

# CHINA

**Editor's Note:** Around this year's Qingming Festival, or Tomb Sweeping Day, on April 5, the national public security system carried out a series of activities in memory of fallen heroes. Last year, 261 police officers and 131 auxiliary police officers across the country died while on duty. Below, China Daily tells the stories of three officers.



Dong Qinwei (front left) and colleagues study policing skills in August. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

## Family and colleagues honor memory of dedicated officer

The unexpected death of a devoted team member has brought sorrow to his relatives and those who were guided by him. **Yang Zekun** reports.

"I will always remain at my post to ensure the passengers' safety," pledged Dong Qinwei, an officer with the Harbin railway public security bureau in Heilongjiang province, on Jan 14 at a symposium on Spring Festival transportation.

However, the same day, the 58-year-old died suddenly as a result of a cardiac problem on the journey back to work, despite first aid being administered.

Having become a police officer in 1988, Dong devoted his life to the job he was passionate about. He served in a number of roles at both the police office at Harbin Railway Station and the local bureau's criminal investigation department. His last workplace was the police station at Harbin's Acheng North Railway Station.

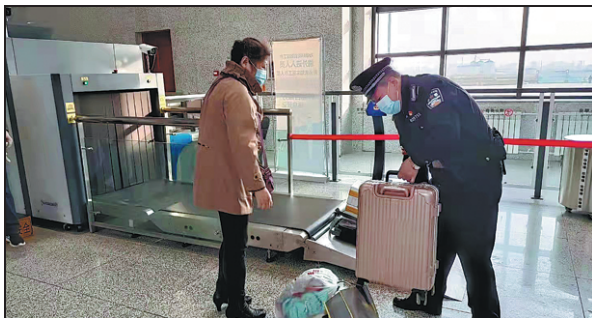
During his 34-year career, Dong solved hundreds of cases and detained 135 suspects. His patrols totaled about 3,000 kilometers of the railway, where he helped uncover 117 potential risks to the track and other infrastructure.

Yu Chunhai, a colleague, said Dong was a responsible and devoted officer. Soon after Dong joined the police office at Harbin Railway Station, the officers were deluged with reports of thefts from passengers. Dong often gave up his spare time to help tackle the issue.

Yu said the officers noticed that the same methods were being used to steal passengers' belongings at the station.

They had identified a suspect, but a lack of evidence meant they were unable to formally detain him. In response, Dong tracked the suspect for five straight days and apprehended him just as he reached out to steal a passenger's belongings.

Later, Dong and his colleagues solved several old cases and tackled a gang of thieves that was hanging about at the railway station.



Dong helps a passenger with her luggage at the railway station in Harbin, Heilongjiang province.

Though he did not major in public security studies in college, Dong worked hard to learn new skills and knowledge so he could adapt to the changing needs of public security work.

He often told his colleagues, "I love being a police officer and can't get enough of the job." Regardless of his role at the station, his enthusiasm for his work never diminished, which encouraged those around him.

In August 1997, a 5-year-old girl was abducted in Anda, a city in Heilongjiang. Dong, who was working in the criminal investigation department at the time, thought the suspect might return to Anda by train.

After receiving an official notice with a photo of the suspect, he paid special attention to male passengers traveling alone or with a young child. After 50 days of searching, he arrested the suspect and rescued the girl.

### Mentor and friend

"Dong was my mentor. He always reminded me that when an emergency alarm sounds on a train, we need to collect all our equipment as quickly as possible and rush to the scene," said Wang Kai, a colleague who spent his first day as a railway police officer with Dong.

"I especially remember a trip from

Harbin to Haikou (in Hainan province). He taught me how to combat drug trafficking on the train and told me about certain times and locations where it was easier to commit crimes. I grew quickly as a police officer under his guidance," Wang added. "With Dong's help, I began to love the job more and more. The best way to honor his memory is to be just like him."

Tao Baoyu, who was also mentored by Dong, said he was grateful for the impact his older colleague had on both his life and career.

