, it said.

An employee of BOC Hong Kong's communication departments surnamed Ye confirmed the information to *Beijing Today* this

Wednesday.

"The bank said it was confident that the new executives would enhance the corporate governance of the group and facilitate the further adoption of international best practices," Ye said. "The bank hired global recruitment company Spencer Stuart to help identify candidates during the last four months."

Gao Yingxin, previously CEO at Bank of China's investment bank BOC International Holdings, will become head of corporate banking at BOC Hong Kong

(Holdings), Heng Sheng Bank's Zhang Cheng has been hired as chief risk officer and Liao Renjun, formerly of IBM, is the new chief information officer.

BOC Hong Kong has been scrambling to reorganize itself and tighten internal controls after former deputy chief executives Zhu He and Ding Yansheng were found to have illegally used bank funds. Zhu and Ding were suspended on August 3 last year and resigned two weeks later.

The bank later said its former CEO Liu Jinbao and former general manager Zhang Debao were also under investigation for embezzlement.

Sinopec Prepped to Privatize Beijing Yanhua

By Sun Yongjian

Sinopec Corp. announced last Thursday that it is going to merge with Beijing Yanhua Petrochemical Co., which is listed as an H-share on the Hong Kong stock market, and make the local firm a private company under its umbrella.

The process would begin with the establishment of wholly-owned subsidiary Beijing Feitian, which would handle the merger agreement with Beijing Yanhua, the statement from Sinopec, one of China's leading crude oil and petrochemical companies listed in Hong Kong, New York, London

and Shanghai, said.

Under that agreement, Beijing Yanhua's board assented to the proposed privatization of the company by way of "merger by absorption," which entailed the cancellation of all of Beijing Yanhua's H shares, the statement said.

Beijing Feitian would pay a cancellation price of HK\$3.80 per Beijing Yanhua H share to the company's shareholders, with the total reaching approximately HK\$3.85 billion, it said.

The Sinopec subsidiary would also issue new registered capital to its parent company before the completion of the merger, the

company said. In the last step of the process, Beijing Yanhua would be delisted and eventually deregistered.

The proposed merger was meant to consolidate Beijing Yanhua's petrochemical business into Sinopec's integrated oil and petrochemical operations to create a leaner and more efficient group structure, the statement said.

The move should also effectively eliminate competition between the two sides, since Sinopec Corp. and Beijing Yanhua are both engaged in the petrochemical business with similar products and competing sales channels.

Non-circulating Shares Allowed to Transfer

By Sun Yongjian

The two domestic stock exchanges have begun allowing the transfer of ownership of non-circulating shares of listed companies in China's securities exchange markets, the Shenzhen and Shanghai exchanges announced Sunday on their websites.

Actual approval for such transfers was granted on Tuesday, when the exchanges' Implementation Rules of Transferring of Non-circulating Shares of Listed Companies took effect.

Non-circulating shares in domestically-listed companies total around 30 billion yuan, the *Beijing News* reported on Tuesday.

"This new policy will result in the creation of a C-share market, opening a new kind of domestic stock market after the A-share and B-share markets," the newspaper said.

Sun Land Group Pouring \$3 Bln into Harbin

By Qiu Jiaoning

America's Sun Land Group Corp. has signed a framework agreement with the government of Harbin, Heilongjiang Province to invest \$3 billion in the construction of the Haxi Development Zone in the northeastern city's Nangang District, Xinhua reported Sunday.

Daniel Meggin, CEO of Sun Land Group decided to make the investment after an on-site inspection in August 2004, the company said in a press release. Meggin's company and Harbin authorities would work together to set a phased plan for the construction of the new economic development zone, it said.

A project group would be set up to implement practical operations within 90 days of the signing of the agreement, Sun Land said.

Major Lube Makers Squaring Off

By Deng Minjie

The 170 million yuan first stage of PetroChina Lubricant's East China lubricant oil plant was completed in Taicang, Jiangsu Province on December 31, an employee of the PetroChina Co. subsidiary told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

"This plant uses state-of-the-art technology and should be the main production base for Kunlun-brand lubricant," Liu Changxue, an engineer from PetroChina Lubricant's project office said.

"We expect production of Kunlun lubricant to reach 100,000 tons in 2006. We have a 30 percent share of China's lubricating oil market and hope to grab 10 percent of the domestic market for high-end products."

Taicang is also the site of a massive lubricating oil plant owned by ExxonMobil, according to the Web site Sina.com.

An employee from PetroChina Lubricant's marketing department was quoted as saying that the American company had an 8.4 percent share of China's lubricant market, but sources from Exxon-Mobil's public relations department would not confirm those figures when contacted by *Beijing Today* on Wednesday.

Greater competition between the two companies seems all but inevitable in the domestic market.

Tour Service Plans Own Airline

By Sun Yongjian

China Youth Tour Service (CYTS) plans to set up its own airline, *Guangzhou Daily* reported last Saturday.

A source from CYTS confirmed the news on Tuesday.

Ding Chongyang, an executive at CYTS's securities department told *Beijing Today* that the company's CEO Jiang Jianning revealed the plan to the media last week after it was sent to the company's board for consideration.

"But Jiang hasn't revealed any exact schedule for the plan," Ding said.

Russia Selects Pacific Oil Route

Moscow, January 1 (The Asahi Shimbun) – The Russian government announced Friday it had agreed to the construction of an oil pipeline favored by Japan that would connect eastern Siberia to Russia's Pacific coast. That plan was chosen over a Chinese proposal to route the line to Daqing in northern China.

The Pacific route stretches 4,200 kilometers from Tayshet in eastern Siberia through Skovorodino, near the Chinese border, and through Khabarovsk to the port of Pervoznaya, near Nakhodka on the Sea of Japan coast. The pipeline is expected to have the capacity to pump about 80 million tons of crude oil annually.

Japan argued for the Pacific route on the basis that Moscow would benefit more from access to the vast expanse of the Asia-Pacific region. China wanted the Daqing connection to meet its own surging oil demands. Now that the route is decided,

Moscow is seeking an agreement with China to supply crude oil to China via rail, the sources said.

Analyst's Take:

The Pacific route from Tayshet to Nakhodka on the Sea of Japan coast will undoubtedly bring more benefit to Russia. First, compared with the Sino-Russia oil pipeline which was proposed from East Siberia's Angarsk to Daqing, this Pacific route can also supply a steady amount of oil to Japan and South Korea, as well as China. Therefore, Russia can gain influence over these three Asian energy-consuming powers. Second, this line can easily cross over the Pacific Ocean and convey oil to the western coast of America, which will inevitably influence Russia-US relations. Furthermore, countries benefiting from the pipeline will all become investors in this billion-dollar project, thus balancing the risk of construction better than if only

two countries were involved.

However for China's multilateral energy diplomatic policy, though Russia has agreed to build a branch line from Angarsk to Daqing, we won't depend on it alone. Last September, China began to build a similar crude oil pipeline from Kazakhstan to Xinjiang. Once completed in 2010, the 1,200-kilometer pipeline will be able to deliver up to 20 million tons of crude oil to western China annually.

The Russian government said the pipeline is expected to have the capacity to pump about 80 million tons of crude oil annually, but given complex technical and political concerns, whether or not it will reach that production capacity by the time of its completion has still to be determined.

— Zhao Junjie, Associate Professor and Special Consultant from the Institute of European Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Chu Meng)

Good Year for Internet Stocks

January 4, (USA Today) – Anyone focusing on the Big Three stock indexes ending 2004 on a strong note probably missed the real action: Internet stocks.

Unlike the grab-your-socks type of indiscriminate gains five years ago, not every Internet stock has performed well, which is why the USA Today Internet 50's 8.8% 2004 gain was on par with the Standard & Poor's 500's 9.0% rise.

But consumer-oriented Internet stocks, such as Yahoo and eBay, had a stellar year and powered the e-Consumer 25 to a remarkable 25.5% gain. The surge of consumers getting high-speed access and using the Internet for everything from shopping to searching drove these stocks to impressive performance.

While consumer Internet stocks stole the attention in 2004, the entire group has enjoyed a big bounce from 2002 bear market lows. The Internet 50 is now 142.2% above its low, far better than the Nasdaq composite's 95.3% bounce from its low.

That's a sign Internet stocks have grown up, says Scott Kessler, Internet stock analyst with S&P. "There are a fair number of Internet companies of the size and long-term staying power to be profitable investments for people," he says.

Kessler expects investors who stay alert to new initial public offerings and mergers in Internetland to make money again. "2005, like 2004, is going to provide a lot of opportunity for nice appreciation in Internet stocks," he says.

Analyst's Take:

The New Economy, which is driven by high tech stocks such as the IT industry, is commonly recognized as the brightest point in the modern economy of the US.

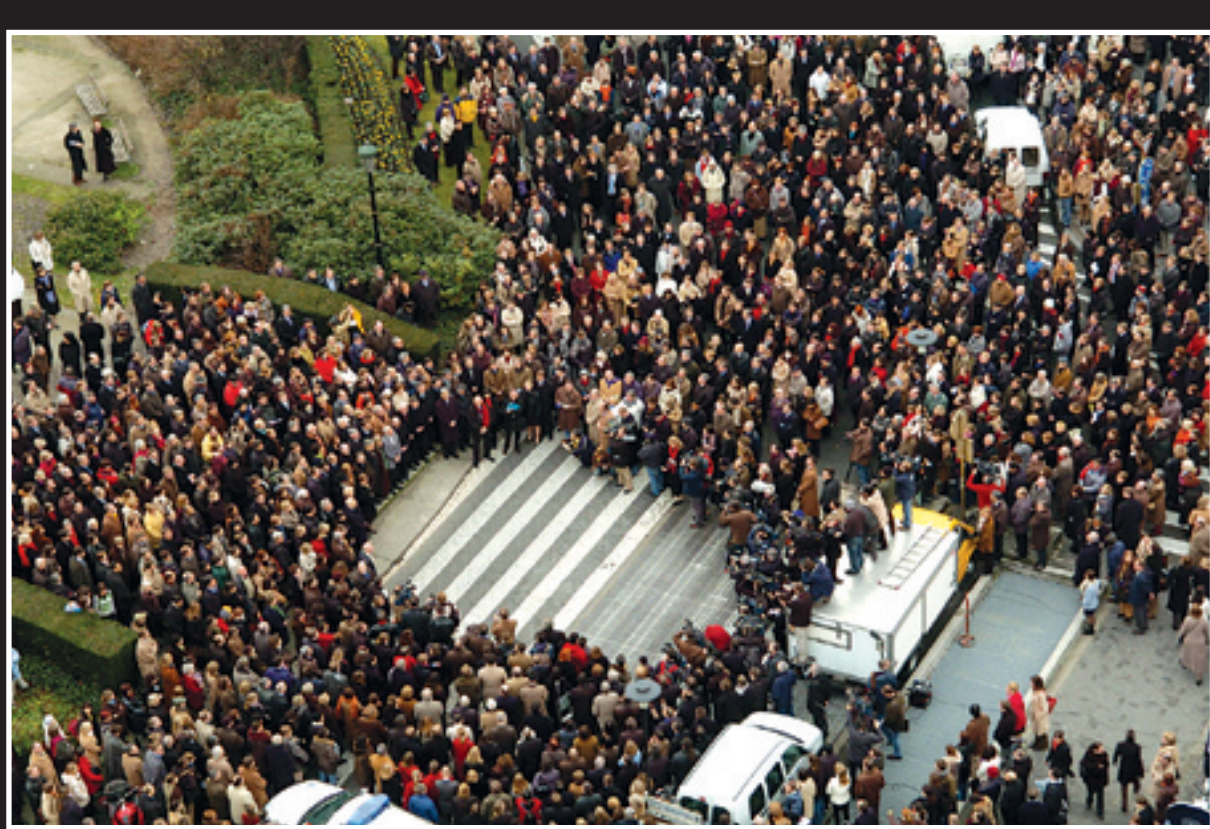
The New Economy has already been transformed into a new lifestyle for average citizens in America, meaning that it has been merged into people's daily lives and has become more and more necessary. For example, online purchasing is a very commonly used service.

The New Economy has also made important contributions to the national economy and has become a major economic driving force. That's why the high tech industries have attracted great investment in the US.

In China, the New Economy still has a long way to go to catch up. For example, big Internet companies like Sohu.com, Sina.com or Dangdang.com have not been listed in the domestic stock markets, and few people use the Internet for purchasing goods or services.

However, as time goes on, the high tech lifestyle will merge into people's lives here as well.

— Xu Yiding, analyst with Southwest Securities Firm (Sun Yongjian)



Europe Mourns Tsunami Victims

People gather in the Schuman Square, Brussels, to pay their respects to the victims of the tsunami on Wednesday.

A couple are mourning for the German victims in the tsunami Wednesday, in Berlin's downtown Friedrichstraße Station. By now, 60 German citizens have been confirmed dead in the disaster; more than 1,000 Germans are still missing. Xinhua Photos



Pyongyang to Host World Trade Fair

Beijing, December 31 (Yonhap) – North Korea will hold an international trade fair in May in an ambitious step towards an open economy and has already invited American and European firms as possible trade partners, a Chinese report said Friday, quoting a North Korean official.

The fair will take place from May 16-19 and up to 300 companies from the United States and European countries have been invited by Pyongyang, said the International Herald Leader, a newspaper published by China's state-run Xinhua News Agency, quoting a North Korean embassy official in Beijing.

Local Report:

China's non-governmental enterprises have so far had no access to North Korea's market in any significant scale. North Korea has published the news of the trade fair to the Chinese media in order to invite Chinese enterprises officially. It indicates that North Korea is ready to open up its economy to the world.

North Korea has carried out an economic adjustment policy over the last two years that is similar with China's opening-up policy, and this has stimulated huge demand in the North Korean market. Therefore, now is the right

time to hold a trade fair. The North Korean government has revealed its intention to attract more Chinese enterprises, so it could be a good chance for Chinese enterprises to enter the market.

A North Korean embassy official in Beijing said that the government has set forth some regulations aiming at attracting more investment from overseas. "We will offer preferential policies to those Chinese enterprises that invest in our country," he added.

The current consumption level in North Korea is close to that of China in the 1980s. North Korea is extremely short of civil products of light industry, most of which come from imports. It has a very strong dependency on food imports while maintaining strong seafood and ginseng exports. "In general, North Korea focuses on importing machinery, light industry products, electronic products and food. Meanwhile, mineral resources can be ranked among the most important exports from the country," said Cheng Peng, vice director of the China-North Korea Cultural Exchange Corporation. Cheng added that current business activity in North Korea is relatively quiet, even though the economy shows signs of revival.

— Xinhuanet, December 30 (Qiu Jiaoning)

Japan Mulls FTA Policy

Tokyo, December 21 (The Japan Times) – The government on December 21 approved a basic plan to promote free-trade agreements (FTA), prioritizing accords with Asian trading partners to help build an East Asian community.

It also adopted a set of 12 criteria to choose potential FTA partners, envisioning future negotiations with trading partners outside East Asia. These were decided at a meeting of cabinet ministers involved in FTA negotiations, said an official at the Prime Minister's Official Residence.

Japan has already signed FTA

with Singapore and Mexico, and agreed in November with the Philippines on a basic accord. Talks are now under way with Thailand, Malaysia and South Korea.

The idea of setting up an East Asian community is meant to enhance regional cooperation based on the ASEAN-plus-three process involving Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states plus Japan, China and South Korea. Japan has suggested that Australia, New Zealand and India be admitted as members of the proposed community.

The criteria for selecting potential partners include whether an FTA would help strengthen Japan's economic power and solve political and diplomatic issues, whether it would help strengthen Japan's position in international negotiations such as at the World Trade Organization, and whether it would help secure and diversify stable imports of food and other resources for Japan.

Local Report:

Japan's Economic and Social Research Institute released a report last Friday saying that if Japan managed to sign a free trade pact with China, it would promote Japan's economy significantly and push its GDP

up by 0.5%.

The report basically evaluated the results of the FTA negotiations between Japan and 18 other countries. It also argued that Japan's GDP would rise by 0.24% once Japan agreed an FTA with ASEAN and that agreements with Mexico and Singapore would boost Japan's GDP by around 0.24% and 0.002% respectively.

Japan's government places particular emphasis on the effect of an FTA on agriculture. However, the report said that an FTA would have a marginal effect on Japan's farming and fishing industry, at least in respect of pacts with the US and Australia.

— Oriental Morning Post, January 1 (Deng Minjie)

Florida Teen Credited for Firefox

Key Biscayne, January 5 (UPI) – A Key Biscayne, Fla., teenager now attending Stanford University is getting credit and national attention for the development of the new web browser, Firefox.

The browser was introduced two months ago by the Mozilla Foundation, a not-for-profit organization that promotes "choice and innovation" on the Internet.

The Miami Herald and the London Times have given much of the credit for Firefox to Blake Ross, 17, who is now attending Stanford.

Computer experts have been quoted as saying Firefox is faster than Microsoft's Internet Explorer, more versatile and also offers more protection from viruses and spam.

