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**Front cover:** Tang Jiaxuan, Honorary Advisor to the China-Japan Friendship Association, with Masahiko Komura, President of the Dietmen's League for Japan-China Friendship, and other Japanese participants of the Meeting of Leaders of Chinese and Japanese Nongovernmental Organizations (February 17, 2012)

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## Tang Jiaxuan Attends Meeting of Leaders of Chinese And Japanese Nongovernmental Organizations

Fu Bo

On February 17, leaders of Chinese and Japanese nongovernmental organizations met in the Great Hall of the People for a meeting which was addressed by Tang Jiaxuan, Honorary Advisor to the China-Japan Friendship Association (CJFA).

Tang said it was of great significance that, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations, leaders of the people-to-people friendship organizations of the two countries should gather to exchange views and offer suggestions for boosting friendly cooperation and deepening the strategic relationship of mutual benefit. It was a very successful meeting that would play a positive role in planning activities and promoting the cause of people-to-people friendship.

Reviewing the course of the development of the bilateral relationship over the past four decades, he identified four key points: First, the achievements in developing relations do not come easily, but are the result of long-term unremitting efforts by the governments,

leaders and far-sighted personages of various circles and should be carefully cherished. Second, China-Japan friendship represented an irresistible historical trend according with the will of the people. Third, only when the two countries carried out mutual assistance and win-win cooperation, could relations have broader prospects of development. Fourth, it was not easy to achieve a good China-Japan relationship, which could easily be undermined. Thus, on major sensitive issues, the two countries should always set great store by their overall common interests, act in accordance with the consensus and understanding reached by the two sides, particularly the principles and spirit enshrined in the four political documents signed by them and properly handle issues through dialogue and consultation.

Looking ahead, Tang saw bright prospects for China-Japan relations with a huge space for development. To promote long-term steady and healthy development, however, needed concerted, unremitting efforts by the govern-

ments, nongovernmental organizations and various personages on both sides. First, the two countries should enhance political and strategic mutual trust. Second, they should persistently carry out cultural and personnel exchanges, particularly those between youths. Third, they should boost mutually beneficial cooperation. Doing this, at the bilateral, regional and global levels, the two countries could achieve win-win results, continuously expand their common interests and upgrade the China-Japan strategic relationship of mutual benefit.

Wang Xiao, President of the All-China Youth Federation; Meng Xiaosi, Vice President of the All-China Women's Federation; Jing Dunquan, Vice President of the CPAFFC and the CJFA; Jiang Guangping, Member of the Secretariat of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions; Wang Jinzhen, Vice President of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade; as well as leaders of the seven Japanese friendship-with-China organizations including Koichi Kato, Yohei Kono, Takashi Tsujii, Masahiko Komura, Fujio Cho, Takeshi Noda and Satsuki Eda attended the meeting.

The representatives frankly and fully expressed their views on developing China-Japan relations in the new era. After the meeting, the Chinese and Japanese Nongovernmental Organizations' Declaration of Action in Commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of the Diplomatic Relations Between China and Japan was jointly released. ■



# Chinese and Japanese Nongovernmental Organizations' Declaration of Action Commemorating 40th Anniversary Of Normalization of Diplomatic Relations

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan, representatives gathered in Beijing for a meeting of Leaders of the Chinese and Japanese Nongovernmental Organizations to fully exchange views on further carrying out people-to-people friendly exchanges and cooperation and promoting a long-term steady and healthy development of China-Japan relations under the new situation. The Declaration of Action jointly released declares:

First, we deem that in the past 40 years since the normalization of diplomatic relations, with the concerted efforts by both sides, China-Japan relationship has witnessed significant development in every field, bringing great benefit to both countries and peoples and making important contributions to peace, stability and prosperity of the Asian-Pacific region and the world at large. We will continue to make full use of the advantages of people-to-people friendship, promote exchanges and cooperation between the two countries in various fields covering politics, economy, culture, education, science and technology, sports, trade unions, women's affairs, news media, youth and local government and further enrich the contents of the China-Japan strategic relations of mutual benefit.

Second, we will, as always, observe the principles set forth in the four political documents including the Sino-Japanese Joint Statement and in the spirit of "taking history as a mirror and looking to the future" enhance mutual political trust, safeguard the overall interests of China-Japan friendship and consolidate the political basis of the bilateral relations.

Third, we hold that China and Japan are most important trade partners with strong economic complementarities

creating a huge potential in cooperation. Under the current global economic situation, it is most important that the two countries strengthen communication, coordination and mutually beneficial cooperation. We will intensify our efforts to boost practical cooperation in the fields of energy conservation, recycle economy, new energy, new materials and finance, push forward transformation and upgrade of bilateral economic and trade cooperation, foster new growth areas in the economy so as to achieve win-win results and common development.

Fourth, the foundation of China-Japan friendship lies among the people. The future of China-Japan friendship relies on youth. We will take the 40th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations and the Year of Exchanges and Friendship Between the Two Peoples as an opportunity to further boost cultural exchanges, particularly friendly exchanges between the youth. We will increase interaction between the two peoples to enhance mutual understanding and friendly sentiments between the two peoples, foster successors to the cause of China-Japan friendship and let the spirit of China-Japan friendship take root in the hearts of the people and pass on from generation to generation.

Fifth, we deeply cherish the memory of the older generations of friendly personages of the two countries who have made great contributions to the development of China-Japan relations. We are determined to carry forward their behest and the spirit of China-Japan friendship, advance with the times and strive for opening up new prospects of the cause of China-Japan friendship and achieving the lofty goals of "peaceful coexistence, lasting friendship, mutually beneficial cooperation and common development".

The China-Japan Friendship Association  
The Chinese People's Association for  
Friendship with Foreign Countries  
The All-China Federation of Trade Unions  
The All-China Youth Federation  
The All-China Women's Federation  
The China Council for the Promotion of  
International Trade

The Japan-China Friendship Association  
The Japanese Council for the Promotion of  
International Trade  
The Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association  
The Dietmen's League for Japan-China Friendship  
The Japan-China Association for Economy and Trade  
The Japan-China Society  
The Japan-China Friendship Center

Beijing, February 17, 2012 ■

# Tang Jiaxuan Becomes President of CJFA

Zhang Zhenxing

At the council meeting of the China-Japan Friendship Association (CJFA) held in Beijing on March 15, Tang Jiaxuan was elected as the new president, while Song Jian became honorary president.

In his speech, Tang noted that, over the past 40 years since the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan, with concerted efforts by the governments and people of all walks of life, the bilateral relationship had witnessed remarkable development with exchanges and cooperation in various fields reaching an unprecedented level. The significant development of the bilateral relationship had brought tangible benefits to both peoples, and made great contributions to peace, stability and development of Asia and the rest of the world.

At the time when the two countries marked the 40th anniversary of the normalization of bilateral diplomatic relations, their relations stood at a new historical starting point, and the China-Japan strategic relationship of mutual benefit had an important opportunity to progress towards a higher level and wider range.