"The year I spent working with Dong on the train was the year I made the fastest progress and gained a lot of experience. He made me realize that a police officer's job is much more than simply handling cases and answering the call when passengers need help. It also includes anti-terrorism work, prevention of explosions and fires, security checks and much more," he said.

Tao added that Dong was a strict mentor and a kind older friend, who had many rules at work and was meticulous when checking uniforms and equipment.

Meanwhile, Dong was kind to his colleagues and willing to work extra hours so others could rest.

"I remember that one time, a but-

ton fell off my uniform. When Dong saw it, he made a joke, saying I should start losing weight, even as he took out a needle and thread and started carefully sewing my clothes. At that moment, he was like a father to me," Tao said.

Knowing that Tao had a master's in law, Dong encouraged him to take the National Judicial Examination, a qualification that is a must-have for some legal professionals.

While Tao prepared for the exam, Dong undertook a lot of inspection work on trains on his behalf, which helped him pass the test.

The late officer also faced retaliation from some of those he had arrested when they were released from prison, even being stabbed in the stomach and waist.

When his wife and daughter asked him if he could find other work, they said he replied: "I love this job. I'm not afraid of a few little injuries."

Dong Mingwen, his daughter, said that reading was her father's only hobby outside of work.

"My father was so passionate about his job that he devoted almost his entire life to his career," she said.

"One time, the family was on vacation. During the train journey, my father saw a man jump out of a window to escape a police officer who was trying to arrest him, so he followed the suspect without hesitation. Then, he spent the rest of the vacation helping his colleagues with the case," she said.

Dong Qinwei's death has been a great blow to his family, who can't believe he has gone.

"My parents often took care of my 5-year-old son, and now he often asks why he can't see his grandfather and wants to know where he has gone. We just can't answer that question," Dong Mingwen said.

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## Plainclothes veteran always put work first

By YANG ZEKUN

As a plainclothes police officer, and therefore rarely having the opportunity to wear a uniform or work on major cases, Jia Changquan saw himself as a security guard for the public.

The 40-year-old was a member of the special patrol department at the public security bureau in Weihai, Shandong province.

He had been a police officer for 21 years, during which time he served in different departments, including the traffic police, as a patrol officer and undertook plainclothes duties.

While other families reunited to celebrate Spring Festival on Feb 1, Jia stayed at his post as usual. However, he died after a cardiac arrest, despite attempts to resuscitate him.

The late officer once told colleagues that after he became a plainclothes officer, there was no longer a boundary between life and work. His family's understanding and support enabled him to focus on his job.

"I also want to spend more time with my family during the holidays, but thieves don't take breaks. Every time I see the happiness people get from stolen items being returned, I feel my efforts have been worthwhile," Jia said, according to colleagues.

During his five years as a plainclothes officer, Jia focused on pickpockets. He helped arrest 357 suspects, participated in the resolution of 556 cases and recovered stolen items and money worth 1.3 million yuan (\$205,000).

Leveraging his experience, Jia made use of big data to crack down on pickpockets, which improved his work efficiency.

"A plainclothes officer may never encounter a big case, but every case involves the security of the public. The cellphones or wallets lost by people may not be worth much money, but if we allow cases to happen, people will lose their sense of security, so we must regard each case as a big deal," Jia said.

He often told his younger colleagues that plainclothes officers need to deal with thieves who hide among ordinary people.

Malls, bazaars and streets are their workplaces because when people are busy shopping or traveling, they present the best opportunities for thieves, he said.

Jia said making an arrest is the most exciting and also the most dangerous part of the job, as offi-

cers have no time to consider whether the suspect has a weapon or even an infectious disease.

The officers' first reaction is to catch the culprit despite unknown dangers, and they depend on their colleagues.

Zhang Peng, who worked with Jia for 21 years, said Jia loved his job and was disciplined at work. Moreover, he constantly learned new skills to use in his job.

He recalled how Jia and some colleagues discovered four people stealing electric cables during a late-night patrol in December 2010.

The thieves fled in separate directions, and while Jia was giving chase, the suspect took out a knife and attempted to attack him. Undeterred, Jia tackled the man to the ground and restrained him, but another suspect picked up a flower pot and hit Jia on the head.