Ross began playing with computers when he was just 7, and at 14 was offered an internship at Netscape in California. He worked there for three summers and became familiar with Mozilla.

The organization was already working on a new browser but now gives Ross and his friend David Hyatt the credit for making the critical breakthrough that led to Firefox.

Frankfurt Chases London Stock Exchange

Frankfurt, January 4 (AFP) – Deutsche Boerse is upping the stakes in the battle for the London Stock Exchange, with media reports suggesting that the German stock market operator is ready to raise its offer and might sell its Clearstream unit.

The Financial Times reported that the Frankfurt stock exchange was ready to compromise on every aspect of its bid and was even willing to consider selling off Luxembourg-based Clearstream, which many observers saw as the main stumbling block to a tie-up.

But a Deutsche Boerse spokesman rejected the report. "Clearstream is an integral part of Deutsche Boerse," he said.

The London market believes that having all of Deutsche Boerse's trading, clearing and settlement activities under one roof could disadvantage LSE users in terms of prices. So far, Deutsche Boerse has promised to leave existing contractual arrangements with the London Clearing House in place.

Morgan Stanley Cuts Thai Growth Forecast

Singapore, January 5 (AFP) – US investment bank Morgan Stanley has lowered Thailand's economic growth forecast this year to 5.7 percent from 6.0 percent due to the impact of the tsunami disaster on the country's tourism industry.

While the affected Thai provinces account for only 2.7 percent of the country's GDP, the damage to the tourism sector could have a "multiplier effect" on the entire economy, Morgan Stanley said in a report Tuesday.

Morgan Stanley maintained its 4.5 percent GDP growth forecast for Indonesia as the tsunami damage has been largely confined to the province of Aceh, nearest to the epicenter of the December 26 earthquake that triggered the massive waves.

"Given that the energy (mainly oil and natural gas) production facilities in Aceh or Northern Sumatra have survived the tsunami, the overall damage to Indonesia's economy appears to be minimal," it said.

It also noted that the impact on Malaysia is minimal and maintained its growth forecast for the country at 4.8 percent.

Samsung Develops Super LED

Seoul, January 4 (AFP) – South Korea's Samsung Electronics has developed the world's largest organic light emitting diode (OLED) display panel for high-definition televisions.

The 21-inch (53.34-centimeter) OLED panel outperforms existing liquid crystal displays (LCDs) in brightness, slimness and power efficiency, the firm said.

Organic LED screens generate their own light, eliminating the need for back lighting and allowing equipment makers to develop slimmer and more power efficient monitors.

Samsung said its new portable display would be used for televisions and computer monitors.

Samsung, one of the world's largest LCD makers, said its new OLED display panel, an upgrade on its own 15-inch product, uses technology that can be easily mass-produced on the company's existing LCD production lines.

The global market for organic LEDs is forecast to grow to US\$830 million this year from US\$330 million last year.

The Best & Worst Managers

January 10 (Business Weekly) – To decide which executives should be lauded and which deserved a different kind of renown, we surveyed our staff of more than 130 writers and editors in New York and in 20 bureaus around the world.

The best managers: Jeffrey Immelt (General Electric); Steven Reinemund (PepsiCo); Hector Ruiz (Advanced Micro Devices); Steven Spielberg, Jeffrey Katzenberg and David Geffen (DreamWorks SKG); Robert Nardelli (Home Depot); Jack Rowe (Aetna); Joseph Tucci (EMC); Gary Forsee (Sprint); John Henry (Boston Red Sox); Henning Kagermann (SAP); Anne Mulcahy (Xerox); Edward Breen (Tyco); Phil Knight (Nike); Linus Torvalds (Open Source Development Labs); Chung Mong Koo (Hyundai); Steven Murphy (Rodale); Jerry Perenchio (Univision).

The worst managers: Raymond Gilmartin (Merck); David Smith (Sinclair Broadcast Group); Franklin Raines (Fannie Mae); Michael Eisner (Walt Disney); Gary Bettman (National Hockey League); Scott Livengood (Krispy Kreme); Howard Pien (Chiron).

Local People Open Hearts, Wallets to Aid Tsunami Victims

By Liu Zhaoxi

Street artist Li Weiguo fished some hard-earned cash from his pockets and turned it over on Monday at a donation center run by the Beijing Red Cross.

The 19 yuan, Li's contribution to local efforts to help the millions suffering after the December 26 tsunamis in South and Southeast Asia, represented half the money the young man had earned over a weekend of making music on an overpass in Xidan.

He is just one of the many Beijingers who have answered the international call for aid after a



Teachers and students at Tsinghua University line up to donate to the campaign to help tsunami-stricken countries. Xinhua Photo

massive earthquake sparked tsunamis that swamped several countries, killing more than 155,000 people as of Thursday.

Engineer Zhao Tong, who gave at the same donation center on Monday, said he felt compelled to contribute by the gravity of the disaster.

"I thought this disaster would be over in a few days. But it just kept getting worse and the death toll just kept rising," Zhao said.

Thousands of people in Beijing have donated to the cause since last Thursday, when a youth volunteer group previously set up to assist at the 2008 Olympics and the China Red Cross

called on the public to give to help those in need. By yesterday, the Beijing Red Cross received around 2.6 million yuan in donations from businesses and individuals, even a group of cancer patients, Liu Yanjun, secretary general of the city's Red Cross society told *Beijing Today*.

More than 100 donation boxes have been set up in hotels and communities across the city and Beijing Red Cross staff have been working around the clock answering phones and handling donations. Prominent athletes, artists and pop stars have given their time and money in organizing and participating in donation drive events.

Going, Going, Gone



Photo by Lou Qiyong

By Chu Meng

The old Xiushui, or Silk Street, Market was finally closed and demolished this Wednesday to make way for New Silk Street, a multi-storey building that stands just meters away.

The only remaining task for the local economic administration center that used to oversee the popular clothing market is to clear away the rubble.

At 9 am on Wednesday morning, three police wagons arrived on the scene and officers tried to maintain order as angry vendors reluctant to move next door crowded into the market area in a vain effort to save it.

Silk Street vendor Zhao Jinghua told the *Mirror* newspaper on Wednesday, "My license is legally valid until 2008, so demolishing this market is a violation of my rights. It might be closed, but I'm still going to come here and sell my stuff everyday from the back of my tricycle."

Other vendors donned white T-shirts that read "oppose the savage demolition," and a bolder few held theirs up in front of the assembled news television cameras, hoping to plead their case. Many vowed to stay all day and all night, but in the end, the wrecking ball won out.



Photo by Jia Ting

Freaky Flakes

By Zhou Ying

The unexpected first snow of 2005 blanketed Beijing in white flakes on Wednesday afternoon.

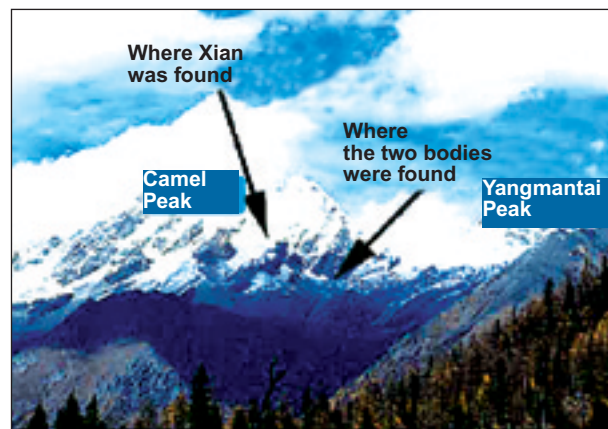
The snowfall seemed to catch the Beijing Meteorological Administration off guard, as its weather prediction for the day said nothing of snow.

The flakes started falling around 3 pm and kept coming down for nearly eight hours, *Beijing Youth Daily* said Thursday. Thanks to quick action from transportation authorities, the snowfall did not have a serious impact on road safety nor did it significantly slow traffic flow during rush hour.



Xian Wenmin suffered no serious injury in the accident.

Xian was carried back to safety after three days alone on the mountain. (left)



Climbing Tragedy Leaves One Alive

By Wang Fang

After spending three days and nights trapped and alone on a mountain glacier, an editor for the website Sohu.com was rescued last week and is in stable condition. But one of the first things she had to do after returning to civilization in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, was oversee the cremation of her husband, who died on the mountain along with a local guide, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

Xian Wenming, her husband and experienced climber Wang Zhuo and their guide, Lu Zhongron, set out on a trek up Sichuan's Siguniang Mountain on December 24, but five days later the small team met with tragedy.

"We left from Rilong town in Xiaojin County, planning to summit Camel Peak on Siguniang Moun-

tain in five or six days," Xian told the Sichuan-based *Tianfu Zaobao* newspaper. "But when we were climbing on December 29, the glacier broke under the feet of my husband and the guide. They plunged down and were soon buried in ice and snow.

"I saw everything but there was nothing I could do."

The accident left Xian stranded without a guide on the mountain for three days. "On that icy cliff, I had only the tent and nine chocolates to ward off the cold," she was quoted as saying.

Climbers Xu Huichuan and Cao Weiqing found the bodies the next day.

"We met Lu, Wang and Xian on December 26 when we were on the way to Yangmantai Peak. We knew

they were heading for Camel Peak. Then when we passed a crevasse near Camel Peak on December 30, we saw a human hand sticking out from a thick snow drift. We immediately feared something had happened to the three people we had met just four days before," Xu told *Tianfu Zaobao*.

They immediately sent word to local authorities to organize a search party. "After we got the report, we sent out our crew and found two male bodies at the site," rescue team member Ma Qishou said. "We also found Xian and rushed her to a local hospital. She was alright except for a slight injury to her left hand."

After staying in Xiaojin County a few days, Xian on Tuesday traveled to Chengdu, where her husband's body was cremated on Thursday.

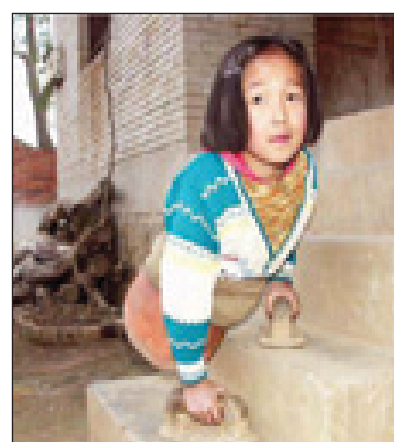
Stepping towards Hope

By Zhou Ying

After sitting on a basketball for five years as a way of moving around, a nine-year-old girl has hopes of being able to walk again. Doctors at the China Rehabilitation Research Center in Fengtai District began treatment yesterday to fit her for artificial legs.

Qian Hongyan, a native of Yunnan Province, had her legs and lower torso amputated after she was involved in a severe traffic accident at the age of four. Her family later had the idea of having her perch on a basketball so she could push herself around and be mobile.

Three experts from the research center flew to Qian's hometown on Monday to bring her back to Beijing



for treatment, which should take six months.

Qian's teacher Zi Hongying told the *Beijing News* on Tuesday that Qian was very shy when she first

got to school. "Teachers or students had to carry her on their backs to the toilet," Zi recalled.

Over the years, Qian has changed basketballs six times and it is far from a perfect system, Zi said. "After all those years on a basketball, her bottom has got blistered and swollen."

Chen Yawei, one of the three experts, told the *Beijing News* after the preparatory examination that Qian was very suitable for getting artificial limbs and she had already moved to a wheelchair, ending her days on a basketball forever.

"The operations will cost nearly 90,000 yuan, most of which is coming from social donations," Chen added.

Revised Driving Tests Put Brakes on New Licenses

By Dong Nan

Hopeful new drivers faced a whole new set of skills tests on Tuesday when revised, more difficult driving exams started running as per Ministry of Public Security orders. Unlike in the past, the failure rate was surprisingly high.

Nearly half the examinees at driving schools in Fengtai and Haidian districts did not make the grade that first day, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

"I was one of 14 students who took the test this morning and only one of us passed," a student in Haidian surnamed Liu confessed.

The new test is bro-

ken into three sections – theory, parking and on-road. Skill checks such as driving around obstacles and along a one-way bridge, handling right turns and up-hill starts, changing gears in a rigorous 100-meter course and navigating uneven, zigzagging and narrow roads, have been added or upped in difficulty.

New drivers caused 95 traffic accidents in 2004, resulting in 39 deaths, according to data released by the Beijing government at the end of last year. The challenging new test is intended to produce more careful and skillful new drivers and decrease the grisly toll of poor driving.

All the School's a Stage

By Lu Xiaonan

Beijing's first in-school children's acting troupe was established recently at Dongcheng District's Fensiting primary school, now home to the first campus branch of the Beijing Children's Theatre Company.

The troupe is well-organized and complete, consisting of playwrights, directors, singers and dancers and a drama club, all under direction of artists from the theatre company, Fensiting principal Wang Huan was quoted as saying by Xinhua on Tuesday.

"Children in this troupe have adapted many stories from their textbooks into plays," Wang said. "They also won the grand prize in the Beijing Campus Children's Play Competition on Children's Day last year."

Youth drama was an ideal way to cultivate knowledge as well as foster cooperation, artistic appreciation and self-expression among students, she said.

The Beijing Children's Theatre Company planned to set up children's troupes at primary schools across the city in the next two to three years to give lots of local kids the chance to get into theatre at a young age, Xinhua said.

Dead on Arrival

By Liu Zhaoxi

When police in Guangdong Province found a few men trying to move a dead body near a train station last week, they had not stumbled upon a crime scene but a sad, strange story of poverty and friendship.

More than a month ago, Li Shaowei, 61, persuaded his neighbor and life-long friend Zuo Jiabin, 54, to leave their home in Hunan Province and go with him to Fujian Province to take up work at a fiber-optic cable installation project. Zuo was hoping to make some money to build a house in their village, Li told *Southern Metropolitan Daily* on Monday.

On New Year's Day, Zuo, who had high blood pressure, suddenly passed out after having a few drinks with Li and some other friends. Li and the others took him to a nearby hospital, where the doctors diagnosed Zuo as having suffered a severe stroke and gave him little chance to live. After a few hours of fruitless emergency treatment, Li and his friends asked the doctors to give up and Zuo died soon after.

"We did not have any money," Li told the newspaper in explaining why he did not go all out to save his friend. "The doctors said he was gone." After his friend died, Li was determined to find a way to send his body back to their hometown for burial.

"He died away from home, so he had to be sent back," Li said, adding it was in keeping with local custom.

That evening, Li purchased a few tickets for a train to Guangzhou. Li carried Zuo's body on his back as if he were merely sick, boarded the train



Li wrapped Zuo's body to try to sneak him onto a train to his hometown.

Photo by Zhao Yan

with the other friends and sat the body down. But the ruse was up when they got to Guangzhou, and police found them trying to cover Zuo's body as they prepared to get on another train back home.

The police quickly informed Zuo's family, who rushed to Guangzhou. Members of the family later said they were very angry with Li at first, but later understood he had only good intentions.

The Guangzhou police have not charged Li with any crime.

Li was quoted as saying he greatly regretted not immediately telling Zuo's family about his death as well as taking Zuo to Fujian at all.

On Monday afternoon, Li and Zuo's family went to Fujian to clarify the cause of Zuo's death.

Press reports on the case have elicited some unexpected responses. A man in Shenzhen contacted *Southern Metropolitan Daily* on Tuesday with a pledge of a job at his farm for Li, whom he said showed impressive honesty and loyalty. A Chinese reader in the US, who had seen the story online, also contacted the paper on Wednesday offering to donate money to Li.

By Wang Fang

The plan to introduce a "clean pension" scheme for government employees in a district in Hangzhou, the provincial capital of Zhejiang Province, hit an obstacle on January 1, 2005, Xinhua reported.

Zhu Zhongyi, secretary of the Discipline Inspection Commission of Xiacheng District of Hangzhou told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday, "To be prudent, the Discipline Inspection Commission of Hangzhou has sent our draft to the provincial Discipline Inspection Commission. Since it is undergoing assessment, the scheme cannot be carried out as we planned."

Introduced by Xiacheng District government at the end of December 2004, the pension scheme was officially called a "Guaranteed Money System for Clean Government." The idea was to guard against corruption, with more than 1,500 government employees in Xiacheng District of Hangzhou Government standing to receive pensions of up to 300,000 yuan upon retirement so long as they are proven to have been clean and honest dur-

Clean Pension Scheme Delayed

ing their tenure.

Zhu told *Beijing Today* that the pension scheme would be based on supplements paid by an official each year and subsidies paid by the local government. For example, a new public servant at the age of 22 will be required to pay 500 yuan yearly while the local government will subsidize 150 yuan every year, with the combined sum standing at 650 yuan, Zhu added.

In addition, the amounts of money increase according to the length of service and the specific work posts. That means a public servant at the level of the section chief could get up to 300,000 yuan after retirement.