Tang Jiaxuan at the CJFA Council Meeting

Over the past 50 years since its establishment, the CJFA had played an important role in reestablishing, improving and developing the relations between the two countries, and made great contributions to promoting exchanges and cooperation in all fields and enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples. Currently, the international and regional situation, as well as domestic conditions of both countries had undergone great and profound changes and

this had created new and higher demands on the work of people-to-people friendship. In future, the CJFA would continue to carry on the glorious tradition, work together with various circles, uphold the banner of China-Japan friendship and give play to the role of a bridge and a firm bond. It would take the 40th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations and the Friendship Year of People-to-People Exchanges as a new opportunity to carry out multi-faceted exchanges and cooperation in various fields. It would continue to do a good job in enhancing political mutual trust between the two countries and friendship between the two peoples so as to further deepen the strategic relationship of mutual benefit. It would make unremitting efforts to realize the lofty goal of peaceful coexistence, lasting friendship, mutually beneficial cooperation and common development.

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin, CPAFFC and CJFA Vice President Jing Dunquan, and CJFA Vice Presidents Wen Chi, Wang Xiaoxian, Chen Yongchang and Wang Xiuyun were present at the meeting. ■



# Winners of the Japan Chinese Speech Contest

## Editor's Note:

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the normalization of China-Japan diplomatic relations. The final of the 29th Japan Chinese Speech Contest sponsored by the Japan-China Friendship Association (JCFA) was held in Tokyo on January 8. The 28 contestants came from 17 Japanese prefectures. They spoke about their experience in learning Chinese language, their contacts with Chinese people and their views on removing misunderstanding and enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between the two countries. We publish the following two speeches for our readers' interest.

## After a Span of 40 Years

### Yui Tanaka (Winner of the University Student Group)

Hi, everybody! Recently, my classmates often looked at me, saying "Oh! How come you smile so brightly today?" Some even said that I looked like I had won the lottery; well, I haven't. But, to me, a "China fan", there really is a happy event to celebrate, i.e. we will soon greet the 40th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China diplomatic relations! Here, I can tell everyone without scruple that Yui likes China more than mice like rice and pandas like bamboo. I am a hundred percent "China fan".

Of course, it is not a plain sailing for one growing up right now. Behind my beaming smile, there are tears. I remember that, once, I took part in an important Chinese language competition full of confidence. When I arrived at the venue, I found so many strong competitors, which made me feel as if I were looking at the sky from the bottom of a well. I felt even more dismayed when the competition results were released. I failed to get beyond the first round. At that time I couldn't control my emotion, and cried as I called my Chinese teacher: "Teacher, I could not do it. I lost. I am finished!!" The teacher comforted me in a soft voice. Hearing me crying all the time, she said to me, "Oh, Yui, you

are just like my own child. When you feel sad I feel sad, too!" These words injected a gush of warmth in me and brightened me up immediately. It was true that I didn't win a prize, but I still felt very lucky and happy, because I have my Chinese mother. Whether I succeed or fail, the Chinese teacher like my mother will, as always, care for me, support me and cheer me on. It makes me feel very warm!

After I started to learn Chinese, I found that my horizons were broadened. Before, I did have such a favorable impression of China. The negative reports about China on TV and in newspapers had even prejudiced me against it. Now, the Chinese teachers and friends around me are so kind-hearted, friendly and amiable. All this has helped me completely remove my prejudice. I have discovered that the main reason for the embarrassments in the relationship between our two peoples is that we look alike in appearance and all have profound culture traditions, so when one side does not behave well enough, the other side will feel as if cheated. The Japanese eat sashimi, while the Chinese eat shish kebab; The Japanese keep a low profile and maintain an easy manner while the Chinese are

straightforward and warmhearted... As a matter of fact, there are numerous cultural differences between the two nations. If we could adopt another way of thinking, we might have learned more wisdom from each other, thus enabling us to have a more colorful and wonderful life.

This year of 2012 is the 40th anniversary of Japan-China diplomatic relations. In 1972, a Japanese prime minister named Kakuei Tanaka built a bridge of Japan-China friendship. After a span of 40 years, an ordinary student called Yui Tanaka is determined to become a diplomat for the two peoples so as to make her due contribution to further consolidating the bridge of Japan-China friendship. As a common saying goes "A thousand-li journey starts with the first step." Promoting Japan-China friendship is not something unattainable. Perhaps, by starting from the exchanges between us, the most ordinary people at the grass roots, friendly exchanges between our two peoples can really be promoted and the friendly relationship between our two countries last from generation to generation! In a word, I will pass my brilliant smile to more Japanese friends and let more Japanese people become "China fans" like me!

## Have Confidence in Oneself

**Yuka Goto (champion, group of people of all sectors)**

Learning Chinese language has taught me a lot. And the most important aspect of all is that I gained confidence in myself during the learning process and I will never again deny any of my potentialities.

Because of my father's work, my family lived in the United States for six years. When I went to the United States for the first time, I was a junior middle school student who could only say "This is a pen" in English. My sister, three years older, is very clever. So when she was very young, my father already began to teach her English earnestly. His strict teaching made my sister cry numerous times. Seeing the way she learned English, I thought it was a horrible thing to learn the language. So, I swore that, if there were any way out, I would never learn English.

Generally speaking, it is easier for smaller children to learn a foreign language. Accordingly, my parents said to me: "Yuka, you ought to learn English faster than your sister." But, half a year later, it was my sister who got used to the life in the United States. She even spoke English in her dreams, while I had only learned to say only one more English sentence "What is this?" My sister's English was far better than mine.

At first, my parents scolded me; and later they began to do homework for me. To my mind, by doing so, my parents showed their kindness and love for such a slow child. I knew they really wanted to say, "It doesn't matter whether you can speak English or not." All the family knew that Yuka had no talent in language. They didn't believe that it was possible for me to master a foreign language, and had no more illusions about my ability there. During my six-year stay in

the United States, the feeling of inferiority never left me. I felt that I could never do as good as my sister and any efforts I made were fruitless.

After graduating from senior middle school, I decided to return to Japan for higher education. Then, I had to learn a second foreign language. I was scared. How dreadful it was! What should I do? I couldn't even learn English well, how could I learn one more foreign language? I boarded the plane for Japan, feeling terribly upset. On that flight I heard Chinese spoken for the first time. The hostess usually broadcasts in English, but this time she spoke in Chinese! Of course I couldn't understand what she was saying. But I was touched by her beautiful pronunciation and intonation, and then involuntarily imitated her intonation. Hearing me blurt-ing out Chinese, the friends sitting next to me said, "So you can speak Chinese! Why didn't you tell us?" I was greatly surprised. I found this should be my talent, the talent in language. Since that day, Chinese became my last ray of hope to learn a foreign language.

Since then, I have been learning Chinese every day. And finally, I can stand in front of you to deliver this speech. The friends whom I made through learning Chinese have always encouraged me. They often say to me: "We believe you can! You are excellent!" What they said time and again is what I wished to hear since childhood. Their encouragement awakened me and I began to have confidence in myself.

Learning Chinese has given me not only knowledge and experience, but also confidence in myself. I will never give up any of my potentialities; never, not even the slightest! ■

On February 22, Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang met with IBM President and CEO Virginia M. Rometty and her party in Beijing. CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin and Assistant Foreign Minister Zhang Kunsheng were also present. The two sides had a candid discussion on the overall China-U.S. relationship, bilateral economic and trade relations, China's social and economic development and the international situation.

