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Niu Jianming, office director at the Secretariat of Beijing Express Association

TOBACCO CONTROL

Beijing sees 2,719 fined over smoke ban

By WANG XIAODONG
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More than 2,700 people in Beijing have received fines for illegal public smoking since the city introduced China's toughest tobacco control regulation 18 months ago.

A total of 2,719 people were fined a total of 142,500 yuan (\$20,700) between June 1 last year, when the regulation took effect, and Nov 30 this year, the Beijing Commission of Health and Family Planning, the city's top health authority, announced on Tuesday.

Health law enforcement officers also levied total fines of more than 1.8 million yuan on 663 premises' owners for failing to apply the regulation, the commission said.

“We have maintained intensified efforts in the fight against illegal public smoking in the past year and a half,” said Wang Benjin, deputy chief of the Beijing Health Inspection Bureau.

More than 1,000 officers from the bureau, a primary force for health law enforcement in Beijing, inspected more than 127,000 business owners since June 1 last year, and stopped 5,300 people from smoking in public places, he said.

The regulation bans smoking in all indoor public areas and workplaces, and a number of outdoor areas, including schools, seating areas in sports stadiums and hospitals where women or children are treated.

Violators face fines of up to 200 yuan (\$32), while owners of buildings classified as public places, such as restaurants, face fines of up to 10,000 yuan if they allow people to smoke on their premises, the regulation states.

The percentage of people found smoking in public places had been reduced from 11.3 percent before the regulation to 3.8 percent at the end of last year, the commission said.

Entertainment venues such as internet cafes, karaoke TV rooms and restaurants are still the venues where illegal public smoking is most likely to occur, according to a survey conducted by Beijing's health authorities in October and November, which was released on Tuesday. The survey found that more than 40 percent of internet cafes were found to contain cigarette butts.

The survey also found that 73 percent of taxis in Beijing do not have “no smoking” signs, and nearly one-quarter of taxi drivers allow passengers to smoke in their vehicle.

With temperatures dropping in Beijing, the number of people smoking in indoor public places may increase. The city's health authorities will intensify law enforcement over the next few months to prevent a resurgence of illegal public smoking, said Mei Hongguang, an official with the commission's health promotion department.



In leaf

A child looks at a sofa made of leaves on the China Academy of Art campus in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, on Tuesday. A festival featuring art works made of leaves was launched at the academy on Monday. The event runs through the end of this month. LONG WEI / FOR CHINA DAILY

LOGISTICS

Registration system to strengthen oversight on express-delivery tricycles

By DU JUAN
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Beijing this month introduced a registration system for express-delivery tricycles by standardizing the appearance of such vehicles and issuing safety instruction cards to couriers, officials said.

Insurance policies for the tricycles have also become a must for express-delivery companies.

The new coating for electric tricycles, primarily on the cargo trunk, features the word “kuaidi (express)”, with the vehicle's eight-digit registration number on the top half, and the company's logo and contact information on the bottom half.

“About 57,000 tricycles had completed recoating by early this month, including 40 delivery companies,” said Niu Jianming, office director at the Secretariat of Beijing Express Association. “Some old tricycles do not meet the set standards, and we are urging the companies to discard them.”

“We register the information of every tricycle, including



Express-delivery tricycles with eight-digit registration numbers are seen in Beijing on Friday. WANG ZHUANGFEI / CHINA DAILY

its registration number and its owner,” said Zhao Xin, an official from Beijing's traffic management bureau.

According to Zhao, traffic police officers will use such information to track down companies if an express-delivery tricycle is found breaking the law. Citizens can also report severe breaches of traffic rules through a hotline, quoting the tricycle's registration number.

In addition to the unified appearances of the tricycles,

compulsory insurance and mandatory training sessions for couriers are also listed in the regulatory measures.

“Our tricycles have been covered by full insurance packages, covering common situations,” said a branch runner of ZTO Express, a company recently listed on the New York Stock Exchange, who declined to be named.

“The tricycle is only a carrier,” Niu said. “It's the overall quality and safety awareness that need to be improved.”

He said express companies will receive punishments, including restrictions on renewing registration of tricycles, if the association gets too many complaints about their couriers, adding that new methods, such as the use of GPS chips, will help regulate the industry in the future.

However, Niu said this is only a temporary, self-disciplinary approach during a transition phase, as the national standard is yet to be issued.

The legal status of electric tricycles remains ambiguous, as they are yet to be categorized as either motorized or nonmotorized vehicles, meaning there is a lack of consistency in the law when dealing with accidents involving such tricycles.

In addition, to deliver numerous packages as quickly as possible, some couriers choose to ignore traffic rules, including driving rapidly in the bicycle lane or running red lights.

Liang Shuang contributed to this story.

MILITARY

New drone to beef up PLA aerial skills

Aircraft is said to have cruise speed of 750 km/h and range of 7,000 km

By ZHAO LEI
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10 countries

The People's Liberation Army will soon have an unusually shaped drone, which is expected to strengthen the Chinese military's aerial reconnaissance capabilities.

An unknown number of Xianglong, or Soar Dragon, high-altitude, long-endurance drones have been produced by Guizhou Aviation Industry Group, which is part of the State-owned aircraft maker Aviation Industry Corp of China, according to aviation sources.