Those who have received warnings or punishments will have 20 percent of the total deducted; those who have been demoted will lose 60 percent and those who have been expelled from office will lose the

"It's a resolution to track down the root of corruption. This is also what developed countries do to deal with corruption."

"Since the policy-makers behind this clean pension scheme are also the beneficiaries from it, it is quite difficult to say that the scheme would be fair and just."

"This scheme only says that the guaranteed money will be paid back upon retirement. But what will happen if some government employees want to quit their jobs?"

entire amount, Zhu explained to *Beijing Today*.

Though the scheme has been welcomed by local officials, not everyone believes the idea will tackle corruption effectively.

Xu Jianfeng, vice-director of the Economic Institute under the Zhejiang Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: **it's a supple-**

mentary method, but not effective on its own

More attention should be paid to building a power scrutiny system to standardize the personnel system and reform the financial management and administrative examination and approval system. The anti-corruption work should be incorporated in devel-

oping institutionalized, standardized and legalized governance.

Huang Chuangping, member of Hangzhou People's Political Consultative Conference: **it's a resolution to track down the root of corruption**

It is important to change the method of cracking down on corruption from using administrative power to building up a beneficial system to prevent government employees taking bribes or breaking the law. This is also what developed countries do to deal with corruption.

Tang Yijun, secretary-general of the Zhejiang Provincial Discipline Inspection Commission: **we encourage the scheme**

We encourage the implementation of the clean pension scheme. It's a way of using economic means to keep corruption within limits. We issued the Zhejiang Anti-Corruption Precaution System Regulations last year, proposing six systems: ideological education, restraining administrative power, supervision and management, legal checks, encouragement of clean governance and proactive steps. The clean pension is in line with all these ideas. It demands enormous financial support so we want to carry it out in Xiacheng District in Hangzhou as a trial so we can see the results.

Yang Xiaojun, professor at the law department of the State Administration College: **it is a way to raise government employees' salaries in a disguised form**

Since the policy-makers behind this clean pension scheme are also the beneficiaries from it, it is quite difficult to say that the scheme would be fair and just. Additionally, if the clean pension scheme is promoted, the public cannot monitor what the government will do to collect funds to subsidize its employees.

Xie Qingkui, professor at the government management faculty

of Beijing University: **the scheme is against the Constitution**

The law does not provide any reference to the so called clean pension scheme. The plan involves deducting money from government employees' salaries but it is against the principles of the Constitution which protects personal assets from being taken by anybody or any organizations. I don't think this scheme should be carried out.

Mao Shoulong, professor at the law department of Renmin University: **more social problems will be created**

According to this scheme, the government employees will get a pension which is several times higher than other workers. In the context of the nationwide anti-corruption mission that is under way, the scheme will enlarge the gap in income between government employees and other people.

Yu Hai, professor at the sociology department of Fudan University: **self-discipline is not enough**

To reinforce the building of an honest and clean government, encouraging moral self-discipline is not enough. There needs to be an institution such as the clean pension scheme to restrain government employees from giving in to corruption.

Yang Zhenliang, a Hangzhou citizen: **I don't understand the scheme**

The scheme implies that the government employees do not need to take bribes since the government will provide them with lots of money. But say a government employee can take more than one million yuan of bribes, will he take it or not? I bet he will because it is much more than the pension could provide. The scheme doesn't guarantee the government employees will refrain from thinking of taking bribes.

Zhang Zhan, a government employee in Beijing: **the scheme is not practical**

I am only 26 and I don't know if I am going to stay in the government for the rest of my life. This scheme only says that the guaranteed money will be paid back upon retirement. But what will happen if some government employees want to quit their jobs? As a government employee, I don't have as high a salary as my peers who work in companies. I think the deducted guaranteed money would create a financial burden for me since I already have to pay other insurance fees and taxes.



China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation had hoped to hold the banquet prior to Spring Festival

Charity Banquet Postponed

By Wang Fang

China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation, China's largest non-governmental anti-poverty organization, announced on Monday that the charity banquet planned for February 1 would have to be postponed, *Beijing News* reported.

Liu Wenkui, deputy secretary-general of the foundation, told *Beijing News* that they had hoped to hold the banquet prior to Spring Festival, which falls on February 9, but that it would have to be postponed owing to "insufficient preparation."

The plan was to raise money by holding a lavish state banquet at the Great Hall of the People and invite state leaders to attend, the idea being that people would pay more to sit next to a top official. "This would be China's first charity banquet featuring top officials," Liu said.

According to Liu, the money to be raised will be spent on vocational training for young people from poverty-stricken areas and in rewarding those who have contributed to poverty relief.

"Elite people from all walks of life are welcome to the banquet, but they will have to pay an admission fee," Liu told Xinhua. The foundation planned to issue seven kinds of tickets with face val-

ues ranging from 1,800 yuan up to 38,000 yuan for a seat next to a top official.

Liu said that due to accommodation capacity, about 3,500 to 4,000 tickets would be issued at most and the foundation planned to hold such Spring Festival charity banquets once a year from 2005 to 2007.

People have different feelings towards this novel way of raising charity funds.

Shan Meng, reporter with *Beijing Times*: **this banquet benefits everyone**

This is a new experiment to raise funds for charity while spending relatively little. This plan is based on the theory of market exchange. Rich people around the world pay a great deal of money for the honor of sitting next to a top official. China also has this tradition. In the past, when people donated money to build something, like schools, bridges or roads, their names would be engraved into a monument for people to remember and to show respect. It is similar to the charity banquet. The rich and the poor will both benefit from this banquet.

Sun Zhenglong, editor with *Qilu Evening News*: **the luxury banquet doesn't fit into the theme of helping the poor**

Society has the responsibility to encourage people to

donate money to help young people living in poverty; however, it is not necessary to hold a state banquet. State banquets are for top officials to treat their foreign counterparts and distinguished guests. If the foundation is truly to work for the poor, why can't they hold a more simple ceremony?

Li Xing'an, college student at the sociology department of Nanjing University: **this might be unfair to some donors**

Obviously, people who want to be present at the banquet would regard it an honorable thing to sit together with top officials. But what about people who have already donated more than 38,000 yuan but are not able to attend this charity banquet? What will the organizers do for them?

Li Yundong, reporter with *Lianhe Zaobao*, a Singapore based newspaper: **a new way to help the poor**

As the well-known saying goes, "whether the cat is black or white, as long as it can catch mice, it is a good cat." This applies here, in that people should feel free to try different means to contribute to charity. I feel it's a good idea to ask tycoons, celebrities and entrepreneurs to raise money to help with poverty in China. This kind of banquet should be held every year.

Yang Tao, professor at the

law department of Jiangxi University: **there's no need to criticize people who donate money**

People will feel happy if their donation can be recognized by the officials and in this sense, the banquet provides them with this opportunity. We understand that people donate for different reasons and some may just want to get a little bit of fame by donating money and having dinner with top officials. Does this really matter? I suppose as long as they make a contribution, it is okay for them to be there.

Andrene Hunts, student of law at the University of Sheffield: **this kind of thing might work in China**

As a specialist in tax law, I know that in China the current tax law is quite prudent towards enterprises, allowing them certain tax exemptions in return for donations. However, it is not a general practice in the West.

Frances Wang, an NGO employee: **nothing to get too worked up about**

Having been working in an NGO for three years, I have seen many kinds of charity banquet though this is the first time I have heard about a state banquet for donors. This is a game solely for the rich. Holding a banquet is not against the law and what the organizers need to tell the public is how they are going to monitor the whole donating process and how they are going to use the money.

Soundbites

"I'm here testifying against prisoner abuse. It just wasn't right," a **former Navy SEAL** said Tuesday. The sailor, whose identity was not revealed, said he initiated a criminal investigation into prisoner abuse in Iraq because of the brutality he witnessed weighed heavily on his conscience. The accused Navy SEAL lieutenant, who also was not identified, is accused of punching Iraqi **Manadel al-Jamadi** and allowing other Navy personnel to abuse the prisoner, who died a short time later at Abu Ghraib prison.

"There are many people whose level of grief has reached abnormal proportions," said **Dr. R. Reuban**, a psychiatrist at a psychiatric ward in the Sri Lankan city of Galle, an area hammered by the tsunami, where some patients banged their heads against the wall; some, wide-eyed, just stared vacantly, and others mumbled "the sea is coming". These patients are being treated for post-traumatic stress disorder but doctors worry the debilitating condition will overtake many survivors.

"I think when more players find out about it, they'll get involved," said **Jalen Rose** of the Toronto Raptors about the program, called "Shoot-a-Thon," in which Tracy McGrady, Kobe Bry-

ant, **Jermaine O'Neal** and four other NBA players have promised to donate \$1,000 for every point they score in a game later this week to help victims of the Indian Ocean earthquake-tsunami. The program hopes to raise about US\$250,000. The money raised will go to UNICEF.

"Everybody says he was a prince of a guy. He did records for rappers, gangster rap and hip-hop, but we haven't found anyone who had any particular problem with him yet," said a detective in Detroit about the slaying of **Amjed A. Abdallah**, the owner of the studio where hip-hop megastar **Eminem** recorded the multimillion-selling CD, *The Slim Shady LP*. Abdallah was found shot to death inside the studio on Wednesday and investigators had not determined a motive in the slaying.

"I think this should be regarded as an example. I now feel 40-42 years old in all aspects of my life," **Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi** told journalists at his end-of-year news conference on Thursday. The 68-year old prime minister disappeared from public view a few times over the past year, emerging afterwards with a new look: a hair transplant and a face lift.

(Edited by Lene Chau)

Who Can Protect China's Police?

Threats to body and mind are natural parts of police work, but reports from around the country indicate that many officers suffer from severely poor health and mental illness, putting them at real risk and casting doubt over their abilities to effectively serve and protect.



Local police were called on to work heavy hours during the SARS outbreak in 2002.

By Zhou Ying

The deaths of three police officers in Chongqing Municipality in only two days last December sent tremors through China's law enforcement community, and seemed clear testimony to some that law enforcers in this country are being pulled down by the physical danger and mental exhaustion they face every day.

Threats to body and mind are natural parts of police work, but reports from around the country indicate that many officers suffer from severely poor health and mental illness, putting them at real risk and casting doubt over their abilities to effectively serve

and protect.

Reacting to the troubling findings of several recent surveys, the Ministry of Public Security decided on Sunday that all candidates for public security positions or potential students at law enforcement academies had to first undergo psychological evaluations as of this May. The move is part of a larger campaign to protect China's legal enforcement institutions, its police officers and the public.

Routine assaults

There were at least six cases of police suffering assault or injury on the job in a two-month span last year in the city of Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, report-

ed *Oriental Outlook* magazine. In the most severe of the incidents between March and April 2004, an officer was stabbed in the head by a criminal wielding a screwdriver.

A total of 6,550 police officers around the country were wounded or died in the line of duty in 2003, statistics from the Ministry of Public Security reveal, and the death toll among cops hit 476.

That translates to more than one cop dead and 17 injured every day.

Shijiazhuang policeman Yu Zhong told *Oriental Outlook* last year that many officers he knew, especially those who worked at 110 emergency call response centers, had been assaulted while carrying out their duties.

The situation in Beijing is no better. Li Jie, a patrol officer at the Haidian public security substation told *Beijing Today* on Monday that attacks on police were commonplace. "An officer can't really call himself a cop if he hasn't been beaten," he grimly joked.

Liu Zihua, a member of the Beijing Political Consultative Committee, said on Tuesday that of the total 4,197 cases between 2001 and early 2003 in which local police faced dangerous situations, 10,567 officers were beaten or verbally abused.

Those injuries, and the idea that attackers could lurk around any corner, have worn down

many officers' mental endurance and had serious impact on their morale, Liu said.

Physical toll

The deaths of the three policemen in two days in Chongqing early last month shocked China's law enforcement community and the public.

The first death occurred on December 1 when Peng Xuesong, deputy director of the Baitao public security bureau in Peiling district, Chongqing, who had only been in the police for three months, ended his own life by jumping off a 12-storey building.

A member of his family later told the *Beijing News* on condition of anonymity that Peng had tried to commit suicide in November by overdosing on medication, but he had been found in time and saved.

Peng left behind a suicide note explaining he could no longer take the heavy pressure and physical and mental exhaustion of being a police officer.

The same day Peng killed himself, Du Chenghua, 49, a deputy police team leader in Chongqing, died of liver failure as a result of excessive workload.

And by unfortunate coincidence, a heart attack claimed the life of a 42-year-old policeman Peng Shijie from Erlang County the following day.

Nearly half the police in Chongqing's public security system suffered from chronic

found these results completely astonishing," Chen Yijun, director of the Wenzhou bureau's public affairs department was quoted as saying.

Depression and anxiety plagued the majority of police, the survey showed. Over 40% of the officers surveyed said they suffered depression, 37.6% had phobias and 35% showed symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorder.

However, Zhang Zhensheng, a professor in police psychology from Chinese People's Public Security University told *Beijing Today* on Wednesday that he did not think the situation was so severe.

"Law enforcement is a very special profession, so you cannot judge police according to the same criteria as ordinary people," Zhang said.

He said his own studies indicated that 10% to 20% of police officers suffered from mental illness, through he admitted those were not acceptable figures.

A previous survey once showed that the average cop witnesses more horrible events in three years than most people see in their lifetimes, an occupational hazard that possibly helps explain the high frequency of mental trauma.

Heavy pressure was the main culprit in police officer's mental problems, Zhang said. "As far as I know, most police have to work an average of 14 hours a day and they aren't even well paid," he said.

It is precisely those conditions that turn many people away from law enforcement, which then explains why police stations are understaffed and officers overworked, according to Zhang. For China's massive population, there are only around 1.7 million police officers nationwide, a proportion far lower than the 500 people to one cop ratio standard in many countries.

"They not only have to do their duties, but often other government departments seek police help for backing up their actions, from planned parenthood to campaigns to inoculate pets, and those trivialities can leave officers exhausted, bored and whiny," he said.

Taking action

This grave situation has drawn attention from the Ministry of Public Security, which set up a special investigation team in 2003 to look into and solve the problem of deteriorating physical and mental health among police.

Zhang is a member of the team and said the group had come up with three measures for helping police with mental problems.

First, a special website accessible to public security personnel only, was launched on December 30, 2004, to make free counseling and psychological advice accessible to police nationwide. "More than 50 psychology experts around China have signed on to counsel cops and I hope that number will grow to 100 by the end of 2008," the professor said.

More than 12,700 police had already logged on to the website, he added on Wednesday.

Psychological testing was also going to be made a mandatory part of the process of screening people for police forces and academies, Zhang said. "That way we can choose people who have the most psychological strength."

The content and standards of the tests are still being discussed among Zhang's team. "It is quite a complicated thing, but we hope to have everything settled before this May," he said.

Lastly, the public security ministry will conduct a general investigation of the psychological health of the country's police, opening files on every officer, which Zhang said would assist in getting a clear picture of the situation and allow for more carefully directed help and treatment.



Outside their daily duties, police officers are expected to enroll in cultural courses and training.

By Dong Nan

The idea that Chinese are very concerned with *mianzi*, or 'face,' may seem a tired stereotype, but a recent survey shows it has much validity. Over 80 percent of the 1,030 people queried by *Beijing Sci-tech Report* in a study released last week said that face was an important consideration in their lives.

Only 11.98% thought face was moderately important, 2.61% said it was not important and 2.07% said they had no feelings on the issue.

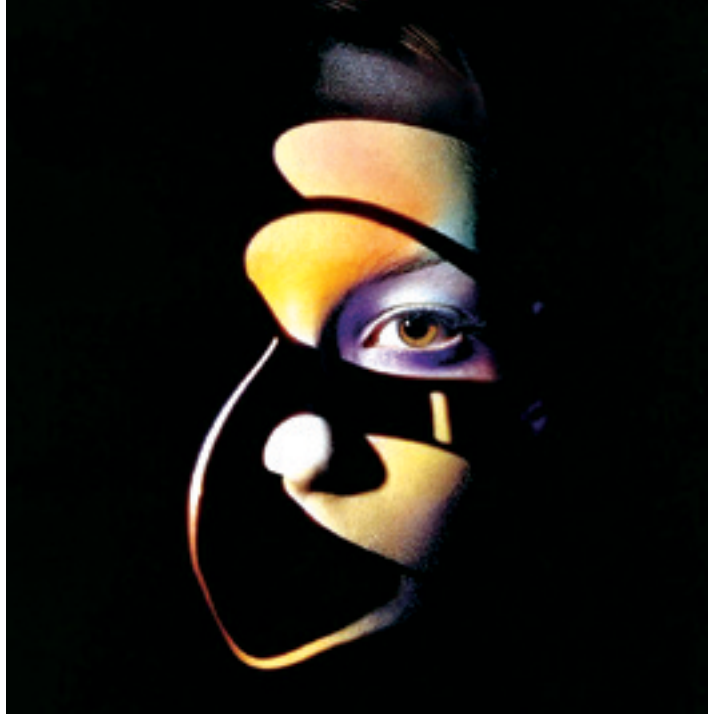
"In China, 'face' mostly stands for one's social status and reputation, and people paying attention to face means they are paying attention to the external estimation of their social status," Huang Guangguo, a psychologist at Taiwan University told *Beijing Sci-tech Report*.