Zhang heard Jia calling for support on his walkie-talkie, and he rushed to the scene. Upon arrival, he saw that Jia's head was covered with blood, but he was still clinging to the suspect, subduing him. Later, the three other suspects were also detained.

Influenced by Jia's love of his job, his younger brother became a police officer in 2009.

"I remember that after my father died in 2006, my older brother was in charge of everything in our family. I used to consult with him when I encountered difficulties. Even though he was just 25 at the time, he shouldered many things," Jia Changbo recalled.

After he became a police officer, Jia Changbo often turned to his brother for advice when he ran into difficulties, but Jia Changquan rarely mentioned his own problems.

"The last time I saw him was in August 2020. We planned to take a photo in uniform with our family on Jan 10, National Police Day, next year. Sadly, that won't happen now," Jia Changbo said.



From top: Jia Changquan (second from right) and young officers make a snowman in January last year. Jia (center) and several colleagues make dumplings for Spring Festival in January. This is the last photo taken of Jia.

## Cop killed in accident achieved childhood dreams

By YANG ZEKUN

In China, people often say that snow often precedes a good harvest, but snowy days are the most stressful times for traffic police officers.

Following heavy snow on Feb 5, officer Da Deming and his colleagues were worried that snow and ice might pose a hazard to road safety as they patrolled the section of highway they oversee.

As the auxiliary traffic officer in Qinghai province set up safety warnings and applied spray to melt the snow, he was struck by an out-of-control vehicle, sustaining head injuries.

The 37-year-old was rushed to the hospital, where he was diagnosed with an intracranial hemorrhage. Despite efforts to save him, Da was declared dead 37 hours later.



Da Deming directs traffic on a highway in November 2019.

In July, a busy work schedule meant Da was unable to go home for several days. His 10-year-old daughter missed him, so she begged her mother

to take her to see him on duty.

"I just sneaked a look at him in the car and didn't disturb his work," the girl said. She also secretly took a pho-

to of him on duty in the sunshine. Neither she nor her mother needs any encouragement to look at the photo. They still find it hard to believe that Da has left them.

On the day of the accident, the fifth day of the Spring Festival holiday, Da went on duty after eating a meal of dumplings with his family.

"Spring Festival celebrates family reunions, but for my husband, it was almost the busiest time of the year. He was so passionate about his work and dedicated to the job that we never heard him complain," Su Falian, Da's wife, said. "He smiled at me before he went to work, saying we would celebrate after his shift on Feb 8, which would have been our 10th wedding anniversary. He promised a big dinner and a family photo. Now, we will never hold that celebration."

Da had dreamed of being a police officer since childhood. He was happy with his role and hoped his young daughter would join the force when she was older.

After joining the police in 2012, Da worked in Xining, Qinghai's capital.

During his service, he helped deal with more than 3,000 cases of traffic violations and 600 accidents. He also helped recover more than 100,000 yuan (\$15,700) in lost property and had an excellent disciplinary record.

"He was a great colleague and very professional at work. I trusted him and knew I could leave the team's affairs to him. He loved the job, so he was willing to make many sacrifices for it. All his colleagues said they felt safe with him," Xu Gang, the leader of the team in which Da worked, said.

In 2014, Da dealt with a hit-and-run crash. The victim, who had severe leg injuries, had been drinking, so he couldn't remember anything about the incident.

Additionally, the crash was reported to police via an anonymous call, which made solving the case an extremely difficult task.

After working day and night, Da and his colleagues discovered a truck driver who could have been a major suspect.

However, they had difficulty identifying the registration plate number on his vehicle. Undeterred, they continued checking the records on traffic-monitoring cameras and finally established that the suspect had caused the accident.

"I took a photo of Da when he was directing traffic on a snowy day in 2018. I wish I had taken a better shot of him," Xu said with regret.

In the notes he made during his early days with the police, Da wrote, "Being an auxiliary police officer is not just a job I'm passionate about, but also a career that can represent my wishes and contribute to a better society."