Vice Premier Zhang extended his congratulations to Ms Rometty on taking up her position as President and CEO early this year. He said that, with concerted efforts by both sides, overall relations between the two countries would generally maintain good, positive momentum. Particularly, during President Hu Jintao's visit to the United States in January 2011, the two heads of state had reached an important consensus on building a cooperative partnership based on mutual respect and benefit, laying a solid foundation. Recently, invited by US Vice President Joe Biden, Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping had paid a successful visit to the United States through which the two sides had enhanced mutual understanding and trust, further expanded practical cooperation in all fields and reached an important consensus on accelerating building a strong bilateral cooperative partnership. This was of great significance for maintaining a continuous, healthy and steady development of bilateral relations for a long time to come. The politicians and entrepreneurs of both countries were fully aware of the importance of bilateral cooperation. However, there were always some politicians in the United States who like to exploit such issues as the Renminbi exchange rate, Tibet, etc. to create obstacles to the development of relations. Although an irritant, they would not hinder healthy develop-

# Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang Meets with IBM President Virginia M. Rometty and Her Party

**Jiang Yingshan**

ment of the bilateral relationship.

China was now implementing the 12th Five-Year Plan and endeavoring to readjust economic structure and expand domestic demand. The United States was also accelerating its economic restructuring and enhancing efforts to implement a "Plan to Double U.S. Exports" and the "Select USA" initiative. These provided a vast space for the two countries to cooperate in the fields of trade, investment, new and clean energy and newly emerging industries. China's ongoing process of industrialization, urbanization and agricultural modernization would generate huge market demand. The growth and internationalization of Chinese enterprises would also accelerate the soaring demand for FDI. By 2015, the scale of China's domestic consumer market would reach 31 trillion RMB. In the coming five years, China would import commodities worth over US \$8 trillion, among which imports of high-tech products would form an important part. In the coming decade, China's external investments would reach US \$1 trillion. Facing this rare historic opportunity, China and the United States should join hands and further tap the potential for bilateral mutually beneficial cooperation to create a new situation in bilateral economic cooperation.

Ms. Rometty expressed her thanks to Vice Premier Zhang for meeting her and her party. China's economic growth benefited not only itself but also the whole world. It was a mode of mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. This was her first visit to Asia since she assumed the post of IBM CEO. China played an important role in IBM's

global business development. For years, the company had dedicated itself to research and innovation, attached great importance to personnel training and helped Chinese enterprises achieve better transformation and upgrading. IBM had shifted to China its headquarters for business in more than 140 countries and regions except for the developed countries. It was now actively planning to move the innovation center for energy and automobile industries to China. The company's robust business growth in China not only expanded American exports to China and increased employment opportunities for both countries, but also boosted bilateral cooperation and promoted the overall bilateral relationship.

Vice Premier Zhang expressed his appreciation of IBM for its contribution to the development of bilateral relations. He said its 20-year successful business operation in China should be attributed to its correct understanding of the country. The continuous spread of the international financial crisis, particularly aggravation of the European sovereignty debt crisis, had had great impact on global economic recovery and stability of international finance. In West Asia and North Africa, regime change in some coun-

tries had triggered social instability. The situation in Iran was grave due to much saber rattling, affecting international oil supply and security. Against such a backdrop, China and the United States, the two largest economies in the Asia-Pacific region, and indeed the world, needed to uphold the spirit of cooperation, reduce frictions and prevent politicization of differences between them. The two countries should use bilateral channels as well as multilateral platforms such as the G20 to strengthen coordination in macro-economic policies, give full play to the capacity of the two engines of global economic development and promote vigorous and sustainable economic growth of not only themselves but also the rest of the world. Vice Premier Zhang hoped that IBM, as a global transnational enterprise and China's old friend, would make its contribution in this aspect and promote cooperation between enterprises of China, the United States and the rest of the world so as to tide over the current economic difficulties together. ■

**Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang meeting with IBM President and CEO Virginia M. Rometty**



Sri Lankan Minister of Rural Affairs Athauda Seneviratne, a strong supporter of the Association for Sri Lanka-China Social and Cultural Cooperation (ASLCSCC), led an Association goodwill delegation to Beijing, and Hunan and Guangdong Provinces from March 7 to 14. ASLCSCC President Indrananda Abeysekera accompanied the delegation.

### Recalling Traditional Sino-Sri Lankan Friendship

Feng Zuoku, Vice President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, met with the delegation in Beijing, and extended a warm welcome. He said, China and Sri Lanka enjoyed traditional friendly relations and the two peoples maintained deep friendship. In the new era, the CPAFFC and the ASLCSCC carried out many friendly activities rich in content and variety, enhancing the relationship. He believed the latest visit would undoubtedly further the friendship between the two countries.

Minister Seneviratne thanked the CPAFFC for its invitation and good arrangements for the trip. In 1950 soon after the founding of the PRC, Sri Lanka had extended formal recognition, he noted. In 1952, when the two countries had not yet established full diplomatic relations, and despite the Western

### CPAFFC Vice President Feng Zuoku meeting with Sri Lankan Minister of Rural Affairs Athauda Seneviratne and his party



## Sri Lankan Minister of Rural Affairs Athauda Seneviratne Visits China

Liu Hongmin

blockade of China, Sri Lanka stood firm against all the pressure and signed a Rice-Rubber Barter Agreement with China that became a much-told tale in the history of the development of friendship between the two countries. Whenever China suffered from grave natural disasters, Sri Lanka always offered whatever help it could, while China had also given great help to Sri Lanka to survive hard times. For three decades, the government of Sri Lanka had struggled to put down domestic terrorist groups at home. Western countries had imposed numerous restrictions, but China had extended a timely helping hand for the government to finally realize peace and unity in the country. The basis of bilateral friendship had been consolidated by mutual support in hard times, an example of the saying: "A friend in need is a friend indeed".

Minister Seneviratne showed great admiration for China's achievements in economic construction. He said, Chairman Mao and other leaders

of the first generation established the socialist system, enabling the Chinese people to stand like giants in the East; Deng Xiaoping set up the reform and opening-up policy and the socialist market economy that led to China's immense achievements in economic development. At the moment when the Western developed countries all faced recession and crisis, China's economic success had been outstanding.

Though China was becoming stronger day by day, however, it never forgot old friends. In the new era, it provided selfless aid to Sri Lanka in the fields of agriculture, mining, infrastructure, etc. It helped build the Bandaranaike Memorial International Convention Hall, the Mahinda Rajapakse Performing Art Center, the Port of Hambantota, and the Puttalam Coal Power Plant. As domestic peace prevailed, the Sri Lankan Government welcomed more Chinese enterprises to invest, actively participating in the country's economic construction.

### Enhancing Pragmatic Cooperation

Invited by the CPAFFC, the ASLCSCC delegation's visit not only brought the two organizations closer together, but also firmly strengthened exchanges and cooperation in various aspects.