When asked, "What do you think of paying great attention to 'face' as a social phenom-

enon?" 51% of respondents said it was hard to say if it was a good or bad thing, but that it was a useful habit. Just over 28% said "face" was a remnant of traditional culture that modern Chinese should reject, 15.6% thought it was a good idea and helpful to communication, and 5% said that they simply did not care about the matter.

The flip side of concern about face and keeping face is losing it in situations related to work or social standing. Over 35% of respondents said not being able to do their work well or show their abilities was the most "face-losing" situation imaginable. Another 17.29% chose "not having any social position and not having any say," 17.15% said "having limited income and money," 12.35% responded "not having enough social relationships," 10.88% chose "not having any power" and 6.99% answered "not having many friends."

A Matter of Face



By Liu Zhaoxi

On his sixty-first birthday last Thursday, Tan Shouxiang, a former senior bank manager, was released from a detention house in Nanjing, capital of Jiangsu Province. He had spent the past four years of his life in the detention house, on a charge of taking a bribe of US\$40,000. At the turn of the year, the Supreme People's Court of Jiangsu ruled that he was not guilty after all.

Tan finally went home and was reunited with his wife, after having been sentenced to 14 years in jail three times and appealing each time.

Framed

The case can be traced back to the 1990s and was closely related to another man, Sui Zhenan, one of Tan's subordinates when Tan was vice president of the Nanjing City Branch of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC). From 1994 to 1998, Sui, who then headed an ICBC sub-branch of the Nanjing City Branch, embezzled more than three million yuan from the bank by not recording loan interest income and accepting bribes of more than 600,000 yuan and 30,000 HK dollars, according to Nanjing People's Procuratorate.

In early 1997, Tan, who then was in charge of disciplinary inspection at the Nanjing branch, began to look into the unrecorded interest income at Sui's branch. He talked to superior bank offices as well as an official from the National Auction Office about

Why did the case take so long? It was because everybody was very cautious about it. "In the future, disciplinary officials should be given more protection in anti-corruption struggles," said Tan's lawyer Wang Houhai.

Sui's actions.

Meanwhile, an investigation into Sui had been launched by the Nanjing branch. In May 1997, Sui was dismissed from office for his violation of bank regulations, a decision which Tan voted for.

The extent of Sui's crimes was not fully revealed until later. At one point, local procurators spoke to Tan, telling him that Sui had committed crimes and asking for

Free at Last

Bank official accused of bribe-taking found not guilty after four years' detention



Tan Shouxiang

his help in bringing him to justice. Sui was out of town at that time, but Tan managed to have somebody escort Sui to the procurators, Tan recalled to *Beijing Today* on Tuesday. Sui was later sentenced to death, with a two-year stay of execution, on the charge of embezzlement and bribery in November 2000.

Not long after Sui's arrest, Tan found himself in trouble. Sui

told the local procurators that Tan accepted a bribe from him of US\$40,000, as Tan's son needed the money to go and study in the US. In July 2000, Tan was arrested. Nanjing People's Procuratorate filed a law suit against Tan at Nanjing Intermediate People's Court, charging him with accepting a bribe.

Two versions of the story

Tan insisted that Sui's ac-

cusation was false, and merely an attempt to set up a disciplinary official.

Sui told the investigators that in June 1997, after learning the city branch was investigating his problems, he went to Tan's home three times and gave him US\$40,000 in total. Sui testified that he had got 350,000 yuan in cash from his friend Chen Delin in early June 1997, and changed this money into US dollars before giving it to Tan.

Wang Houhai, Tan's attorney and the chief partner of Nanjing Dongfang Ruixin Law Firm, pointed out to the court that in Chen's testimony for another case, he said he remembered giving the money to Sui in late 1997, not in June as Sui claimed. Therefore, Wang argued, Sui did not have the money to pay the alleged bribe in June.

The court, however, was satisfied that Chen had the money in summer 1997 and disregarded his claims about when he had given it to Sui. The court based its judgments on the financial records of Chen's company, from which he got the money, showing that the company gained income

of more 500,000 yuan during May and June 1997.

Other company financial records, however, demonstrated that the 350,000 cash was withdrawn between September 1997 and January 1998. Regarding this, the intermediate court decided that the records were made after the actual withdrawal.

"This explanation was not convincing," Wang Houhai told *Beijing Today*. "Any written evidence, so long as not proved to be fake, should be deemed credible."

To make things even more complicated, Tan himself once admitted accepting a bribe during initial investigations.

"There were many reasons for that," Tan told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday. The reasons he mentioned included "inappropriate means" used by the investigators. "I had no choice but to confess," Tan said. He did not elaborate further, but said he had always been confident the verdict would be overturned one day.

"Whether the case would stand did not depend on power, but evidence," he said.

The appeal court, Jiangsu Supreme People's court, finally ruled that Sui's testimony about the time he had received the money for his alleged bribe was at odds with other written evidence and testimony. Therefore, they concluded, there was insufficient evidence to support the original verdict in Tan's case. Tan was finally pronounced not guilty.

Three sentences and three appeals

Tan was first put on trial in 2000, found guilty of bribery and sentenced to jail for 14 years by the local intermediate people's court. He appealed. In September 2001, the Jiangsu supreme court ruled that the facts were not clear and the evidence was not sufficient, so they repealed the original verdict and sent the case back to the intermediate court.

The court heard the case for the second time, which ended in March 2002 with exactly the same verdict as the first trial. Tan appealed again, and the Jiangsu supreme court ruled in the same way as it had last time, too. Again, the case was sent back to the intermediate court.

From December 2003 to February 2004, the case was heard for the third time. The verdict? Guilty and 14 years in jail. Tan appealed for the third time and the supreme court of Jiangsu opened the trial in May 2004. This time, the appeal court did not send the case back to the intermediate court. Instead, it conducted further investigation and made its own decision. At the end of 2004, Tan got the court ruling for which he had waited for four years.

During the four years in the detention house, Tan, a graduate from the Department of Western Languages and Literature at Peking University, bided his time by doing simple things like reading French fiction and walking for miles each day. When asked if he had ever felt like giving up, he told *Beijing Today*, "I did nothing wrong."

Why did the case take so long? Wang Houhai said it was because everybody was very cautious about it. "In the future, disciplinary officials should be given more protection in anti-corruption struggles," he added.

Che Hao, a Ph.D student in law at Peking University, attributed the marathon trial to a defect in criminal law procedure in China: the law, he said, should not allow the appeal court to send the case back to lower courts for retrial without any limitation. He wrote this opinion in an article commenting on Tan's case in the *21st Century Business Herald*.

As for Tan, he said his case was the result of the prosecutor and the court refusing to correct their own mistakes. He said it was understandable that the institutions made mistakes, which he did not see as a big deal, so long as the mistakes were addressed. "I hope everything will become history as soon as possible, so that I can resume a peaceful life," Tan said.

Private University Fraud Exposed

By Dong Nan

Xi'an Fanyi University (Xi'an Translation and Interpretation University) used not to be that well known, but it has certainly acquired publicity in the last few months.

At the end of October 2004, a number of newspapers and websites in China reported that a story had appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* on October 4 saying the university had been selected by the "USA Fifty State Higher Education Union" as one of "the most respected Chinese universities", and that its president, Ding Zuyi, had been named by the union as one of the most respected university presidents in China.

However, on December 20, Wang Xuming, a spokesman for the Ministry of Education, told a press conference that the "report" in the *Los Angeles Times* was in fact a paid-for advertisement, and that the "USA Fifty State Higher Education Union" did not exist.

"Education is very important, and we condemn this kind of phony advertising that lacks conscience or morality," said Wang.

According to Fang Zhouzi, a Chinese biologist who has become well known in recent years for exposing many fake academic claims in various fields, the earliest report he found in the Chinese press about Xi'an Fanyi University was in *Elite Reference*, a Beijing based newspaper, on October 27. The story was soon reprinted by some well known media companies including Xinhua, and even some overseas Chinese newspapers.

Websites had picked up the story even earlier on October 20. Fang found three websites running the story, one of which, China Basic Education (<http://www.cbe21.com>), is operated by the Ministry of Education of China and Beijing Normal University. All the three sites published the original English text as it appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* as following:

"Ranking of Chinese Universities by USA Fifty State Higher Education Union — The first list of most respected Chinese universities and their presidents was established by the USA Fifty State Higher Education Union through a survey.

The advert in the LA Times was not the first sighting of Xi'an Fanyi University's impressive new credentials. On June 6, the university had published the "news" on its own homepage (<http://www.xfuedu.org/>), titled "Fruits in Summer — the World Hails Xi'an Fanyi University." They also published the supposed certificates of the two honors on the website.

80,000 questionnaires were distributed with 50,000 returned as valid. The event is the first of its kind in China done by international agencies. Noticeably, China's first private university, Xi'an Fanyi University in the country's western province of Shaanxi, has entered the top 10 list. It is now the biggest private university in China boasting about 40,000 students in residence."

Along with the story were lists of the most respected Chinese universities, such as Tsinghua, and their presidents. Xi'an Fanyi University ranked tenth. Some renowned institutions, such as Renmin University, did not appear on the list.

On another list, Ding Zuyi, president of Xi'an Fanyi University, was ranked as the second most respected Chinese university president, only behind Xu Zhihong, president of Beijing University, and followed by renowned educationalists including Gu Binglin (Tsinghua University), Wang Shenghong (Fudan University) and Pan Yunhe (Zhejiang University).

"The language in this story is obviously 'Chinglish' and awkward," said Fang Zhouzi on his homepage "Xinyusi" (www.xys.org) on December 7, 2004. Fang said he thought the advert was probably written by a Chinese person who "only knows a little English."

"If the report came from one of the teachers at Xi'an Fanyi University, it is not difficult for



The original report in the LA Times

people to judge the real quality of the university," he said.

Honors

The advert in the *LA Times* was not the first sighting of Xi'an Fanyi University's impressive new credentials. On June 6, the university had published the "news" on its own homepage (<http://www.xfuedu.org/>), titled "Fruits in Summer — the World Hails Xi'an Fanyi University." They also published the supposed certificates of the two honors on the website.

The report on the university's website also gave details of the ceremony at which the certificates had been handed out. It was held on the university campus and the certificates were issued to Ding Zuyi by Chinese guests, most of them retired foreign affairs officials invited by the university.

According to Fang, he had researched the state government of California and found that the USA Fifty State Higher Education Union was a company registered by a Chinese person called He Yuming, and the date of its registration was May 26, 2004.

In other words, within 10

days after it was founded, the USA Fifty State Higher Education Union had completed a survey involving 80,000 questionnaires and had prepared the certificates to be handed out at Xi'an Fanyi University.

The website also mentioned various other notable honors bestowed upon the university, such as being named "the First Model Private University of the Ministry of Education of China." However, Wang Xuming told *Beijing Youth Daily* that this title was fake as well. "The Ministry of Education does not have any titles such as 'model private university,'" he said.

At the press conference on December 20, Wang also said that the *Los Angeles Times* had confirmed to the ministry that the report about Xi'an Fanyi University was a paid advertisement. But he did not reveal whether the ministry planned to punish the university in any way.

An empty building

In the middle of December, after Fang had already exposed the USA Fifty State Higher Education Union as a fake, *The China Press*, a renowned Chinese newspaper in New York, received an anonymous letter with some ma-



Ding Zuyi at Xi'an Fanyi University



The certification of "the most respected Chinese universities"

By Peng Juan

He was a famous young Hong Kong magnate in his thirties, with a fortune of hundreds of millions of yuan and a chain of prosperous businesses. But then, ten years ago, longing to do something constructive with his wealth, Xing Yiqian established the "Blackbird Nature Reserve" in his hometown, Wenchang City, in Hainan Province. It was the first nature reserve in China to be wholly privately owned, and it had been Xing's childhood dream.

Xing never thought this lofty ideal would be so ruinous. His nature reserve, which was given the tag of "the nation's first non-government environmental protection business," has cost him every penny he made and left him bankrupt.

A disconsolate king

Now, Xing Yiqian is the only one tending his huge reserve. It has become desolate and overgrown with weeds.

Surrounding the vast and quiet Egret Lake are lush old trees like banyan, litchi and palm. From time to time, a flock of egrets skate over the blue water surface and fade into the distant sky. Fallen leaves are scattered around, sometimes gathered in piles. Beside the water is a log cabin in the best location for views. Its walls and floorboards are worn and threadbare.

With a pot of tea and a chair, Xing sits beside the lake everyday, gazing at the surface of the water. When dark falls, he walks home to relax on a shabby sofa. "Some people call me Don Quixote, but my father regards me as a kook. I don't even know myself now," Xing says.

The 100-square meter apartment he's living in has three bedrooms and one living room. The walls are turning a dull brown and there are bits of litter here and there. Some equally bleak but peculiar details, such as an old silk bedgown and a dust-covered but expensive coffee maker, offer a glimpse of the high life Xing used to know.

From cowherd to magnate

Xing was born in July 1956 in a small village of Wenchang City, Hainan Province. It was a poverty-stricken area where most people had to travel far away to make a reasonable living. Hunger, endless and hopeless, was Xing's only childhood memory.

On November 16, 1979, Xing, at the age of 23 and with a sparkling dream, left for Hong Kong to join his father. The family of six lived in a shabby 30 square meter apartment. Xing worked as a carrier at a building site. He did all kinds of harsh labor in the daytime and crouched on the sofa in the sitting room at night. His clothes were so ragged that he tried to avoid public places like restaurants.

Xing began his small retail business in 1980, commuting frequently between Guangzhou and Hong Kong with two enormous rucksacks stuffed with jeans and small commodities. To facilitate his retail business, Xing borrowed 20,000 HK dollars from his mother to buy a small apartment in 1983. This later earned him his "first barrel of gold", when he sold the apartment in 1985 for 300,000 HK dollars.

"It was the first large sum of money I had ever seen in my life. I wanted earnestly to do something with it." Xing went back to Hainan and set up garment factories one after another. This earned him two million HK dollars by 1990.

Fortune was on his side. In the following two years, Xing invested in real estate and his wealth snowballed. By the year 1993, Xing had accumulated assets worth 200 million yuan in various forms, such as houses, limousines, and land. He was only 37 at that time.

An honored citizen

"I guess spending money was a way to make up for the hunger and hardships I had suffered in my childhood and youth," Xing recalled, thoughtfully. "The desire to have everything was swelling inside me. I was indulged by everyone and followed around by a large retinue."

Xing returned home in 1993, and saw that little had changed in his hometown. People there were still bound by poverty. "It was aching to see that. I wanted to get the villagers what they needed."

Money was never inadequate as long as Xing was there.

The cistern that the villagers had needed for half a century was set up, new roads were built, electrical wires were laid and the local government was provided with their own vehicles. Cloth, garments and foodstuffs were also distributed to each family in the village.

"I hadn't the heart to reject those who come to me for help, because I once had the same feeling and unease," Xing said firmly, filled with satisfaction that he could bring benefit to his hometown and villagers. In the following years, Xing invested 7 million yuan on projects in Wenchang and he gave more than 2 million yuan to the poor villagers.

He was awarded the title of "Honored Citizen" of Wenchang together with a pure gold key by the local government.

