

CHINA

Official learns language of compassion to aid families

Regular home visits and attending important occasions help enhance ties with impoverished villagers

By YANG JUN in Guiyang and LI HONGYANG in Beijing

When asked to sum up his life as a grassroots cadre tasked with eradicating poverty, Qu Jia thought for a moment and then said it was tough but rewarding.

Since being appointed as the Party secretary of Zilinshan, an impoverished village in southwestern China's Guizhou province, in August 2017, Qu has experienced a fair share of stress and success.

Over the past 17 months, the 35-year-old official has come up against a language barrier and struggled to get families to change their lifestyles, with some flatly refusing to cooperate with government officials or take part in poverty alleviation programs.

Yet in that time, he has managed to help more than 100 impoverished households find ways out of poverty through forestry development, resulting in him receiving an award on Oct 30 from the central government for his outstanding work in poverty relief.

Qu was a researcher for the National Forestry and Grassland Administration based in Beijing before his two-year appointment to Zilinshan. He is among nearly 200,000 officials assigned to villages nationwide by the end of 2017 to lead anti-poverty efforts.

"The first step in my job was to visit impoverished families and get to know their economic situation," Qu said. "This usually takes a lot of time and energy because the village

is spread across 4,360 hectares, with scattered houses and bumpy, dangerous roads."

As he is not native to the area, Qu is unable to speak the language used by the local Sui ethnic group, making communication difficult.

"Usually, a local will accompany me and help me translate. Just a brief chat is not enough to help me totally understand these families," he said. "When I'm not busy, I attend the weddings and funerals in the village. These occasions make it easier to talk with them and enhance our emotional ties."

The most challenging task, he said, has been persuading villagers to change their mindset, such as their resistance to moving to safer housing in a nearby county and joining projects initiated by the government.

"They don't want to move because they have land to cultivate in the village and are worried they couldn't find jobs in the county. Some elderly people in particular won't resettle because they love their hometown, even if the houses they are living in are dilapidated."

For those unwilling to move, Qu said he would visit their homes more than 10 times. So far, 67 out of 85 families he has visited have resettled.

"There were some villagers unwilling to strive for a better life through working hard," Qu said. "There was even someone who asked me to give them money directly. I was speechless. Some people believe that poverty relief



Qu Jia (right) welcomes an impoverished farmer at Zilinshan village in Guizhou province joining the local forest patrol team by giving him a patrolman's vest. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

has nothing to do with them."

To tackle traditional thinking, Qu and his team held meetings to persuade residents to resettle or join a project to plant sphagnum moss, a plant suitable for growing in the village that can be sold at a higher price than other crops.

Li Zuyou, who works alongside Qu as the village's long-term Party secretary, said that 80 percent of households have joined the planting project and each earns an average of 20,000 yuan (\$2,910) a year by selling the moss.

Qu said he plans to invest in processing machines for sphagnum to ensure people who join the project can make more money.

"In the fight against poverty, we must be down-to-earth and get the results step by step," he said. "We don't need slogans. What we need is hard work and responsibility, and to be daring in the face of difficulties."

Li Hanyi contributed to this story. Contact the writers at lihongyang@chinadaily.com.cn

SPIRIT OF ACTION

'Magical Pen' has gone, but his spirit remains

By ZHANG YANGFEI

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A man in his 60s, medium height, and a little thin. That was all Zhang Xin needed to know when he was composing the portrait of the suspect who caused an explosion in Linfen, Shanxi province, in 2014.

Known as the "Magical Pen", Zhang was a senior sergeant of criminal investigation at the Shanghai Railway Public Security Bureau and an expert in facial composites. Over a career of more than 30 years, he helped solve more than 800 cases by sketching suspects' faces based on vague descriptions.

The bureau announced Zhang had died in a post on social media on Oct 21. He was 58 years old, and the cause of death was given as extreme exhaustion.

Zhang became a police officer in 1982, and at the time painting was just a hobby. He was first asked to sketch a suspect portrait in 1986, which helped his colleagues solve a theft case. From then on, he was transferred to the bureau's criminal technology team.