The aircraft is believed to be undergoing testing and is expected to be delivered to the PLA soon, sources said, adding that it is likely to become China's answer to the United States' Northrop Grumman RQ-4 Global Hawk, considered to be the most well-known unmanned surveillance drone in the world.

With an innovative “joined tandem wing” design, the drone's configuration is different from all other Chinese manned and unmanned planes — it has a conventional swept wing joined with a forward swept wing, which makes it look like a traditional Chinese kite.

In accordance with Chinese regulations, Guizhou Aviation Industry Group has not, and will not, reveal characteristics of the drone.

However, AirForces Monthly, a British military aviation magazine, said Xianglong has a cruise speed of 750 kilometers per hour and a flight range of 7,000 km. It is capable of operating for 10 hours and can fly up to an altitude of 18,000 meters, the magazine said.

Xianglong was unveiled in 2006 at an air show in China, but later disappeared from public view until 2011 when a prototype was seen at an airport run by the Aviation Industry Corp of China.

including Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kazakhstan, have benefited from China's drone technology advances.

No other news on the drone's development has been leaked since then, and whether it has conducted its first flight remains unknown.

However, since July, speculation about the mass production of Xianglong started to circulate on Chinese defense technology websites after Guizhou Aviation Industry Group published a photo of one of its manufacturing facilities on the internet, with two yellow Xianglong models in a corner of the picture, leading observers to discuss whether the inclusion was intentional.

“Xianglong's unique design makes it suitable for long operations at high altitude. Once the drone is commissioned to the military, it will boost the PLA's long-range reconnaissance capabilities,” said Wang Ya'nan, editor-in-chief of Aerospace Knowledge magazine.

“Moreover, the jet is a good platform for electronic warfare operations such as signal intelligence collection and electronic jamming,” he added.

The PLA has become a big user of unmanned aircraft thanks to the rapid development of the drone industry in China. The military showed three types of unmanned aircraft at the most recent parade in September last year. It is also said to have deployed several other models.

Advances in the nation's drone technology have also benefited at least 10 foreign countries, including Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kazakhstan, with foreign media reporting such countries have bought and deployed Chinese military drones.



The Xianglong, or Soar Dragon, drone is seen in this file photo. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

ARCHAEOLOGY

Ancient State-level sacrificial site discovered

By MA LIE in Xi'an
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Archaeologists recently found a State-level venue used by ancient emperors to parate in sacrificial offerings.

Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology announced the significant discovery on Monday on its official website, saying that the finding had great academic value for in-depth research on social institutions and politics of the Qin (221-206 BC) and Western Han (206 BC-AD 24) dynasties as well as ancient Chinese ritual culture.

From April to November, a joint archaeological team consisting of archaeologists from the institute, and several local archaeological institutions completed the excavation of 2,000 square meters on the sacrificial site, which was approved early this year by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage.

“The excavation completed a wider archaeological survey of this large ancient site, which had a total area of 4.7 million square meters, and produced important findings, with the confirmation of more than 3,200 related sites,



Cultural relics unearthed from an ancient sacrificial site in Fengxiang, Shaanxi province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

including buildings, facilities, roads and sacrificial pits,” said Tian Yaqi, a researcher with the institute and chief of the archaeological team undertaking the excavation.

The ancient sacrificial site, named Yongshan Blood Pool, is located in Fengxiang, about 15 kilometers southeast of the Yongcheng ruins, which is believed to have been the capital of the state of Qin (770-221 BC).

“The excavation focused on a rammed earth platform and sacrificial pits, two site ruins with different characters, and it is the first time we have found such imperial sacrificial

sites, which are identical with ancient records,” Tian said.

At the sites, archaeologists found 2,109 relics, mainly including jade articles, and bronze chariots and horses, which were often used for sacrificial offerings in ancient times.

Tian said that Yongshan Blood Pool is an ancient name for the location, which is believed to have been used to slaughter and bury livestock for sacrifice.

Liu Qingzhu, a famous archaeologist and academician at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and former director of the academy's Institute of Archaeology, said that the unearthed jade figurines, ornaments of bronze chariots and horses, tiles and other relics found at the sites play an important role in defining the sites' nature and age.

“Sacrificial offerings have been one of the core values of civilizations worldwide, but such large-scale sacrificial ceremonies were only seen in Chinese civilization,” Liu said.

Briefly

HUNAN Murder suspect caught 23 years on

Police in Changsha said on Tuesday that they have captured a man suspected of a triple homicide 23 years ago. The man was apprehended in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, on Sunday. It is alleged that the suspect, Liu, had a run-in with several villagers in 1994 and fatally shot three of them before fleeing. Police were tipped off last month that Liu might be hiding in Nanning. The ensuing investigation uncovered that the man had assumed a fake identity.

HUBEI 5 killed, 6 trapped in mine accident

Five miners have been confirmed dead, and six remain trapped in a coal mine after a gas outburst in Badong county, local authorities said on Tuesday. The incident occurred at about 8 pm on Monday at Xinjia Coal Mine. Sixteen workers were at the coal seam where the outburst occurred. Five managed to escape. By Tuesday afternoon, rescuers had retrieved five bodies. A search for the trapped miners is underway.

XINHUA



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