Environmentalist

Another thing Xing noticed upon his return home in 1993 was the continuing degradation of the environment. Having been fond of birds and trees since his childhood, he was sorry to see the dirty lake, the shrinking forest and the dying

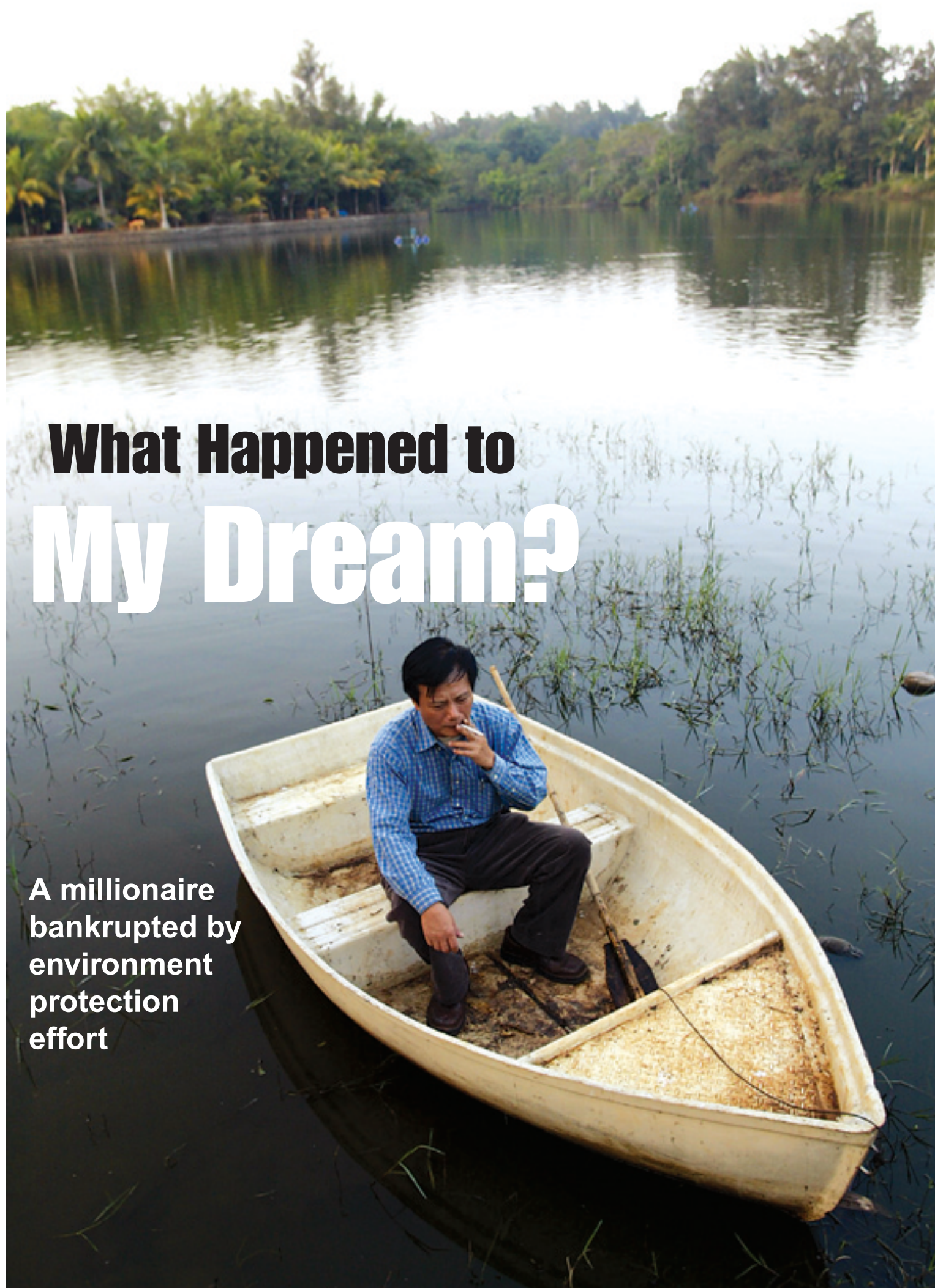
'My beloved Benz was sold in the summer of 2001. I had to take a bus to the nature reserve. I was in a lather of sweat, just like sitting in a bamboo steamer. I have to get used to it. Anyway, I was just a cowherd in my childhood.'

out of birds in his hometown.

Lumber is an important local trade and cutting trees down is one of the only ways for local people to make money. But Xing would stand at the roadside in the daytime, and if he saw a tree was being chopped he would hurry over and pay whoever it was to stop cutting down the tree.

However, this was of little use since the villagers were so poor and were more in need of money than trees. "The idea of 'preserving being the best development' suddenly struck me one day," said Xing, "and I decided to make it a business to help all the villagers to get out of poverty."

He established Hainan Yitian Agriculture Engineering Ltd in 1995 with an investment of 4.2 million HK dollars, and his Blackbird Nature Reserve was officially approved as a city-level nature reserve in 1997, with an area of more than 2,000 hectares, covering 22 villages and more than 1,500 households. Xing



Photos by Wang Yishu

What Happened to My Dream?

A millionaire bankrupted by environment protection effort



Lost in thought, over a simple meal

intended to build it into a large comprehensive country park constituting the nature reserve, a holiday area for tourists and a commercial and residential area.

A patrol team was set up to do the rounds in the vast jungles day and night in all weathers. But lumber remained the easiest way to make a living for most villagers and Xing soon

found himself receiving threats for his efforts to obstruct the business. To buy off the villagers and preserve the ancient trees, Xing just handed out millions of yuan in payoffs.

A special team was to transplant threatened trees to the Egret Lake in the nature reserve. The area around the lake, where the tourist villas were to be built, was rented

from the peasants. Now, some rare wild Chinese fan palms salvaged in the summer of 1998 are growing vigorously here.

Year by year, the forest in the nature reserve became more verdant and lavish, and the birds came back to make nests. But by 2003, Xing had spent nearly all his money and used up his and his wife's savings.

Penniless

At the beginning of 1994, the real estate bubble in Hainan burst, and Xing's wealth empire supported by real estate business collapsed all at once, his 200 million yuan in assets shrinking sharply.

But Xing had neither time nor energy to deal with his real estate problems. He was busy patrolling his forest, cultivating his tourist villas, or persuading the villagers not to chop down trees and shoot birds.

The real estate corporation finally went bankrupt. Xing began to sell his assets in 1996, his trucks, cars, the seaside villa, and eventually his beloved Benz, just to keep his nature reserve running. "The nature reserve took up too much of my time and energy. Business is like a battlefield. It is hard to succeed even if you concentrate on one business, let alone in a half-hearted way like me," Xing sighed.

Now Xing has no money to buy the trees that the villagers want to cut down. His three children in Hong Kong are solely supported by the meager

income of his wife who has been washing dishes in restaurants for the past four years. Xing's heart aches each time another tree inside the nature reserve is cut down. "I would have bought the trees if I had money. The villagers need money. Their children need the money to go to school."

He is still a wealthy man on paper, since the precious trees in his nature reserve were bought at a high price. But this doesn't cover the daily cost of running the reserve.

Living is now becoming the biggest problem Xing has.

Down but not out

Xing is to attend a forum on environmental protection in Beijing. He has booked a night flight, and the ticket money was borrowed from a friend.

In a trim business suit, which was bought in the 1990s, and with polished leather shoes, Xing wryly recalls the feeling of seeing his wealth vanish. "My beloved Benz was sold in the summer of 2001. I had to take a bus to the nature reserve. I was in a lather of sweat, just like sitting in a bamboo steamer. I have to get used to it. Anyway, I was just a cowherd in my childhood."

"I'm down now but not out. I have no way to give up now, otherwise my 10 years of effort would be in vain. Protecting and developing can coexist and bring fortune, I still believe in this, though I may have made some mistakes in trying to realize it."

Charm of Ancient Music

By Rose Li

As the New Year's bell announced the beginning of 2005, people of Quanzhou, Fujian Province, were celebrating a double happiness. From this year, New Year's Day marks not only the start of a brand new year, but also the "day of folk-custom and cultures."

The first day of the year will witness renewed efforts to protect the most important and representative traditional arts and cultures of Quanzhou, which include seven groups and twenty-five kinds of folk arts or cultures. Among them, *nanyin* has been given the foremost place on the list of the arts and cultures to be protected.

Nanyin, a style of folk ballad, is widely known in southern provinces of China such as Fujian, Guangdong and Taiwan, and is also popular in overseas Chinese communities. Due to its long and profound history, beautiful melodies and simple tunes, it has been recognized as a "living fossil of music."

Living fossil

Nanyin, distinguished for its fresh, elegant and light tunes, is a musical style that can fully demonstrate the charm of the exquisite and primitive Chinese traditional music.

It has its roots in the Tang Dynasty (618-907), and was a fully developed musical form by the Song Dynasty (960-1279). As one of the oldest folk music styles in China, *nanyin* has long been considered the "living history" of Chinese folk music. Musical

experts consider an understanding of *nanyin* necessary to gain an understanding of the essence of the whole Chinese history.

During its development, *nanyin* absorbed the essences of Songci (poems of the Song Dynasty), Yuanqu (verses of Yuan Dynasty) and Kunqu (an ancient form of Chinese opera). It was recorded that when Zheng He, the seafaring explorer of the Song Dynasty, made his fifth voyage, *nanyin* was also carried on board.

According to Professor Liu Dehai, compere of a special performance of *nanyin* in Beijing last year, the charm of the music lies in three exclusive features; the antiquated notation, the traditional musical instruments used and the primitive manner of singing.

Firstly, *nanyin* has a special way of recording notes, called *gongchi*, which could also be read on the serial bells of more than 2,400 years ago. Secondly, the musical instruments used to play *nanyin* are exclusively made in Quanzhou, Fujian Province. The main instrument, called a *chiba*, copies the style of the *xiao* of the Tang Dynasty (a vertical bamboo flute), and gives a pure and profound sound. Counterparts of another instrument, the *nampa*, can even be found in the frescos of Dunhuang.

Thirdly, originated and developed in southern China, *nanyin* is sung in the dialect of southern Fujian, and it retains numerous ancient phrases and words.

Musical figures

Thanks to the joint efforts of the government of Quanzhou, many experts in fields of Chinese traditional music and thousands of fans, *nanyin* is now thriving in its hometown of Quanzhou. There are

more than 3,000 songs in the repertoire, most of which are still performed on the stage.

"If you want to know something about *nanyin*, you may bear these three numbers in mind; one, twelve and 50 million," Liu Dehai told *Beijing Today* when asked about the current situation of *nanyin* in Quanzhou.

The plan of "One" proposed by Liu three years ago, aimed at collecting and saving one folk music style of China every year. "If we save one kind of music every year, in ten years' time, we will be able to save ten. And there would come a day when we make a complete collection of Chinese traditional folk music." The 67-year-old professor is still ambitious and energetic when talking about his dream. In 2002, a special performance of Quanzhou music was staged in Beijing, the first major step made by Liu and his team.

The plan was delayed by the outbreak of SARS in 2003, but work picked up again at the end of that year. After much hard work, an performance was finally staged by professional *nanyin* musicians from Quanzhou and students from the China Conservatory of Music last month.

The number "12" refers to Liu's proudest achievement. Every year for the past 12 years, *nanyin* competitions have been held in middle schools in Quanzhou, involving a total of more than 120,000 young people who have practiced singing *nanyin*. "We should not only collect the traditional

songs and music, we should 'open the drawer' of our collections and play them. And children are where the future of *nanyin* lays," says Liu.

When collecting folk music with his students in Quanzhou, Liu said he was surprised to find that even a 90-year-old grandfather could sing *nanyin* well. It is said that there are more than 50 million people, including a large number of overseas Chinese, whose mother tongue is southern Fujian dialect, and who understand and love *nanyin*. It is no wonder then that the music has been warmly welcomed in Beijing.

Simply irresistible

The charm of *nanyin* lies in its simplicity and authenticity. "When I first listened to that song, I wept," said Liu, describing his first impression of *nanyin*.

While trying to preserve the precious cultural legacy, the government of Quanzhou has also been considering the future of *nanyin*. In view of the success in having *kunqu* designated a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO, fans of *nanyin* have resolved to duplicate that success. Last summer, the government of Quanzhou lodged an application to UNESCO to have *nanyin* recognized globally as a treasure of the world.

Having written *nanyin* into middle school music textbooks, the people of Quanzhou are placing their hope in the younger generations. In a world submerged in western cultures, where pop music and foreign movies equate to "fashion," fans of *nanyin* are still concerned as to whether this unique music will thrive and prosper in the future.



Liu Dehai

Photo by Bao Wei



A Glimpse into a Lost Kingdom

Color painted earth Buddha, unearthened at Hongfo Pagoda, Helan County, Ningxia, in 1991.

Photos by Xiang Li

By Li Ruifen

A thousand years ago in the vast deserts of north-eastern China, a kingdom known as the Western Xia Dynasty flourished for some 200 years before being obliterated by the overwhelming forces of Genghis Khan. Although historical records make tantalizingly few references to this ancient civilization, it has left behind a precious legacy.

An exhibition highlighting the exotic culture of the Western Xia Dynasty (1038-1227) is now underway at the National Museum of China. Featuring 155 pieces, A Glimpse of the Western Xia Dynasty creates a vivid picture of this mysterious dynasty and the people known as Tanguts.

The exhibition is divided into four parts, introducing the calligraphy, craft, religion and architecture of the vanished kingdom. Most of the pieces on show were created at the peak of the dynasty's two-hundred-year history, reflecting its advanced technology and unique nationality.

The writing system of the Western Xia was created by order of the first emperor, Li Yuanhao. However, when the invading Mongolian armies swept away all before them on the continents of Asia and Europe to establish the Yuan



Gilded bronze ox, unearthened in Yinchuan, Ningxia, in 1977

Dynasty, the Western Xia was erased from history, together with its unique writing system.

It was not until 1804, when Qing Dynasty historian Zhang Shu discovered a stele on which were carved articles in both Chinese and Western Xia characters, that the secret of this ancient script was unlocked.

Zhang Shu described the characters he discovered as "familiar at the first sight, but not one of them recognizable." As these characters were directly and deeply influenced by Chinese characters, Zhang dubbed them "the twin brother of Chinese characters."



Glazed flask with carved floral design, found in Haiyuan County, Ningxia, in 1985

The Tangut were a nation that lived on horseback, but their semi-nomadic lifestyle was never a restraint on imagination and creativity. One of the exhibits, simply labeled Dark-brown Glazed Flask, appears at first glance to be no more than an ornament with beautiful floral designs carved on the body. But researchers have found that such flasks were commonly used by Tanguts to carry water, liquor and milk.

One of the highlights of the exhibition is a gilded bronze ox, unearthened near Yinchuan, the capital of Ningxia, in 1977. The bronze ox has been eulogized by collectors and archaeologists alike, and is one of the Ningxia Museum's most precious treasures. Because of the delicacy of the craftsmanship and the advanced technique of its manufacture, the ox frequently appears in school textbooks as an example of ancient gilding technology.

Influenced by neighboring Han Chinese, the people of the Western Xia practiced Buddhism. In the space of less than two hundred years, the religious artwork of the Western Xia came to occupy a key

place in the history of Chinese Buddhism. Tangut scholars translated 3,600 sets of sutras into their own language, and added a new version of translated *tripitaka* (canonical Buddhist texts) to the canon of Chinese Buddhist literature.

The architecture of the Western Xia served not only to provide shelter from rain and snow, but also served a religious role. People decorated the roofs of their houses, pagodas and temples with religious ornaments, as a means of worship, as well as to keep evil influences and disaster at bay.

Jialinpinjia, which is also called Orphean Bird, or Bird of Beautiful Voice, is a glazed architectural ornament featuring a woman's head and a bird's body. The Tanguts believed that *Jialinpinjia* could entertain the Buddha with its beautiful voice and graceful dance, and thus prevent disaster and suffering. Researchers have also discovered that the ornament, which was fired together with the ridge tiles, served as an effective measure in draining water from the roof when it rained.

A Glimpse of the Western Xia Dynasty can be seen at the National Museum of China until March 20.



Glazed roof ornament, unearthened in Yinchuan, Ningxia, in 2001

What's New

By Tom Spearman
CD

The Hives: Tyrannosaurus Hives



"Repetition, should you listen, or let it go," sings Howlin' Pelle Almqvist on *Two Timing Touch and Broken Bones*, second single from the likeable Swedish rockers' third album. It's as though he's seen the critical notices coming. Some have complained that The Hives' latest album is no different from their last two: three minute bursts of retro, rock energy, with some neat riffs thrown in. So they're not exactly the Beatles, but who cares? When a band has hit on such a perfect formula, why should they tear it up and move on? The songs are as good as before and it's all still fresh and fun. In any case, The Hives do mix up the beats a little, and very successfully, on *A Little More for Little You* and *Diabolic Scheme*.

DVD

Return of the King



For the third film in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy there was particularly good reason to anticipate the extended release, this one coming with an extra 50 minutes of footage. Famously, Christopher Lee's Saruman got cut from the theatrical release, as the filmmakers were worried that his scene slowed down the movie. But it's telling that director Peter Jackson and co. have lavished far more time and effort on the extended DVDs than the theatrical version releases, indicating these are the cuts closest to their hearts. They don't skirt controversy either, giving a clearly angry Lee airtime to make a pretty good case for leaving his scene in. Anyway, it's there now and there are plenty of other bits that fans will be delighted to see restored, giving the main storylines more room to breathe, as with the previous two extended releases. The transfer looks superb, and the documentaries are enjoyable, particularly *The Passing of an Age*, in which the cast and director talk about their feelings as the whole project finally came to an end.

The Office: The Christmas Specials



Let's face it, part of the appeal of this semi-reality sitcom is that you can turn it off and think about how good you are and your life is compared to these hopeless losers, and there is something ruthless about seeing the characters plumb new depths of delusion and humiliation, in particular former boss, now professional entertainer, David Brent. But it's the fact the characters are so real, thanks to the note perfect writing and acting, that the show always hovers on the line between heartbreaking and hilarious. In the Christmas specials, the fictional BBC documentary crew returns to follow the lives of the same characters three years after, and Brent is particularly eager to set the record straight: "I am not a plonker!"



Photo by Tian Yufeng

Salvation Comes to Beijing

By Pan Hao

For those fed up with contemporary pop or wanting to try something a little more earthy, ethnic music extravaganza *Salvation* was the perfect choice, as well as being a great way to spend new year's eve.