**Furthering cooperation with the CPAFFC.** This year marks the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Sri Lanka and the 15th anniversary of the ASLCSCC. During the delegation's stay in China, it presented a plaque of friendship to CPAFFC Vice President Feng Zuoku to express gratitude for the contribution made by the CPAFFC in promoting friendly exchanges and understanding between the Chinese



## Publicizing Muaythai Culture to Deepen Sino-Thai Friendship

Chuan You

From February 13 to 15, the Sichuan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (SIFA) received a Muaythai cultural delegation headed by Thanadej Puangpool, advisor to Deputy Prime Minister Yongyuth Wichaidit and representative of the World Muaythai Council.

Thai boxing is a form of martial art of global fame, and, every year the World Muaythai Council holds an international championships and publicizes Muaythai culture by training boxers and organizing matches in various countries.

Sino-Thai friendship goes back to ancient times. In recent years, friendly exchanges between Sichuan and Thailand have developed continuously with fruitful results. Meeting the delegation, SIFA President Qin Lin noted that one such was inviting Thai friends to visit Chengdu to publicize Thai boxing culture for enhancing mutual understanding and boosting friendly cooperation.

While in Chengdu, the delegation visited Daci Temple, which actively

carries out friendly exchanges with Thailand. Every year on the birthdays of Thai King and Queen, local Thais go to the Daci Temple to offer birthday congratulations and pray for their majesties. After the Wenchuan earthquake, Thai Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn presented a gold gilded statue of Buddha as a gift to the Temple and as a prayer for the people in Sichuan. When Thailand suffered severe floods last year, the Temple's Abbot Shi Da'en donated 200,000 yuan to Princess Sirindhorn, the Thai Red Cross Society and the Thai Wat Phra Dhammakaya. Last year on the Thai National Day, the Consulate-General in Chengdu conferred the honorary title and certificate of International Friend for China-Thailand Friendship upon Shi Da'en.

The members of the delegation looked with great reverence at the Buddha presented by Princess Sirindhorn, accepted the blessings given by Abbot Shi Da'en and donated 10,000 yuan to the Temple.

They also visited Chengdu University to meet Tu Huoming, Secretary of the CPC Committee of the university. The two sides discussed setting up a Muaythai training center to teach Thai boxing in the university and signed a memorandum of intent.

The delegation visited the Sirindhorn Thai Language and Culture Class and the Thai Language and Culture Center set up in the College of Foreign Languages & Cultures. They also inspected the indoor stadium and gymnasium in the School of Physical Education.

Delegation leader Puangpool said happily that Chengdu University had done a great deal of work to boost Thailand-China friendship, especially inviting Princess Sirindhorn to visit. "We feel greatly honored and very warm. The Thai language teaching offered by the university has provided a basis for us to promote Muaythai culture. We expect that the cooperation between our two sides can progress smoothly and achieve success." ■

and Sri Lankan people. ASLSCC President Abeysekera submitted to Vice President Feng Zuoku a proposal about the holding of Sri Lanka-China Friendship Forum jointly initiated by the ASLSCC and the Sri Lanka-China Society, and extended a formal invitation to the Vice President to visit Sri Lanka and attend the First Sri Lanka-China Friendship Forum.

**Strengthening Contacts with Beijing.** In Beijing, the delegation attended the opening ceremony of the Photo Exhibition of Sri Lankan Scenery held by the Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (BPAFFC), at which it conferred the title of Special Honorary Council Member of the

BPAFFC on President Abeysekera.

Li Xin, Deputy Magistrate of Mentougou District, Beijing, met with the delegation and talked about establishing friendship-city relations between the Mentougou and Kegalle District of Sabaragamuwa Province. The district government of Mentougou also signed a Letter of Intent on Friendly Exchanges with the ASLSCC.

**Strengthening Education Exchanges.** In Hunan, Minister Seneviratne paid a visit to Central South University, and delivered a speech entitled "Friendship Between Sri Lanka and China and the Current cooperation and Development" to 400 students and faculty, who warmly applauded many

times. On behalf of the ASLSCC, he gave subsidy to six students who needed help.

**Consolidating Exchanges and Cooperation in Buddhist Culture.** In Beijing, the delegation members and the Abbot of Jietai Temple recalled the long history of exchanges of Buddhist culture between Sri Lanka and China, reaffirming the enthusiasm and willingness of both sides in developing exchanges. In Guangzhou, the ASLSCC delegation presented a statue of a Sri Lankan Buddha to Liurong Temple. The monks and followers lined up in front of the gate of the temple, holding beads and flowers and chanting the hymns of Buddhist teachings, welcoming the statue to the temple. ■

# Union of Local Authorities In Israel Delegation Visits China

**Ai Lin**

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Israel. At the invitation of the CPAFFC, Shlomo Bohbot, President of the Union of Local Authorities in Israel (ULAI) and Mayor of Ma'alot-Tarshiha, led the 12-member Israeli mayor delegation on a goodwill visit to Beijing and Shanghai from March 20 to 27. The mayors wanted to learn China's experience in urban and rural construction, carry out cultural exchanges, and promote further cooperation at the local government level.

In Beijing, they met CPAFFC Vice President Feng Zuoku, who said the Jewish people had a long history and culture; over the past two decades, bilateral exchanges and cooperation in various fields had grown continually—for example, the 14 pairs of friendship-city ties, and another 20 pairs engaged in informal friendly exchanges. He hoped the two sides would closely cooperate for new achievements.

President Bohbot said the Chinese people selflessly had offered help to the Jewish people when they suffered persecution, which would never be forgotten in Israel.

During the meeting with the Ministry of Railways, the Mayor of Eilat, Meir Yitzhak Havlevi, briefly introduced the government-funded urban railroad project in southern Israel and its great significance not only to the city



**ULAI President Shlomo Bohbot presenting a souvenir to CPAFFC Vice President Feng Zuoku**

of Eilat but also the overall development of Israel. He hoped China could provide relevant assistance.

The delegation had discussions with leading members of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Finance and the Beijing Municipal Commission of Tourism Development (BMCTD), exchanging views on issues such as taxation, distribution of social security funds and organizing China-Israel tourism forum. The delegation showed keen interest in the rapid development of the tourist industry in Beijing, and invited the BMCTD to make site visits to Israel and conduct tourist promotion activities.

The delegation also inspected the biogas station of Daxing Liumingying eco-farm, and held a discussion on the development of the rural economy and the improvement of living conditions for rural residents. They agreed China had made rapid progress in rural development and that the installation of new energy facilities had greatly improved residents' lives. Some members who had visited Beijing several years ago were amazed at the incredible speed of its development.

The delegation was very concerned about how to maintain urban environmental sanitation and disposal of household refuse. During talks with

relevant officials of the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Landscaping and City Appearance and the Shanghai Housing Administration, President Bohbot said the delegation had seen a clean and tidy city, and learned that Shanghai had a complete waste separation and waste transport system as well as publicity system to help residents with garbage classification. These were successful experiences worth learning. Israel is small in area but with a comparatively large population. As large numbers of Jews return to live in Israel from Europe and other parts of the world, cities face issues concerning land allocation to solve the housing problem, so China's effective basic housing policies were worth studying.