To improve his skills, Zhang took advantage of every minute of his daily train commute to and from work to sketch the facial features of the people around him. In all, he drew more than 10,000 sketches.

He also attended art college and spent his holidays traveling in cities and villages as well as visiting ethnic communities to observe the diverse physical features of the locals. After sketching tens of thousands of pictures for various cases, he began to earn a reputation. "The more challenging the case, the more motivated I become," he told China Central Television in an interview.

The job required Zhang to have ample experience and be extremely logical, as witnesses tend to describe

things emotionally after experiencing psychological trauma.

He recalled in the CCTV interview a rape victim who had told him that her attacker had "extremely round eyes". Zhang had held up a coin and asked her if the eyes were as round as the coin, and she said the rapist's were even rounder.

"That was impossible. It was definitely an exaggeration," he said.

Zhang was best known for sketching the facial composite of Gao Chengyong, one of China's most notorious serial killers, who murdered 10 women and an 8-year-old girl between 1988 and 2002 across northern China.

He was asked to join the investigation to sketch the suspect's face in 2002. A year earlier, the killer attempted to assault a female factory worker, which resulted in three witnesses: the victim, her husband, and a police officer who passed the suspect en route to the scene.

Zhang later said that he had never experienced such difficulty before, as a whole year had already passed and their memories had faded.

"Due to the significance of the case, I had to carefully sift through each piece of information from their descriptions and sort out the most useful ones," he said. Even though the descriptions were vague and subjective, Zhang said there was scientific logic, such as a fat person cannot have a thin nose.

He spent three days sketching three pictures of the suspect, which provided a lead for detectives to eventually track down the murderer.

After the announcement of Zhang's death, the bureau paid tribute by honoring his achievements. "Zhang Xin fought on the front line to solve crime," it said on social media. "The hero has gone, but the spirit remains. May our compatriot rest in peace."



Visitors try out the virtual reality facility to experience the interaction between man and machine at Hongqi's booth during the annual Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, the United States. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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We believe Hongqi will come onto the world stage in a more confident and graceful way, and help fuel China's automotive industry's effort to go upward as a whole.”

Hongqi

industry. Among exhibits, it showcased the H5, its first B-class sedan, which was hailed as the most beautiful Hongqi car and its first electric SUV, wowing audiences at the biennial show. Hongqi plans to launch 17 brand-new cars by 2025.

In November, Hongqi revealed a sedan capable of Level 4 autonomous driving, the first of its kind in China, at the World Internet Conference.

Its HS7 SUV, which is the first C-Class SUV by a Chinese carmaker, was also a star at the event. The model is expected to hit the market this year.

Hongqi was the official vehicle provider for the World Internet Conference, where its C-class sedan H7 won praises for its design, technology and quality.

The model also served guests at other global events, including the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

Hongqi's brand awareness and sales have seen rapid progress. Despite the overall sluggish Chinese market, Hongqi exceeded its 2018 sales target of 30,000 vehicles in mid-December. Hongqi expects its sales this year to reach 100,000.

Looking forward, FAW said it will mobilize the best resources, select the best suppliers and build top-class factories for the Hongqi brand to create better products and experiences for its customers.

"We believe Hongqi will come onto the world stage in a more confident and graceful way, and help fuel China's automotive industry's effort to go upward as a whole," said the brand in a statement.



Hongqi's stand attracts many visitors from around the world at the ongoing CES.



Hongqi's cabin, called Qijing, is one of the carmaker's latest technological achievements since Hongqi released its new strategy in January 2018.

to 600 kilometers are expected to be launched in 2020. By 2025, it will roll out 15 new energy vehicles.

The 5f.RFlag is designed to provide

users with the ultimate experience by using cutting-edge technologies, while the m.RFlag represents Hongqi's ride-sharing plans.

The comprehensive technological package is just part of Hongqi's achievements since its new strategy was unveiled.

In April, Hongqi made its premiere as an independent brand at the Beijing auto show, one of the most important events in the automotive

The section is sponsored by Hongqi.