Presented at North Theatre by the Center of Ethnic and Folk Literature and Arts Development, the Ministry of Culture, and Beijing Qin He Bai Chuan film institute, the show brought together 15 minorities from 10 different provinces. Through music and dance, they showed their traditions, culture and lives. What was special about these artists was that none of them came from music or theatre academies. They all just absorbed the music from their own natural environments and day-to-day lives, learning the songs and dances from their ancestors and friends.

The performers from Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region had a particular joyfulness in their music, particularly in piec-

es such as *Suo Na Gu Yue*. They even made some improvisations with the lyrics and dialogue when they played Uygur classic *Turpan's Grape is Sweet*. The background music was played with string instruments and percussion, and the rhythms had a quality that made most mainstream music sound a bit boring by comparison.

The Mongolian performers brought their renewed Ma Tou Qin, a Mongolian string instrument, whose head resembles a horse's head. Chao Er means "harmonic" in Mongolian, and it is a unique way to form a chorus. One or two people sing the bass line while the others sing the melody over it. The backing vocalists also used a technique called Hu Mai, which uses the throat and mouth to produce a sound rather like brass instruments. Just to give an extra flavor to the grasslands, Pao Lidiao, an old Mongolian man got up on stage and played an instrument similar to the Chinese *xiao* from the right side of his mouth while singing the



melody of *Four Mountains* at the same time.

The Kazakhs presented a bright song, *Ao Bao*, played with two Dong Bu La (a Kazakh string instrument). It was a light, happy and precise piece, and it was impossible not to wave your head along with the music. This was another example in which you did not need to know the individual language to understand what the performers were sing-

ing about. Even though there was a screen at the back of the stage showing pictures of each performer's homeland, the best way to enjoy it was to close your eyes and just use your ears. It felt as though you were surrounded by endless grassland, rivers, mountains and the forest.

One clever item in the show was to have 70-year old Wang Chuncheng start singing a folk tune, gradually being joined by his son Wang Aiming and grandson Wang Haoyu. They walked to the stage from the seats, making the audience feel as though they were not in a theatre but visiting a Tu Jia Zu family in Hubei Province. Wang Haoyu, a 7-year-old boy never showed any shyness, and sang with confidence and enthusiasm. Perhaps he lacked the vocal strength of his father but had his own particular style. This was probably the most adorable star of the night, and the audience of course asked for more.

Folk songs and odes were the

main forms that these talented performers used to convey their lives and culture, as well as the love of their own homelands. Their music was a way of saying that it was only because of their beautiful homes and people that they could create such a performance.

Er Yang Shi Ji, a Yugu nationality singer, told *Beijing Today* after the show that singing is a vital part of life for Yugu people, and that the kids are normally captured by music at the age of one or two. "It is a bit stressful to sing in the theatre, which is quite a different prospect from performing at home," she said. Wu Lan Ba Ter, a Mongolian Ma Tou Qi player, seemed to agree with her. "It is not as good as singing on the grassland," he said, though he added he was not nervous at all. Er Yang Shi Ji admitted she was a little disappointed with the attendance. "I hoped there would be more people who recognized our music, but the audience was not that big," she said.



Photo by Tian Yufeng

Bringing Laoshe to the Stage

By Zhou Ying

Stepping into Capital Theater, you could see a huge shadowless lamp hanging from the center of the ceiling and a stage decorated only with some simple passageways leading off. The sense of strangeness was increased by the cast, some of whom wore long gowns while others wore miniskirts.

In fact, it was all part of a new drama called *Kaishi Daji* (*Auspicious Opening*) from Beijing People's Arts Theatre, a work based on a short novel by famous Chinese writer and satirist Laoshe.

It must have been hard to expand an original story of only 4,000 words into a two-hour drama. *Kaishi Daji* is a comedy full of absurd moments, depicting how the five central characters come up with a scheme to make money by opening a hospital, even though they have no knowledge of medicine. Despite their dubious intentions, all ends well, albeit unexpectedly.

The cast of characters includes various cheats and phonies, such as someone claiming to have a doctorate from an overseas university, and some unscrupulous councillors.

According to Mr. Ma, one of the leaders of the Beijing People's Arts Theatre, the auditorium was nearly 90 percent full for every night of the performance, and they took in more than 900,000 yuan in ticket sales. So they have decided to hold some more performances from January 19 to 25.

However, not everyone was impressed by the performance. "The five main characters spent most of their time narrating the plot, and the conflicts and the drama were a little bit weak," said Mr. Liu after watching the drama on Sunday.

Where: Capital Theater, 22 Wangfujing, Dongcheng **When:** January 19-25 (except Monday) **Admission:** 80-280 (Adults), 40-60 (Students) **Tel:** 6525 0996, 6524 9847, 6525 0123

A Punk, Dance and Ambient Selection

By Wang Yao

Joyside completed their first album *Drunk Is Beautiful* last October. Its issue coincides with bleak times for punk music in China, with the genre largely fading from view. But Joyside are here anyway, inspired by indomitable punk legends The Sex Pistols. Their music is largely influenced by the Pistols and other bands of the 1970s. On this album, the song *I Am Lazy and Wasting*, sounds simple and primal. *I Don't Wanna Be Me* also harks back to old school punk. But the inspirations vary quite widely, with one song even based on the

band's yearning for the city regarded as the birthplace of punk (though fans of Iggy and the Stooges may beg to differ). *The Savior Johnny Rotten*, is, as the name suggests, a salute to the Pistols' lead vocalist.



Stammer (Kou Chi), a new release from Hz (Huzi), has a certain minimalist quality to it. Hz pursues the concept of IDM (Intelligent Dance Music), using an eclectic mix of African dub, experimental ambient and techno. *Stammer* blends gentle ambient tones and more cacophonous sounds. The song *HZ1978.3.9* has a sound like the breeze around your ears. *Jogging Dub* uses abstract hip-pop and *Fictional Hz Orchestra* blends various interesting sounds, such as dub and blues, with harmonicas and bicycle bells joining the backing. *Bonsai* is a quieter song, preparing for the closure of the album. The final song *Bird Zone in Beijing Zoo* opens, appropriately, with sounds of birds, actually recorded at the zoo. Gradually the birdsong

gives way to Hz singing and playing his guitar.



V.A. Charming Playlist is an album jointly released by Chinese record label Modernsky and Japanese independent record label 19-t. The album is mainly IDM music, also offering digital hardcore. One of the initiators behind this album was young Chinese electro musician Sulumi (Sun Dawei). The subject of the album is games, whether Gameboy, computer games or TV games. This kind of musical idea actually emerged about four years ago. It has a low fidelity and experimental sound. One of the artists on the album, Cow'p, from Japan, used Gameboy software in 2002 to make a whole album based on this kind of music. Sulumi, the former guitarist for Underground Baby (Dixia Ying'er), is also fond of playing games and he has re-mixed his favorite game song, from Transformers, into a new version. Other artists contributing to the album include CDR, from Japan, and B6, from Shanghai.



computer game SuperMary which was popular in the early 1990s. *The Pretty 3 Chords* is another variation. Rather than the usual raucous vocals, this song is based around a distant and remote voice and has a clear melody. All the lyrics are in English, partly because it's suited to the punk rhythm. *Nothing to Do* is a song about confusion, and *A dream of London* is about the

BenQ Corporation, a booming IT company, was established in 1984. Now with its 15,000 employees making 3.6 billion dollars per year, it has become one of the most sought after employers among students, for its career development, attractive welfare packages and more importantly, for the concept of a happy job.

In order to help university students understand more about BenQ Corporation before they join, Sun Shichang, manager of the company's human resources department, was invited to chat on www.54club.com and to answer questions about the company and recruitment in 2005.

Support for students:

Q: Could you introduce the support programs that BenQ offers for students?

Sun Shichang: We have started activities to offer social practice for students since 2000. The main program is the green card engineers training project conducted in nearly a hundred universities in China. The students who participate in this project will undergo one-year training, study and practice, and after that, they will be awarded the certificate of BenQ Green Card Engineer, which is helpful for their job-hunting in BenQ or other companies when they graduate.

Also, there are many opportunities for graduate students every year. In 2005, the theme for recruitment is the selection of happy staff, because the concept of "happy jobs" is the slogan and direction of every BenQ employee. What we require for the proper professionals is they must be happy with their work and then they can spread the happiness to everyone.

Q: I wonder if BenQ has any sponsorship in universities? What kind of activities are you inclined to sponsor?

Sun: Most of the campus activities are covered by our green card organization. Generally, we will try our best to return something to society, such as care for older people, and offer sponsorship for activities that accord with our values

Talking jobs and corporate culture:

Happy Jobs in BenQ



BenQ has a strong market promotion in China for its IT series products including PCs, digital cameras, MP3s, mobile phones and flash memory. Photo by ITHouse.com.cn



Sun Shichang, HR manager of BenQ China. Photo by Sina.com

and concepts, such as environmental protection.

Recruitment for 2005:

Q: I was selected for the paper-based test of BenQ in Hangzhou. May I ask how many people you will hire this year in Hangzhou?

Sun: Actually, we won't set a concrete number and we hope more excellent staff will join us and make contributions. Thus we have a relatively high standard during the selection, and as long as you pass it, you are in. I know you care about the possibility of whether you will stay till the last round, but I think you'd better do some research, and find out the distance between yourself and the standard. When you meet the requirements, I should say to you congratulations on coming to BenQ.

Q: The paper-based tests have finished, so how many candidates will be in the next round?

Could you predict how many of them will stay?

Sun: More than 300 applicants entered the second round of interviews, compared to 800 people in the first round. I can't predict the number of the final selection. Last year, about 5 to 10 percent got through, but I am sure the number will be higher this year.

Career dilemma:

Q: I am facing a dilemma - two companies have offered me a job, one is a famous corporation and the other one is a newly-established one. Could you give me some suggestions as to which one is better for my development?

Sun: If I were you, I would first analyze and compare those two companies on the business they do and what you will do there. Because you are stepping into the working environment as a graduate, you don't have any experience in a company, you haven't established the mode of your working habit and haven't made a connection to the theories you learned in school.

My advice is to practice in the big company for several years and when you are mature enough in your working methods and experience, then choose the small one to operate and find your potential.

Q: Now more and more graduates who returned from abroad can hardly find jobs for several reasons. Do you have any advice for them?

Sun: Career development is a long-term schedule from one's twenties to the fifties. I think if you find a job with a rosy future, be patient, for your talent will shoot up before long.

I'd like to demonstrate with an example in BenQ. This year we recruited a college graduate and for the first three months, we asked him to work as sales person in our store with our professionals graduated from high school or vocational schools. At first, he felt that he had more advantages than others because he had a higher degree. However, the fact was his performance in the first month was behind those who only graduated from high school. The feeling of frustration taught him to control his arrogance, to be patient on the job and to learn skills from others. After three months, he achieved a better result than others.

(Edited by Xie Lixue)

Situations Vacant

I barely have time to use my 80 sqm new furnished flat, which is suitable for single professional working in the China World Centre area. Please SMS 13581612019 and I will call you back.

Jinzhou Yinbo Foreign Languages and Computer School is looking for teachers of foreign languages and computers. Please send your resume and photo to:

Yinbo Foreign Languages and Computer School, Ziyang Hotel, Jinzhou, Hebei 052260

Tel: 0311-316000

Website: www.inhb.com

Webmasters wanted. Familiarity with the Internet, web page design and music composition software essential. Love of music useful. Contact Mr. Hu at: 6333 1671 ext. 8006.

A cultural media company wants to hire a foreigner for international business.

Requirements: male, British, long time in Beijing, love Chinese culture, stable, honest. Legal experience an advantage.

Contact:

sun198052@yahoo.com.cn

Seeking Employment

Chen Yurong, PhD in consumer psychology and master's of economics, has been a house-keeper, reporter, editor, economic researcher, market analyst and promoter. Currently, I am the general manager's assistant at Zhejiang-based Zhengbei (Pearl) Co. Ltd. and manager for development planning at Beijing Zhenbei Sci & Tech Co. Ltd. I'm looking for a better job.

Please visit my personal website: www.chenyurong.com

Or call me at: 6707 4612, 13651033853

Email: cyr@chenyurong.com, cyr@zhenbeiy.com

An enthusiastic girl, confident in her future, is looking for a job related to English. Good at English listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Please contact Miss Xie at: 6237 3739, 13114513646

E-mail: Flora2@sina.com

Job Services

Immigrating to Canada? Study, business visit, corporate registration, patent and trademark registration, and legal litigation in Canada? Document translation in English? Please contact:

Add: 7100 Woodbine Ave. Suite 110, Markham, ON. L3R 5J2 Canada

Tel: 001-905-415-1728/92

Fax: 001-905-415-1750

Email:

canadaimcn@yahoo.ca

Website: www.mkgi.com

Help you to change your visa (f, x, z, j) and apply for a green card.

Tel: 8659 2919

E-mail: alen678@163.com

(You are welcome to send positions offered and wanted info to: ayi@ynet.com. Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the information published in this column.)

Singapore Offers High Salary and Permanent Residence

By Zhang Nan

Singapore is seeking professional Chinese workers and technicians, and to fulfill that need, the Singaporean government has established a Contact Singapore office in Shanghai.

Chen Yingying, of Contact Singapore Shanghai, told *Beijing Youth Daily* earlier this week that salaries in excess of 9,000 yuan and permanent residency are being offered.

The targets are professionals in the sectors of communication technology, financial services, medical care, media and information. Chen said.

Foreign people who intend to work in Singapore need to get employment permission first and

can apply for permanent residence in Singapore through the immigration bureau's website at www.icagov.sg.

Beijing residents interested in working in Singapore can submit their resumes to appointed agencies that provide job information or appointed headhunter consultancy companies. Information about such agencies and companies is available at www.contactsingapore.org.sg.

People can also apply for jobs through employment websites like www.monster.com.sg, www.careersaia1.com.sg and www.jobstreet.com.sg. Registering at Contact Singapore's official website is another way to gain useful information.

Foreign Banks Need More Native Professionals

By Zhao Hongyi

Foreign banks are expected to recruit more native professionals in the next two to three years, according to Peng Haitao, HR manager of Standard Chartered China.

On December 1, five more Chinese cities opened RMB business to foreign banks. They are Beijing, Kunming, Xiamen, Xi'an and Shenyang.

"We are expanding in business types and geographic cov-

erage now in China," Peng told Beijing media at a press conference on December 31. Standard Chartered is among the foreign banks licensed.

As business is expanding, foreign banks will need more native professionals. The number of staff of Standard Chartered China has climbed from 2002's 300 to 700 in 2004, according to Peng. "The number is to further increase in the years to come," he predicted.

Tired of Your Work?

By Zhao Hongyi

Job apathy syndrome is spreading rapidly throughout China, according to a survey carried out by Beijing Normal University.

"China is entering a peak of job apathy," Xu Yan, a professor of psychological at the university who led the survey told *Beijing Today* earlier this week.

The survey, conducted over 12,000 candidates from nearly all walks of life in November and December last year, indi-

cates 35 percent lack enthusiasm for their jobs, 45 percent do not want to care too much of their jobs, and 42 percent feel no achievement and progress in their jobs.

Young people account for the largest group of sufferers. Over 40 percent of those with less than four years' working experience said they are tired of their jobs, while the rate is lower among those who have worked over five years and slides to 31 percent among those who have worked over 16 years.

By Xie Lixue

The first job interview is a nerve-wracking, intimidating event for nearly every young person fresh out of university. Among the rare exceptions are graduates who interview at the Beijing office of French oilfield services company Schlumberger, according to the company's human resources department recruiting manager Xu Dayou, as the games that are key in Schlumberger's interviews make for a fun and interesting experience.

Beijing Today:

What are the core values of your corporation?

Xu: People, technology and profit are our three top values. New technologies can generate profit, but technology and profits are always created and produced by people, meaning they are the real core value of our company.

BT: Do you recruit recent graduates?

Xu: Yes, over 50 percent of the new staff recruited each year in our company are fresh graduates. We believe that young students are easier to reach and more likely to accept

the latest information, ideas and concepts. Their passion and optimism can sweep aside the frustration of senior staff.

BT: Many applicants have said they were really impressed by your interviews, even if they got in and out quickly, because the results of your games determined immediately if they got the job or not. Is that the case?

Xu: Yes. Games are a unique part of our interviewing process. For example, we ask people to pick one thing from a bag and do an improvised presentation in English within three minutes in the first round.

Candidates' resumes can demonstrate their abilities, experience, characters

Corporate HR:

Testing Ability Through Games



Xu Dayou, Schlumberger China's recruiting manager. Photo by Schlumberger China

and personalities, but we still need to check their ability to think on their feet and natural reactions.

Another game in later rounds is problem-solving. Candidates are required to think up a hypothetical way to escape from a desert, build a simple but useful bridge, or make snowmen on winter days. These games can demonstrate a person's ability to perform in a virtual situation, their reactions in different environment and their actual attitudes towards teamwork.

BT: What are the purposes of the interviewing games?