During the visit, the delegation had meetings with teachers and students majoring in Hebrew at Peking University, and those studying Hebrew and Arabic at the Shanghai International Studies University. President Bohbot told them that the ULAI would provide scholarships so some Chinese students could live and study in Jewish and Arab cities in Israel for one to three months. They would experience Israel culture while teaching Chinese language and culture to local people, thus, furthering bilateral friendly exchanges.

On the recommenda-

tion of Jackie Eldan, Consul General of Israel in Shanghai, the leading members of the Foreign Affairs Office of Huzhou City and Simon Alfasi, Mayor of Yokneam, exchanged opinions on the establishment of friendship-city ties.

The delegation attended the reception celebrating the 20th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Israel jointly held by the CPAFFC and the Israeli Embassy in China.

The visitors felt their tour had been well arranged with rich content that was rewarding. They had got to know more about the history of the exchanges between China and Israel, witnessed achievements in China's rural and urban construction, learned the experience of the country's urban and rural development, and strengthened the friendly ties between the ULAI and the CPAFFC. ■



The delegation at Zhujiajiao, Shanghai

The delegation with CPAFFC Vice President Feng Zuoku and staff members



# Opening the Vault of Knowledge Spreading the Seeds of Friendship

Chuan You

From December 14 to 16, 2011, Julien Laupretre, President of the Secours Populaire Francais (SPF), led a delegation to visit Sichuan Province for a ribbon cutting ceremony of the Mengjia School library in Deyang.

Founded in 1945, the SPF is an influential public organization in France that cooperates with various organizations throughout the world on programs of development and training, and provides emergency aid to victims of military conflicts and natural disasters. When a severe earthquake struck Wenchuan on May 12, 2008, the organization immediately sent a letter to the CPAFFC expressing deep concern, and appealed to French people to unite with and share the pain of the victims. Later,

the organization decided to donate tents and daily necessities badly needed in stricken areas in Sichuan Province, and took part in reconstruction projects.

In July 2008, the SPF delegation arrived at Deyang, one of the worst damaged areas, and distributed tents, food, sleeping bags and other necessities to 360 households. When they learned that Mengjia School of Jingyang District was badly damaged and the school library was destroyed with over 30,000 books buried in rubble, SPF immediately determined to provide financial aid for its reconstruction. In August 2008, with financial support from the SPF and the CPAFFC, a 12-member delegation of students and teachers of Dongqi Middle School of

Deyang came to Beijing to take part in Olympic exchange activities between Chinese and French youth. They watched the Olympic Games together with the visiting French young students and held parties, which helped ease the pain and depression of the survivors.

On December 15, 2011, the completion ceremony of the multimedia library of Mengjia School was held on the playground. Emmanuel Rousseau, Consul General in Chengdu, and representatives of the SPF and the French multinational Areva Group, Li Jianping, Vice President of the CPAFFC, Qin Lin, President of the Sichuan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Chen Xinyou, Mayor of Deyang; reporters, and teachers and students of the school, totaling about 700 people, attended.

CPAFFC Vice President Li Jianping emotionally described how SPF President Julien Laupretre, now aged 86, had undergone much wartime suffering when young, and so he had decided to devote his life to charity work to help the children all over the world to have a happy life. It is through the active efforts of Mr. Laupretre and his team that the new library of

Principal of Mengjia School presenting silk banners to the SPF and the Areva Foundation



Mengjia School had been completed, opening the door of the vault of knowledge for local children. Li hoped the students would cherish the opportunity and study hard so as to make contributions to their motherland and its people and to friendship with the French people when they grow up.

Mr. Lauprete told the children about his unfortunate childhood and hoped that they could take the good opportunity and work hard so that in future they would be able to help children of other countries and regions in the world badly in need of assistance and love. Unity and mutual assistance should not just remain words, but be realized in deeds. The new library was the result of efforts made in the spirit of unity, friendship and love. He hoped that it would become a seed of friendship and mutual assistance in the hearts of the children and bring about a better, more peaceful and united future to humanity.

Speaking softly, a girl student representative of the school expressed her gratitude to “Grandpa Lauprete” and all other people who had helped the children. She said, the completion of the new library taught them to be grateful and understand sincerity and true friendship. In the world of books in the



**SPF President Julien Lauprete and his party visiting the library**

library, they would no longer feel lonely. They would certainly cherish all that stood in front of their eyes and study hard so as to serve their motherland and spread friendship as adults.

Deyang Mayor Chen Xinyou, on behalf of the people of the earthquake-stricken area, showed his respect and gratitude to the SPF, the Areva Foundation and the CPAFFC for their care, support and aid to the city and its people in the reconstruction. Deyang people would never forget those who had given them a helping and loving hand when they were in peril and

calamity, and would pass on the spirit of humanitarianism, universal fraternity and devotion as well as the lofty spirit of disaster relief from generation to generation.

The Principal of Mengjia School presented silk banners to the SPF and the Areva Foundation.

After the ceremony, the delegation went to Penghua village of Mianzhu city and Jiulong town to inspect other reconstruction projects, and were amazed and happy to see the neat and beautiful new village and the improved public infrastructure. ■

**CPAFFC Vice President Li Jianping Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the Mengjia School library in Deyang, Sichuan**



## Mrs. Miriam Ould Daddah in China

Tang Ruimin

As the April flowers blossomed in the warmth of spring, Mrs. Miriam Ould Daddah, wife of the first president of Mauritania Moktar Ould Daddah, came to China with her son.

Before the 11th century BCE, Mauritania was the main caravan route between southern Morocco and the Niger River. From the 15th century, however, it was invaded successively by colonists from Portugal, the Netherlands, Britain and France. It became a French colony in 1912 and in November 1958, a French Community member state with the name of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania. It gained independence on November 28, 1960. Moktar

Ould Daddah served four presidential terms lasting 18 years. President and Mrs. Daddah visited China respectively in October 1967, September 1974 and April 1977, during which they were cordially received by Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai.

After the death of President Daddah in 2003, his widow set up the Moktar Ould Daddah Foundation to safeguard the legitimate rights of women and children, reducing the number of girls not attending school, providing vocational training for women, and organizing the production of educational radio and TV programs. She also founded the Mauritanian Red Crescent Society

and serves as its President. Mrs. Daddah, French by origin, is now 79. She studied law and history in universities in France, Senegal and Tunisia. She met President Daddah at the law school of University of Paris, where he gained a bachelor's degree in law. The marriage produced two sons and a daughter. Mohammedoun, the elder son who accompanied Mrs. Daddah on the visit, was born in 1966 and now serves as head of the International Department of Mauritania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During her visit in China this time, Mrs. Daddah called on the Soong Ching Ling Foundation where she learned of its international children's summer camps held every July with activities in Beijing and Inner Mongolia. She hoped that Mauritanian children would have the opportunity to take part. She discussed with leading members of the Foundation issues such as the planning of activities for youth and children, the promotion of public welfare programs, and the improvement of subsistence conditions of women and children. She told them that the Moktar Ould Daddah Foundation received the support and protection from the people of all walks of life and the government of Mauritania.