Xu: Using games in the interview, we can evaluate four qualities in applicants: spontaneity, commitment and passion, flexibility and readiness for challenges. Diversity in staff's cultural background is a feature of all our over 120 branches. Therefore, those four traits are crucial in allowing employees to adapt to various conditions.

BT: How do you use game results to choose employees?

Xu: Our games are just like projects. Candidates are randomly organized into teams and made to cooperate with new friends. Some people will demonstrate leadership potential by being thoughtful and inspirational; others that prefer action may be more fit for roles in research, while others good at listening and absorbing new ideas in brainstorming may be better suited for other positions.

Even after the games are over, candidate's different performances can help us decide who to take. Some people stay and help us tidy up, others just leave. That's a trivial thing, but sometimes such little things can have an impact on a candidate's fate.

A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors.

Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience.

Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred.

Please send your resumes and writing samples to: hr@ynet.com



Laying the Law for Agents

By Zhang Nan

The study abroad industry is exploding in China, helping more people realize their dreams of learning in foreign countries and quickly filling the coffers of study agencies.

Legal loopholes in the system allow illegal and unqualified agencies to share in the spoils, despite the fact that they are unreliable at best and edge into the legitimate businesses of authorized agents.

Until the legal gaps are closed, what is the best way to push illegal agencies out and standardize the agency market?

Zhu Yanmin, manager of the respected agency Beijing JJL Overseas Education Consulting & Service Co. answered this and other questions during an interview with *Beijing Today* recently, part of our series of talks with some of Beijing's leading authorized agencies.

Let market forces make rules:

BT: Why do you think many people have negative impressions of study abroad agencies?

Zhu: The study abroad agency market is in the process of becoming normalized, but false advertising and illegal consultancy services and operations still exist.

In particular, unqualified agencies have given consumers false impressions of the agency market. Besides the individuals and companies that provide unregistered, illegal study abroad

services, some schools and universities do business in cooperation with foreign universities, but they do not have standardized operating systems or professional staff.

The market should have control over the agency industry. Although the government has special policies towards the study abroad service industry, agencies that do not operate in accordance with the law and market standards cannot expect to last very long. Many such companies have gone under or have been ordered to close by the Ministry of Education and the State Administration for Industry and Commerce.

BT: What do you think are good ways to promote the standardization of the market?

Zhu: Most people think that market should be managed according to policies issued by national administration departments, but the Administration Permission Law has already come out. That shows that realizing standardization will take more effort and self-management from agencies themselves.

I think in the future, the market will be led by several big and reputable study abroad agencies, meaning illegal agencies' profits will be squeezed and they will have little room to survive.

BT: Do you think China's agency market will open to foreign companies?

Zhu: The domestic study abroad agency market will definitely



Zhu Yanmin, manager of JJL
Photos by JJJL

open its doors to foreign companies. Some say that foreign capital has already started entering the market, but nothing definitive has been published to date.

To be ready to compete with foreign companies, domestic agencies should strengthen their powers by forming brands and setting relevant rules through the Agency Industry Association.

About JJL:

BT: JJL Overseas Education Consulting & Service Co. has a good reputation among Chinese students. Please introduce the history of your company.

Zhu: JJL received its qualification authorization from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Public Security and the State Administration for Industry and Commerce in January 2000. It was the only private agency among the first batch of authorized agencies.

We put a lot of emphasis on public relations and publicity, allowing JJL to establish a good reputation earlier than many other agencies.

BT: What are JJL's main policies for

servicing customers?

Zhu: Our slogan is "providing wholehearted service, giving you a wonderful life."

In 2001, JJL made six promises to customers with the intention of guaranteeing the quality of the information and services we provide. We swore to always protect customers' rights, to maintain the healthy development of the agency market, to operate in strict accordance with government rules, to provide standardized services for standardized, reasonable charges, to never level ambiguous fees and to never run false advertising.

BT: What kind of services does JJL provide? What are your charges?

Zhu: JJL provides customers services in three periods.

Before customers go abroad, most of the services we offer, from consulting to designing future study plans to dealing with documentation, are free. For students who have already studied abroad and have excellent academic records, JJL offers special scholarships. When students have completed their studies and return to China, JJL will help them deal with issues like diploma recognition and can even provide funding to help them set up their own businesses.

Generally speaking, JJL's consulting services are free. The company only charges for helping customers deal with practical affairs. Students can access our free consultants in different ways - over the phone, on

the web, by email, through letters or even through visits to customers' homes. Every weekend, we run free speeches on different topics and each month we invite representatives of foreign universities to meet with Chinese students.

The company also can help students apply to universities and handle visas. Our services can be tailored to students' individual needs.

BT: How can an agency truly promise its information and services are accurate and dependable?

Zhu: First of all, you have to have real experts on hand to give students professional advice and information. Agencies can invite representatives of foreign universities, retain former education officials from foreign embassies or hire people who have experience living and studying abroad.

Agencies also have to establish steady relationships with foreign educational institutions and universities.

Words for students:

BT: What advice do you have to offer students contemplating or preparing for learning abroad?

Zhu: I personally experienced many challenges while I was studying and working abroad. In my opinion, the main purpose for going abroad to study is to really push yourself and learn and use your advantages in a strange country or culture. It is also very important to choose a major well suited to your career goals.

Ask Ayi:

Q: I'm heading to the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University later this month. I want to live close to campus. How much should I expect to pay in monthly rent? For a newcomer like me, which is better - home-stay or renting a room?

—george840814@yahoo.com

RMIT does not offer on-campus accommodation, so students have to live on their own, either by home-stay or by renting an apartment.

Fortunately, the university has a special office to help students make accommodation arrangements. They provide free information, advice and assistance in finding off-campus accommodation, including leasing agreements, condition reports and other services you might need.

Their services cover home-stay, private hostel accommodation, self-contained student apartment complexes, share-house accommodation and private rental properties.

Prices fluctuate greatly depending on quality, distance, facilities and more. The nearby, newly-furnished Melbourne Student House offers two-bedroom apartments at A\$360 per week, or A\$180 per week per student, including electricity fees.

You can reach the office at: +61-3-9925 2963, 9925 7280, or by email at: housing@rmit.edu.au

I've just learned that the Australian Embassy in Beijing is taking applications and issuing student visas through its newly established eVisa system. How can I use this system to apply for my student visa?

The Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs started trial operation of its eVisa system three months ago. The system is aimed at cutting the visa application process to two months from four.

The system provides all the e-format application forms and documents you need to fill out online. You can even pay the A\$410 application fee online by credit card.

But the new system is only currently open to groups. Individuals still to forward their applications to Australia's embassies and consulates directly, wait four months and pay the A\$410 fee by post.

Australian officials hope to finish the trial process as soon as possible, ideally in the first half of the year. For more details, check the embassy's website: www.austemb.org.cn.

With the Irish prime minister due to lead a huge delegation to visit China next week, Ireland is emerging as a top place for overseas studies. Please introduce the country's education system.

Ireland's strongest academic areas are the fields of information technology, particularly software, biology and biological industry. The country has a very good education system as well as rich culture and history.

Though people in Ireland speak with a distinct accent, it is a fine place to learn English. And unlike the UK, Ireland will take students who just want to study the English language.

Chinese students in Ireland are allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours per week in their spare time to support their studies. Overall education expenses in Ireland tend to be around 40 percent lower than in the UK.

Students should know that Irish universities are very selective and very demanding. Graduation is no easy feat, but diplomas from Irish schools are recognized and respected around the world.

To qualify for study visas, undergraduate students need to have base scores of 6.0 on the IELTS or 580 on the TOEFL, while post-graduate students need 6.0 on the IELTS or 600 on the TOEFL. Students for PhD courses need 6.5 on the IELTS or 600 on the TOEFL.

You also have to prove minimum financial ability of 150,000 yuan for language study and 300,000 yuan for undergraduate or advanced degrees.

(Edited By Ayi)

Survey of Chinese Oversea Students:

Realities of Life Abroad

By Zhang Nan

Eighty-eight percent of Chinese students abroad plan on returning to this country once they complete their studies, according to a survey on the conditions of Chinese students learning overseas, popularly dubbed the *haigui*, and released in late December.

The survey covered many aspects of students' academic and life experiences, focusing on the distribution of students by nation, their employment situations after coming back to China, emotional challenges they faced overseas and other issues.

The overseas students department of the All-China Youth Federation and the *Elite Reference* newspaper jointly developed the survey, and the *China*

Youth Daily social research center conducted it over the Internet between October 15 and November 15 last year.

All told, 3,097 people took part, 2,942, or 95.1 percent, of whom had overseas study experiences. Just over 1,000 respondents had returned to China, 1,420 were still studying abroad, 99 had received permanent residence permission in foreign countries but had chosen to work and live in China, and 392 had received permanent residence and not returned from abroad. The average age of respondents was 29 and men made up two thirds of the group.

Where they are

The people who answered the survey had studied or were

studying in a total of 49 countries, and 79 percent of them paid their own way.

Of the 3,097 students, 41.7 percent studied in European countries, including Germany, France, Holland and the UK, 25.4 percent studied in North America, mostly in the United States and Canada, and 17 percent studied in Australia and New Zealand. East Asia, predominately Japan, accounted for another 11.9 percent of Chinese students. The country that drew the most Chinese students was the UK, accounting for 22.9 percent of all those surveyed.

The survey painted a pessimistic picture for students hoping to receive financial aid in studying abroad. Only 15.5 per-

cent of respondents received scholarships to defray their educational costs and an even lower 5.5 percent were sent abroad on the public dime.

Career expectations

Among the 87.5 percent of participants who said they wanted to return to China, 37.5 percent hoped to come back as soon as they graduated, while 53.2 percent said they were more in favor of working abroad for a period of time to accumulate experience before leaving.

Shanghai and Beijing emerged as the clear favorite cities for returned students to seek employment and start their careers, with 37.3 percent of respondents choosing Shanghai as their primary target and 31.8 percent naming Beijing.

Since they have spent time abroad, it should come as no surprise that the most popular potential employers for returned students were foreign companies, an answer given by 47.1 percent of respondents.

Working at universities or research centers was the goal of 15.1 percent of respondents, while 13.8 percent said they hoped to open their own businesses.

Relatively few expressed interest in going into the public or non-profit sectors - 7.5 percent said they wanted to work in international organizations or NGOs, 3.5 percent hoped to work as government officials and only 3.2 percent willing to work in domestic enterprises.

(To be continued next week...)

Shopping, the Next Generation

By Lene Chau

The newly opened New Generation, or Xin Yidai, shopping center is all but certain to cement Xidan's reputation as the hub of teen fashion in Beijing. The seven-storey complex, which opened in October next to Huawei Plaza, houses lots of little stands that sell the kind of funky stuff that students and young *hunzi* can't get enough of. Since everything shares one roof, all the stores open at 9:30 am and close at 8:30 pm.

Shiny Shots

When the cutesy novelty items photo stickers first appeared in this city, they caught teenagers' imaginations by storm. At some shopping malls, it was a common sight to see crowds of pimply pre-teens jostling into sticker booths to take some snaps with their friends or heartthrob du jour. But now that they have been around for some time, photo stickers have been dropped like yesterday's news.

Xiao Ma, owner of the Ice Image Bar, store No. 091 on the second floor of the New Generation mall, believes he has just the thing to revive the fad in a more updated form – photos encased in glass.

"Young people are always looking for something new. If you can put photos on stickers, why can't you put them on glass? It's everlasting," he said.

"We put the photos on glass with

an infrared ray. It's a new technique and relatively inexpensive."

People can bring in any photograph and then choose their vessel from a variety of materials, be it glass, crystal, amber or plexiglass. The shots are then enlarged or shrunk to match the medium and, in a process that takes mere minutes, the photographs are encased permanently in the glass for all to admire. The concept is a natural for decorations or even advertising and catching on quickly.

"There are many uses for the technique. Many people are having pictures of their loved ones put on mirrors or framed as desk photos, but the possibilities are endless," Xiao Ma said.

"It's even possible to have photos put on key rings, which is what many young people are doing."



Pet Prozac

Why should pets not be able to indulge in mind-altering chemicals if their owners can? Nature produces plenty of herbal remedies known to spark euphoria, and that goes for dogs and cats too, said Lian Lian, owner of a pet clothing shop on the second floor of New Generation (No. A010). Among her stock she carries plenty of perfectly-legal natural pharmaceuticals meant just for felines – catnip.

Lian said she had never heard about catnip until several customers asked for some, but now she has become a reliable source. Cats react in amazing ways to just a bit of 'nip. They rub around in it, nibble on it, and end up getting a strong buzz that can last an hour or more.

"Cats can feel down sometimes too. Catnip can put them in a better mood. Many owners consider it 'legal ecstasy' for cats, and that's why so many come looking to score some," Lian Lian said.

The catnip stashes are not the only high points of the shop. It also offers an amazing collection of pet clothing, including Japanese kimonos, Formula 1 uniforms, Spiderman suits and traditional Chinese clothes. Most of the items are so well made that first-time customers may mistake the garments as being meant for kids.

Looking for a different fix for a dog? Then check out the sized doggy shoes and socks, or get Fido a backpack for long strolls around town or country. Or pick up a diamante-studded dog-collar or a Frisbee for hours of fun fetching. This shop has everything the indulgent pet owner might want to pamper their animal friends and get them feeling warm and fuzzy.

Safari Chic

Talk about catty! It appears that the only thing to wear to watch the fur fly this season is a fur of your own, preferably covered in leopard spots.

Once the mainstay of barmaids and rock stars, animal prints are coming back into the limelight in Beijing. Brazen, bold and unashamedly attention-seeking, these prints are not for the shy or retiring. Worn indiscriminately, they can look quite vulgar, which may be part of their charm.

Leopard skin, even when fake, proclaims liberation and simultaneously hints at a streak of savagery. The look is not really about keeping warm but about channeling your inner feline.

The walls at boutique No. A26 on the fifth floor of New Generation are covered in ancient Egyptian paintings, giving it an exotic, mystical feel. And with the incandescent fireball-shaped light glowing overhead, anyone can look flamboyant in its leopard print creations. Nearly every item on hand – berets, cropped tuxedo trousers, short-sleeve cardigans, turtleneck jumpers, pencil skirts, chiffon shell tops, brassieres and even G-strings – bears the tell-tale yellow and black spot pattern.

For the full-on jungle look, the store has plenty of leopard-print accessories, including purses, slippers, bracelets and jewelry.

And for the record, no leopards were hurt to make the products – the animal fur used comes from the lippi cat, a native Chinese animal and not an endangered species.



One Stop Shopping for Survivalists

For those that crave the edge of adventure, or those simply afraid that disaster is imminent, survival is the name of the game and these days that means having the right gear.

To the rescue comes New Generation's fifth-floor surplus store (No. A32), which stocks everything from collapsible shovels to snow goggles, jet fighter helmets to camouflage trousers (in various patterns) and woolly snow masks. The army look is always in fashion, but in these products form follows function and they go for remarkably reasonable prices.

Any outdoorsperson should start with a copy of the *Survival Handbook*, one of the few thin books around that truly qualifies as a cover-to-cover read. This thin tomb includes plenty of tips about how to pitch camp and provide for others on the trail, as well as what to do when things go wrong – an inevitability on every outdoor excursion.

One of the great things surplus clothing is pockets. They abound on pants, shirts and jackets, making them very utilitarian, fashionable and daunting to would-be pickpockets. Some garments have so

many pockets, in fact, that the question is what to do with them?

The obvious answer is to fill them with other handy little items found around the store. Among the must-haves are Zippo cigarette lighters, tiny flashlights surprisingly powerful for their size, laser pointers, rope, can openers, Swiss army knives (or the P.R.C's equivalent), magnifying glasses, handkerchiefs and bandanas, whistles, collapsible frying pans and foldable containers.

Whether the goal is survival or fashion, this store has a surplus on both and plenty in between.

Personal Classifieds

Accommodation

Brand new luxury 3-bedroom apartment of 180 square meters for rent. Located in Class Community, Wangjing, 8 kilometers from German International School. Brand new decoration, currently unfurnished, ideal for expatriate tenant to accommodate their antique Chinese furniture collection. Will equip furniture if required by tenant. US \$2,000 per month plus \$120 for underground parking lot, available from January 2005. Family or long-term lease and non-smoker preferred. No agents. Contact: 13801133854, email: janeing@sohu.com

2 bedrooms, 1 living room apartment near Dawang Lu, close to Balizhuang subway station, ready for lease. 3,500 yuan per month. 70 square meters. Contact: Mr. Chen, 13601246000

Two-bedroom, one living room apartment located near Ritan Lu for lease. 2,500 yuan per month. Contact: 13717871041

Language Exchange

A female Chinese German learner seeks German-Chinese or German-English language writing friends. Contact: grace_mzy@yahoo.com.cn

Professional Help

Elvira Yang, a Beijing girl studying in a language university wants to find a part time job in the coming winter vacation. I can help you with Chinese study or be your tour guide in Beijing. Contact: 13811755514, elivra860610@hotmail.com

Disclaimer: Beijing Today does not take responsibility for verifying the authenticity of the personal classifieds and thus Beijing Today does not guarantee the accuracy, integrity or quality of the content. All content is the sole responsibility of the advertiser.