It had been 35 years since her previous visit to China and she was very excited. She pledged to dedicate the remainder of her life to strengthening Mauritania-China relations so that the people of the two countries would live in friendship generation after generation. ■

**Wang Xiaoshu, Vice President of the Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, meeting with Mrs. Miriam Ould Daddah and her son Mohammedoun Daddah**



How to let students in their adolescence disclose the pressures they confront? How to make hearing-impaired children better communicate with their family members and pals? Veronika Gaber Korbar, Director of the Taka Tuka Club in Ljubljana of Slovenia, Chengdu's friendship city, brought a completely new approach to education: Drama In Education (DIE) to the students of Grade 8 of the Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing of the Chengdu Special Education School.

As a matter of fact, as early as the end of the Second World War, DIE began incorporating theatrical activities for educational purposes in Europe and the United States, emphasizing interaction and situational simulation. In the class, Veronika created a fictitious character Miao Miao and let the children imagine what kind of a student Miao Miao was. "She respects teachers." "She is lively and cheerful." "She loves study." "She gets along with other students very well, except that she quarrels with Xiao Ming." ...The children one by one, through their sign language teacher, described their image of Miao Miao.

"But suddenly one day, Miao Miao turned strange and was very upset. What had happened? How should her classmates comfort her?" Veronika set up this scene and divided the class into several groups each with five children and asked them to play the role of "abnormal Miao Miao" telling the reason why she was so unhappy, and how her classmates comforted her. The reasons mostly related to parents, such "Dad and Mom force me to study"; "Dad and Mom want me to study hard so as to go to university in future"; "Dad and Mom are divorced", etc. Seeing all this, Veronika could not help smiling wryly and shook her head. But she also analyzed that it was under the protection of role-playing that the children felt safe,

## A Slovenian Special Education Specialist Popularizes Drama In Education in Chengdu

Rong You



Veronika Gaber Korbar's way of teaching

thus enabling them to reveal their problems without hesitation. She pointed out: "To them, Miao Miao is a kind of psychological projection. Through role-playing, interaction with other classmates and help from the teachers, they are trying to find ways to solve their problems. This is just the objective that DIE hopes to achieve."

Veronika has been engaged in special education for 20 years. She explained that, when communicating with hearing-impaired children, one needs to be more patient and express ideas as specifically and simply as possible. This is the reason why she has introduced DIE into special education. "Role-playing and interaction can help hearing-impaired children study more actively and intuitively." She told the

reporter that her three daughters often volunteered to do some work for the Taka Tuka Club. "What I hope to teach them most is to be independent and grow up in their own ways and have the ability of solving problems independently."

Last year was China-EU Youth Exchange Year, with its main aim to promote intercultural dialogue and enhance mutual understanding and friendship between Chinese and European youth and encourage them to pay close attention to, and support the development of China-EU relations. This, it was hoped, would exert an extensive and positive influence on the decision makers and youth organizations of China and the EU and ensuring post-2011 sustainable cooperation between the de-

cision makers and youth organizations of the two sides.

In order to strengthen the partnership and develop the contact network, volunteer projects and youth exchange projects, the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), subordinate organization of the European Commission, decided to use its main program for the current year “Youth in Action” and its sub-program “Youth in the World” to solicit international youth cooperation projects from youth organizations and agencies in all EU member countries from which 30 were chosen for funding. Among these, the project in cooperation with Chinese youth organizations was given top priority.

The year 2011 marks the 30th anniversary of the twinning of friendship-city ties between Chengdu and Ljubljana. The Taka Tuka Club which has long dedicated itself to international youth exchanges, was keen to get involved so as to enhance mutual understanding and cultural exchanges between the youth of China and the EU, promote communications and exchanges between hearing handicapped and normal youth and facilitate spreading of the advanced educational method of DIE. From this merged the “Theater as a Bridge for Communication”.

Among the members in charge of the project on the Slovenian side, there is a special member from Chengdu: Wang Xuan, a graduate student sent by the Chinese Ministry of Education to study for a doctorate of child psychology at the University of Ljubljana. During the project design phase, she strongly proposed that Veronika should seek to cooperate with the youth organizations in Chengdu. For this reason, she returned home in May 2011 and made contacts with the Chengdu Municipal People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign

Countries (CMPAFFC) to seek help. When the Foreign Affairs Office of the Chengdu Municipal Government and the CMPAFFC learned about the project, they gave it great support and recommended the Chengdu Special Education School and Chengdu University as the Chinese cooperative partners.

In early August 2011, the project won recognition from EACEA and got 100,000 euros in financial assistance. In December 2011, the Slovenian members of the project visited Chengdu where they held lectures and workshops to popularize the DIE theory and its practice in the education for deaf-mute students. They also visited relevant schools and institutions in Chengdu. In January 2012, the Chinese members of the project visited Slovenia where they briefed about China’s education for deaf-mute children and the development and current situation of China’s children’s theater, held workshops and visited relevant schools and organizations. In July 2012, Slovenian youth will visit Chengdu and participate in DIE and group activities together with local youths to enhance mutual understanding and cultural exchanges and, in particular, promote mutual understanding and communication between normal and hearing-impaired youth. In October 2012, a Chinese youth delegation will visit Slovenia and perform DIE during the Youth Art Festival and have group activities with their Slovenian counterparts.

**Note: The phrase Taka Tuka comes from one of Swedish children’s literature writer Astrid Lindgren’s representative fairy tales Pippi Longstocking. The little unconventional girl Pippi Longstocking is the idol of children. Taka Tuka is from one of the stories Pippi Longstocking in Taka Tuka Land telling about her interesting adventures in the mysterious Taka Tuka Land in the South Seas. ■**

## CLACFA Delegation Visits Three Latin American Countries

Chen Kuanghuai





The delegation of the China-Latin America and Caribbean Friendship Association (CLACFA) led by President Cheng Siwei, former Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, paid a goodwill visit to Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados in early March.

The tour, March 1 to 13, was at the invitation of the Brazil-China Friendship Association (BCFA), the Trinidad and Tobago-China Friendship Association (TTCFA) and the Barbados-China Friendship Association.

Brazil and China are both rising developing countries with many common and complementary factors that offer broad prospects for future cooperation. In Sao Paulo, the biggest city, the delegation met with Flexa Ribeiro, Honorary President of the newly established BCFA, William Wu, its President, and other friendly personages.

Speaking at a welcoming reception, President Cheng said China and Brazil enjoyed traditional friendship. Both had become known as BRICS member countries with bright prospects of friendly cooperation. He hoped the BCFA could act as a bridge for various exchanges in politics, economy and trade,

and culture.

In Trinidad and Tobago, Speaker of the House of Representatives Wade Mark met the delegation and had a warm and friendly talk. President Cheng observed that, though China and Trinidad and Tobago differed in culture and social system, the two countries held similar views on world peace and development, combating terrorism, democracy and freedom, etc., all providing an important base for the development of friendship. He noted that the two countries were very complementary so that economic cooperation was rapidly progressing and that the Trinidad and Tobago National Academy for the Performing Arts (NAPA) constructed with Chinese aid was a symbol of the friendship between the two countries. Both had a long history and splendid culture heritage, and this created vast space for development of cul-

tural exchanges.

The delegation met with Lee Sing, Mayor of Port of Spain, the capital, and attended a working luncheon at the city hall.

During the stay in Barbados, President Cheng visited the Foreign Ministry, made a speech on China's economy at the Central Bank of Barbados, and toured the Cave Hill campus of the University of the West Indies. ■



CLACFA President Cheng Siwei paying a visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Barbados

The delegation with Lee Sing, Mayor of Port of Spain, capital of Trinidad and Tobago



CLACFA President Cheng Siwei and his party with Honorary President Flexa Ribeiro, President William Wu and other friends of the Brazil-China Friendship Association



# Premiere of Film *Nine-Mile Fragrance* Held in Kenya

Liu Qian

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlement Program (UN-HABITAT) in Kenya staged the premiere of the film *Nine-Mile Fragrance* depicting the Wenchuan earthquake relief efforts. The film, showing the unique culture of the Qiang ethnic group and the great spirit of love of the Chinese people in their earthquake relief work, left a deep impression on the

African audience. The January 12 premiere was the first time a Chinese film had been shown in the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON).

The screening of the film, jointly produced by the CPAFFC, the Publicity Department of the CPC Gansu Provincial Committee, the CPC Longnan Municipal Committee and the Longnan Municipal Government, was held in the First Conference Hall of

UNON presided over by Peter Mutie, CEO of the Kenya Film Commission. Liu Guangyuan, Chinese Ambassador to Kenya, Sahle-Work Zewede, UNON Director-General, and Dr. Joan Clos, UN Undersecretary General and Executive Director of the UN-HABITAT, delivered speeches to about 400 people present, including UNON officials and members of the Kenyan government, foreign diplomats in Kenya, representatives of Chinese enterprises and the Chinese community in Kenya, Kenyan teachers and students. Also present were the film's director, Wang Xingjun, and leading actress Yu Na.

Liu Qian, Acting Secretary General of the Chinese-African People's Friendship Association (CAPFA), read out the message of congratulations sent by CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin in which she extended congratulations on the premiere and hoped the film would help more Africans know that the Wenchuan earthquake had not only brought disaster, but had also stimulated the staunch, unyielding spirit of the Chinese people. She wished great development of Sino-African friendship.

Ambassador Liu said in his speech: "The film vividly portrays the traditional culture of the Chinese minority ethnic groups and the essential meaning of the saying: "A friend in need is a friend indeed". It also serves as a spiritual gift to the people of dif-

Liu Guangyuan (L.3), Chinese Ambassador to Kenya with Director Wang Xingjun (L.2) and leading actress Yu Na (L.1) at the premiere



ferent cultures all over the world. Cultural exchange is a unique avenue for the meeting of minds, interaction of feelings and a bridge of friendship between different countries. Both China and Africa have their own brilliant cultures in which all take great pride. More and more Africans have become interested in China. It is the best time for Chinese culture to come to Africa.” Ambassador Liu expressed the belief that there would be more Chinese films and art performances in Africa and more would be jointly produced as the result of closer exchanges and cooperation between Chinese and African artists.

In their remarks, Director General Sahle-Work Zewede and Executive Director Clos warmly congratulated the film’s successful premiere at the UNON. They said it told a beautiful love story and showed how people help each other when facing disasters, which is very moving and encouraging, and positive for China-Africa cultural exchanges. They noted that culture is an important channel for mutual assistance and benefit between peoples and the UNON hall was not only a venue for political conferences, but also a platform for various cultural events. The United Nations was always open to high-quality events of cultural exchanges and cooperation.

The audience gave warm response to the film. Jasmine, a student at the Kenya Confucius Institute, said, “It’s so wonderful. I am very glad to see the film and through such a simple and direct way to know about the profound culture of the Chinese Qiang ethnic group.”

Executive Director Clos said the film tried to expound to the world the importance of cultural preservation. It was a good film with beautiful songs, and a gift to the people of the world that would have great influence. The



**Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director of the UN-HABITAT, receiving an interview**

Chinese government’s efforts to preserve cultures of ethnic groups, particularly Qiang culture, and the Chinese people’s spirit of helping and assisting each other in times of need left a deep impression.

Sahle-Work Zewede said: “The film is very significant for preservation of culture. The ideas expressed are very important to the preservation of not only Chinese culture but also the cultures of other countries in the world. The film teaches us an important les-

son.”

Ruth Baru, a Kenyan journalist, praised the film, saying, he could see the great love the Chinese people possessed and showed in helping each other confront disaster.

Ambassador Liu said: “We try to communicate with others and show Chinese people’s pursuit of love and happiness through films. It can enhance understanding between the people of China, Africa and the world at large and promote our friendship.”

## Background

The film *Nine-Mile Fragrance* tells a heart-warming love story set in a Qiang village in Western China when the catastrophic earthquake occurred on May 12, 2008. It vividly portrays the unique customs and culture of the Qiang ethnic group and praises people’s heroic deeds in the earthquake relief efforts and the great achievements made by the people of various ethnic groups under the leadership of the Chinese government in rebuilding their home. The production crew went to Li County of Aba Prefecture, Wenchuan and Danba of Ganzi Prefecture to shoot scenes. The film adopted Qiang traditional music, songs and dances with rich local flavor and geographic features including the dance at a sacrificial ceremony, *Guozhuang* dance as well as Qiang flutes and original folk songs such as *Asking Bunkers*, *Sister Erma*, *The Mother’s Red Belt*, etc. It gives the audience a chance to appreciate the vast and miraculous land in Western China. ■

# 40th Anniversary of Ambassadorial Relations Between China and the UK Marked

Our Staff Reporter

The 40th anniversary of the establishment of ambassadorial relations between China and the UK fell on March 13. On the evening of March 20, people gathered in the brightly-lit Peace Palace of the CPAFFC at a reception to celebrate the occasion, which began with a performance of the Harrow Girls' Choir from Harrow School in Beijing.

The UK recognized the People's Republic of China on January 6, 1950, the first major Western country to do so. In June 17, 1954, the two countries exchanged diplomatic representatives. Finally, in 1972, they upgraded relations to the ambassadorial level.

Over the past four decades, China and the UK have seen steady development of their political relations. They



**Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Xie Hangsheng and British Ambassador Sebastian Wood at the reception**

have established a comprehensive strategic partnership and a range of structured dialogues including the annual Prime Ministers' Meeting, and have maintained close communication

and coordination on major world issues. They enjoy fast growth of trade and economic cooperation. In 2011, bilateral trade volume reached US\$58.7 billion. The UK is China's third largest trade partner within the EU; in the opposite direction, China ranks third after European Union and the United States. People-to-people and cultural exchanges between the two countries have deepened. Now, over one million Chinese and British nationals visit, study, work or live in each other's country each year. Chinese students studying in the UK have reached 120,000.

With a theme of "40 Years Young", the reception was co-sponsored by the CPAFFC and the British Embassy in China. Vice Foreign Minister Xie Hangsheng was present. CPAFFC

**British Ambassador Sebastian Wood with Olympians from the Chinese Synchronized Swimming Team**



**Harrow Girls' Choir, Dulwich Male Voice Choir and British School Beijing Junior Choir performing at the reception**



# Fiji-China Friendship Association Founded

## Our Staff Reporter

The Fiji-China Friendship Association (FCFA) was founded in Suva on February 3 in a launch ceremony attended by around 100 people from different walks of life and various ethnic groups of Fiji.