Jams



Swedish Noise

Founded in 1998, Swedish band International Noise Conspiracy is by no means a typical pop or rock group. The band fits none of the frames or genres that makes rock music today so sterile and easy to define and therefore harmless. They will bring their "noise" to Beijing tonight.

Where: Yugong Yishan Bar, 1 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** tonight, 8:30 pm **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 6415 0687



DJ Krush

Japan's great hip-hop hope, DJ Krush, comes to Beijing for one incredible night of chilled beats. If you don't already know him, shame on you, but there is time to love him. Supporting DJ Shorty-S.

Where: Mix Bar, inside Workers' Stadium north gate, Chaoyang **When:** January 13, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6530 2889

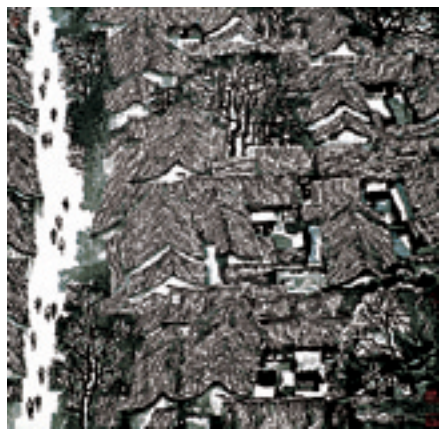
Eclectic and Electronic

Josh delivers a mix of techno, lounge, hard rock and even salsa. He throws in vocals and video for a festival of chilled out juxtaposition.

Where: Yugong Yishan Bar, 1 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** Saturday, 9:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 6415 0687

Exhibitions

Works by Li Yun



Art of Collotype

As a special way to copy limited edition prints from the original paintings, collotypes are the closest thing to the original, which provides art collectors with an alternative way to access invaluable pieces. The exhibition will be led by Li Keran's sketches and other works by master painters. Many people have seen and admired Li Keran's wash and ink work, but few have seen his sketches.

Where: Creation Gallery, north end of Ritan Lu, Chaoyang **When:** January 10-31, daily 10:30 am - 8 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 7570

Because her works sell so well, Li Yun can paint what she likes without concern for the market. Her series of giving and asking express something about religion, love and death, making people re-think their life.

Where: Songzhuang Gallery, 1 North Renzhuang, Tongzhou **When:** daily 9 am - midnight until January 31 (appointment only)

Admission: 15 yuan **Tel:** 6959 8343



Time and Art

Twelve artists from China and abroad will show their works as they attempt to explore the development of Chinese contemporary art in the new century. Focusing on the relationship between art and time, the joint exhibition is expected to trace artistic diversity through the dual experiences of international artists and the innovative language of Chinese artists.

Where: New Millennium Gallery, Diyang Building, 2 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** January 1-31, daily 9 am - 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 6193



Movies



Nid de Guepes (The Nest)

Directed by Florent Emilio Siri, starring Florent Emilio Siri and Jean-Francois Tarnowski. This film contains action, thrills, drama, gore and violence. Not for the faint-hearted.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** opens January 14 **Tel:** 8211 5566



The Polar Express

Santa Claus does not exist. Or does he? For one doubting boy, an

astonishing event occurs. Late on Christmas Eve, he lies in bed hoping to hear the sound of reindeer bells from Santa's sleigh. To his surprise, he hears a steam engine's roar and whistle outside his window.

The conductor invites him on board to take an extraordinary journey to the North Pole with many other pajama-clad children. There, he receives an extraordinary gift only those who still believe in Santa can experience.

Where: UME International Cineplex (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** opens January 14 **Tel:** 8211 5566



The Terminal

Academy award-winning director Steven Spielberg teams up with two-time Academy Award winner Tom Hanks and Oscar winner Catherine Zeta-Jones for this comedy.

Viktor Navorski, an Eastern European arrives at New York's Kennedy Airport just as his homeland has fallen to a coup, making it impossible for him to return to his homeland or enter the US. Now caught up in

The Terminal

the richly complex and amusing world inside the airport Viktor makes friends, gets a job, finds romance and ultimately discovers America itself.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** opens January 14 **Tel:** 8211 5566

the richly complex and amusing world inside the airport Viktor makes friends, gets a job, finds romance and ultimately discovers America itself.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Shuangyushu Kexueyuan, Haidian **When:** opens January 14 **Tel:** 8211 5566



Stealing Beauty

Directed by Bernardo Bertolucci, starring Jeremy Irons, Jean Marais, Stefania Sandrelli and Liv Tyler. Lucy Harmon is an American teenager arriving in the lush Tuscan countryside to visit family friends residing there. Lucy had visited four years earlier and exchanged a kiss with a handsome boy with whom she hopes to become reacquainted. Her mother has committed suicide since then, and the teenager also hopes to discover the identity of her father, whom her mother hinted was a resident of the villa. English with Italian subtitles.

Where: Italian Embassy, 2 Dongerjie, Sanlitun **When:** January 13, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

Performances



Drama: Shenghuo Xiu (Life Show)

A dozen film actresses, folk singers and pop stars including Wang Ji, Cai Guoqing, Liu Xinyin and Ju Xue, will join in a drama entitled *Life Show*.

Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimennan Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** January 10 and 11, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 60-1,000 yuan **Tel:** 6500 1188 ext. 5216



Comedy: Fried Dough Twist II

(Xiang Chi Mahua Xian Gei Ni Ning) Directed by Zhao Zehui, starring singer Lin Yilun and actress Liu Zi. The story is set in the year of 3046, when people regard love as a kind of disease.

Where: Haidian Theater, 28 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian **When:** 7:30 pm, tonight - Sunday night **Admission:** 80-660 yuan **Tel:** 6255 5898

Music

12 Girls Band Concert

12 Girls Band was founded in 2001. They use traditional Chinese instruments such as *guzheng*, *pipa*, *erhu*, *zhudi*, *xiao*, *hulusi* and *duxiaoqin* to play modern popular music.

Where: Beijing Exhibition Theatre, 135 Xizhimenwai Dajie, Xicheng **When:** Saturday, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 180-500 yuan **Tel:** 6835 4455



Activities

BJ Hikers - A Temple Walk

This is a flexible hike. You may go in to the park, have a look at the temples, follow the steps up the hill to the lookout on the top. If you are adventurous, you may take the trail that starts from the top and do a three-hour hike and come back to the start.

Where: Pinggu County, north east of Beijing **When:** Sunday, leaving at 8:30 am from the Lido Hotel outside Starbucks **Cost:** 150 yuan for adults, 100 yuan for children under 12 **Tel:** 13910025516

TV and Radio Highlights

HBO	
7 Friday	
Raiders of the Lost Ark	9 pm
8 Saturday	
Matchstick Men	9 pm
9 Sunday	
Red Water	11 pm
10 Monday	
Casualties of War	11:20 pm
11 Tuesday	
Virtuosity	10:20 pm
12 Wednesday	
Extreme Measures	9 pm
13 Thursday	
What a Girl Wants	9 pm
CCTV-9	
Monday - Friday	
Around China	6:30 am
Culture Express	8:30 am
Nature and Science /	
Chinese Civilization	11:30 am
Culture Express	2:30 pm
Nature and Science /	
Chinese Civilization	5:30 pm
Dialogue	7:30 pm
News Updates /	
Asia Today	8 pm
Sports Scene	11:15 pm
Saturday	
Travelogue	9:30 am
Center Stage	11:30 am
Sunday	
Sports Weekend	10 am
Documentary	10:30 am
This Week	12:30 am
China Radio International 91.5 FM	
Monday - Friday	
Easy FM Afternoon	2-7 pm
Fun in Beijing	5-5:30 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Saturday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Euro Hit 40	12:05-1 pm
Musique Sans Frontieres	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
Sunday	
Music Memories	8:05-11 am
Jazz Beat	6:05-8 pm
Joy FM	9:05-11 pm

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language-exchange and accommodation information for individuals. Feel free to email us at btodayinfo@ynet.com or call 6590 2518

By Zhang Jianzhong

By Shida Zhu

Just 23 kilometers north of the bustling commercial center of Wenzhou, Yongjia County (永嘉) stands as a gateway to the majestically beautiful mountain and river scenery of Nanxijiang (楠溪江).

In a north-south valley flanked by green or rocky mountains, run the greater Nanxi and the lesser Nanxi rivers that form the center of the scenic region. Mountain streams, rocky cliffs, waterfalls, ancient villages and trees and mystic caves combine here to create a harmonious picture of heavenly beauty.

The village of Yantou (岩头村) was established during the reign of Emperor Yanyou (1311-1320) of the Yuan Dynasty. It was listed as an ancient site under provincial protection in 1991.

Nestled against the backdrop of a forested mountain to the west, the village

service. The gate tower was bestowed by Emperor Shizong of the Jiaqing period of the Qing. It is located in front of the ancestral home of the Jin family. Another gate tower honors the generosity of the local people who donated to help refugees of natural disasters.

The village is noted for its water facilities that were first built in the Song Dynasty (960-1279) and completed in the early Ming Dynasty. Mountain streams were channeled through the village by way of eight culverts and two sluice gates. The village is dotted with five artificial lakes for beautification, irrigation and livelihood.

If you drive southward for just 10 minutes or take a three-wheel cab for two yuan, you will find another ancient village, called Furong (芙蓉村). There is a high mountain southwest of the village that has three peaks in the form of a blooming

River Valley Trek in Eastern Zhejiang

is divided by three well-designed parallel streets and enclosed by walls as if a perfect compound in ancient Chinese architectural terms for a home.

Strolling along the 300-meter Lishui Street in the south of the village, which runs parallel to a field of wild reeds and Lishui Lake, you will feel as if you have been transported to the days of Emperor Jiaqing (1796-1821) of the Qing Dynasty. A bridge made of 48 stone slabs, flower pavilions and the Tahu Temple all tell of the history of those long gone days.

On the side of the street that faces the lake there is a long covered and painted corridor. What is striking is that the facades of all 90 shops face onto the lake, giving it a unique touch of novelty and pleasure.

At the southern end of Lishui Street, virtually the entrance of the village, stands Jieguan (Greeting-official) Pavilion which literally means greeting those who have passed the imperial examinations, the candidate officials. This shows how strongly local people desired their young to take up a career of officialdom. On either side of the pavilion, a couplet reads:

*Masters of learning leave legacies here
While craftsmen with strange skills
attract tourists.*

Cross the intersection at Guihua Street and go to the southern end of Central Street, where you will see Shuiting Temple. Taking a walk on the pebble-covered Huatan Street will give you a feeling of quiet and rest.

Try to figure out the patterns in the pebble designs. It might be a dragon, a phoenix, a bronze coin or pictures based on the Eight Diagrams in the *Book of Change*.

At the northern end of the village, a gate tower stands amidst ancient black-tiled houses. It is a monument in honor of Jin Zhao, a resident of the village who passed the imperial examination of civil

lotus. At dusk, the peaks are reflected in a pond in the village like a lotus bud ready to burst forth, hence the name of the village.

There is an entrance fee for the village of 10 yuan. Paying 15 yuan will entitle you to witness the performance of a traditional local wedding ceremony.

The village has a concentration of members of an ancient Chen family. According to the *Records of the Chen Family*, written in 1497 during the reign of Emperor Hongzhi of the Ming Dynasty, a couple named Chen fled the scourge of war during the late Tang Dynasty (618-907), trekking northward from the Yongjia county seat. They found this place nestled amidst high mountains congenial for livelihood with an abundant supply of spring water and settled there.

During the late Southern Song Dynasty



Local residence in Cangpo village

(1127-1279), when the Yuan troops were moving in an expedition to the south of China, they met resistance at the village organized by Chen Yuzhi, a chieftain of the clan. Chen was besieged in the mountain for three years and eventually killed himself because of a shortage of ammunition and food. The Yuan troops entered the village and burned it to ashes. It was rebuilt in the early Ming Dynasty. Learning from the past, the inhabitants incorporated the scattered smaller villages into a major one and built stone walls around its four sides. The walls were equipped with shooting holes and seven gates of different designs.

With a history of well over 1,000 years, this is the oldest village in the area. It is designed in a square form with a southern exposure. This style of design was known as *qi xing ba dou*. The "xing" refers to the square platform at the crossroads and the "dou" is the square pond at the juncture of irrigation ditches.

The layout follows the form as indicated in the *Book of Change*. In following this design, the villagers believed that the stars in the sky accorded with the people on earth, suggesting that there would be as



Fishing boats on Nanxi River

Photos by Ye Xinren

many scholars born in the village as there were stars in the sky. The layout also had a more practical purpose; during times of war, people might stand on the platform to direct fighting against intruders and use water from the pond to fight fires.

If you walk along the central street to the south, you will find a pond there lined with picturesque trees and flowers on its four sides. The pond is dotted with stone bridges and pavilions. The whole village is crisscrossed with streams that run through culverts in the stone walls and even through some of the houses.

The black-tiled roofs of the houses are in a staggered form, creating an unusual architectural rhythm. The white-washed walls and black roof tiles make a striking and vibrant contrast, as if in an ink and brush picture. Every house has a short stone wall and is shaded by trees in a harmony with the mountain terrain.

While you are charmed by the beauty of the village, do not forget its gourmet food. The most famous local dish is stewed Tian fish (田鱼), which is very expensive. Other delicacies include wheat flour cakes, *shagang* dried rice noodle, *yongjia* dried tian fish and a wild herb that tastes delicious.

The wooden houses of the Ming and Qing periods remain intact in the village. Architects today marvel at the fact that so many ancient houses have been so well preserved. If you drive from the Xianju-Leqing highway, Cangpo (苍坡村), another ancient village north of Yandou on the west of the highway, awaits your exploration.

Most of the residents of Cangpo belong to the Li clan. The village was first built during the Five Dynasties period (about 955) and completed during the Southern Song Dynasty. Facing south, the stone village is just

0.5 kilometers square, encircled by walls of huge boulders. The name of the village literally means a piece of "blank paper" for the coming generations to write on.

The village was designed by Li Shiri, a grand master, upon invitation of Li Song, one of the forefathers of the Li clan, in 1178, the fifth reigning year of Emperor Chunxi of Southern Song. Though it boasts a history of more than 800 years, its Song stone walls and ancient cedar trees are still standing, giving visitors a sense of remote, bygone days.

In front of the village runs a straight street, Bijie street, covered with stone slabs that look like a brush with its tip pointing at a mountain called Bijiaoshan, the Brush Hanger Mountain. The facade is bedecked with a type of gate called a *chemen*, which could only be built by a *kongche*, the Song equivalent of a member of parliament. The gate is carved with a couplet on either column:

*Hidden in the green mountains
are tigers,*

*Swimming are dragons in the
double ponds.*

This *chemen* was built by Li Qiushan, a Gongche of the Song. Its wooden structure of semi-bracket pendentives and turned-up eaves is a rare Song architectural treasure.

When you enter the village gate, you will see a double pond, in which lotus bloom in summer. The eastern part of the pond is called Bianhu, and in its center stands an elegant memorial hall, the Water and Moon Hall, in honor of Li Jinxi, a general who died a martyr in action. Before the decisive battle, he sent his whiskers home as an expression of his will to die a heroic death. There is a tomb in the village where his whiskers were buried.

The whole picture of the village has the appearance of a huge ink

slab, one of the four treasures of a typical Chinese study. The village walls look like squares of paper. At the mid point of Bijie street, to the west of Yanchi pond, is a well with water that retains a constant temperature all year round. It draws its source from the 800 meter high Cangshan Mountain.

After a day's toil, the villagers would come to the well and drink its water with a bamboo vessel. Liquor brewed with water from the well is particularly fragrant.

In the south of the village is the ancestral home of the Li family, a place for the ceremonies of worship and pleasure of the clan. There is an ancient theater there, and behind the ancestral hall are Renji Temple and Taiyin Palace, built in imperial palace style. These structures all face on to a pond. This is a sacred place for the village people where clannishness, Buddhism and Taoism are integrated into one. Now, it is a museum for the folk culture of Nanxijiang.

Getting there: Wenzhou is a hub of air, land and sea transportation, connected with all the major cities in the region. You can get to Nanxijiang via Route No. 104 (Jinhua-Lishui-Wenzhou Expressway) and No. 303 (Yongjia-Wenzhou Expressway). The village is 38 kilometers north of the seat of Yongjia county on the middle reaches of the Nanxijiang River. You may also take Bus No. 25 from Wenzhou Railway Station to Wangjiang harbor, and travel to the village by ferry and mini-bus.

Accommodation: There are a number of private inns run by villagers that are clean and offer bathroom, TV and air-conditioning for 90 yuan per night. The best is the three-star Lotus Mountain Mansion, which is reached by way of an 800-meter mountain walk.



The Pipa Well in Xi'an village