Dr. Jiko Luveni, Minister for Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation, spoke at the ceremony to declare: “Today marks another milestone achievement in the bilateral relationship between Fiji and the People’s Republic of China. This association is the extension of the formal relations between our two countries to include our people in an effort to promote and strengthen understanding, friendship and cooperation through people to people programs and activities.”

Chinese Ambassador Huang Yong expressed warm congratulations, saying: “The launch of the Fiji-China Friendship Association comes at a time when our two peoples are trying to expand our friendship and cooperation. It will organize visits, meetings, workshops, art performances to help

build ties in various fields, and I believe people from all walks of life will benefit from its activities. The launching of the FCFA opens a new channel in China-Fiji relations. It is a bridge between our two peoples and a catalyst promoting cooperation.”

Fiji’s Prime Minister Josaia

Vorege Bainimarama, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Inoke Kubuabola, Fiji’s Ambassador to China Commodore Esala Teleni, and President of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries Li Xiaolin sent messages of congratulations. ■

**Jiko Luveni (L.3), Minister for Women, Social Welfare and Poverty Alleviation, Huang Yong (L.2), Chinese Ambassador to Fiji, at the inaugural meeting**



FC Vice President Li Jianping and British Ambassador to China James Sebastian Wood made speeches.

Specially invited were people engaged in youth exchange programs, as well as young people. Chinese scholars who had studied in the UK and university students majoring in English met British students studying in China at the

reception. Together they celebrated this important day in bilateral relations and took advantage of the occasion to increase understanding, make friends and share experiences.

Among the 200 people at the reception were former Chinese ambassadors to Britain Ma Zhengang, Jiang Enzhu and Ma Yuzhen, representatives from the foreign, edu-

cation and cultural ministries, the All-China Youth Federation, the General Administration of Sport of China, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the China Institute of International Studies, diplomats of the British Embassy, representatives from the China-Britain Business Council and other British organizations in China. ■

# Beijing-Paris-London Bicycle Expedition 2012 Launched

**Liu Yuting**

The Beijing-Paris-London Bicycle Expedition 2012 was launched at a ceremony held at the Olympic Park in Beijing on the morning of April 1. The activity was jointly sponsored by the China-EU Association, the Beijing People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (BPAFFC) and the Federation française de Cyclotourisme (FFCT).

In 2008, Beijing successfully held the 29th Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. To give support to the Beijing Olympic Games, cyclists of the FFCT embarked on a 12,000-km-long journey from Paris to Beijing, passing through 12 European and Asian countries in a four-month journey.

In return, the Beijing-Paris-London Bicycle Expedition 2012 was designed to greet the 2012 London Olympics and Paralympics, enhancing sports cultural exchange between the two host cities, carrying forward the Olympic spirit, promoting cycling and strengthening friendship between the

people of Europe and Asia. The 86 amateur participants had an average age of 60. They were all convinced their optimistic and active attitude toward life would overcome all difficulties and dangers along the way and offer a fine interpretation of the Olympic spirit.

Chen Haosu, President of the China-EU Association, Li Xiaoqiang, Vice President of the BPAFFC, and representatives of the French Sports Ministry, the FFCF, Europe-China Friendship Association, and British and

French embassies in China spoke at the launch ceremony.

The cyclists from China, France, Belgium and Canada set out from the National Stadium (Bird's Nest) on a 14,400-km-long journey they anticipated would take five months to complete through 13 countries and reach London on September 1. They will spread the Olympic spirit, friendship, peace and the idea of environmental protection to people of different countries along the way. ■

Setting off on a long ride



The participants from different countries gathering at the Olympic Park in Beijing



# China-Pakistan Young Scientist Forum

Liu Hongmin

The China-Pakistan Young Scientist Forum, cosponsored by the CPAFFC and the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), was held at the China International Conference Center for Science and Technology on April 17. Feng Zuoku, Vice President of the CPAFFC, Xu Yanhao, a member of the CAST Secretariat, and Zahoor Ahmed, Charge d' Affaires of the Pakistani Embassy in China, addressed the opening ceremony.

The 100-odd participants included young specialists from Pakistan, Pakistani students studying in China, and young science workers from North China Electric Power University and Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications. At the forum, with the theme of "A Bright Future Together—Science, Society and

Progress", they had extensive exchanges of their experience in areas such as network security, biomass power generation, the "intelligrid" concept and development of wireless

networks. The forum played a constructive role in enabling the Chinese and Pakistani young science workers to learn from each other, deepen understanding and establish friendship. ■



The China-Pakistan Young Scientist Forum held in Beijing

The participants posing for a group photo



Mr. Junnosuke Ishimoto, our respected Japanese friend, passed away on February 16. He was born in Dalian and spent 12 years in the city. Having lived in Japan for several decades, his feelings for his birthplace never changed. He cared about the city's development and donated to the city's education, and showed people what China-Japan friendship meant with his deeds.

Mr. Ishimoto had been a member of the Nagasaki Prefectural Assembly for 16 years. He made outstanding achievements in old-age care with funds from charity and was a well-known figure in local political and business circles. After a successful career, he wanted very much to do something for the exchanges between Nagasaki and Dalian and build a bridge of friendship between the two localities. He played hosts to Chinese delegations that included leaders of Dalian City and people of educational circles. His warm and meticulous reception made everyone feel at home. At the mention of him, they could not help expressing their gratitude and respect. He also organized local people to visit Dalian so that more people from Nagasaki would know about the city.

For the past 23 consecutive years

## In Profound Memory of Mr. Junnosuke Ishimoto

Qu Shicheng, Li Na

since 1989, Mr. Ishimoto would annually donate 1 million Japanese yen to Dalian's education cause. The accumulated amount reached 23 million yen (about 1.8 million yuan). The education department of Dalian set up a fund with the donations to reward excellent students and more than 30,000 middle and primary school students benefited. At Mr. Ishimoto's home, calligraphic works by Dalian children were hung on the walls of his living room. This had become precious collection from which he found comfort and hope. The donations he made over the years and the sincerity reflected by his persistence was most moving and admirable.



Mr. Junnosuke Ishimoto (L.1) making a donation to the education department of Dalian in 2006

The Dalian Municipal Government conferred the title of Honorary Dalian Citizen upon Mr. Ishimoto in 1993 in recognition of his prominent contributions to exchanges and cooperation between Dalian and Japan. Since then, Mr. Ishimoto had worked even harder in bridge-building work until he breathed his last. Not long before his death, he was still concerned with organizing a Nagasaki entrepreneurs' delegation to Dalian. His perseverance in friendship with China touched people around him and firmed his children's conviction to continue to work for enhancing Sino-Japanese friendship.

"I love Dalian." Mr. Ishimoto's words revealed his true feelings. We will never forget this Japanese friend who had contributed to the cause of China-Japan friendship.

Rest in peace, Mr. Junnosuke Ishimoto. The people of Dalian will always remember you. ■





# Diplomatic Envoys of Four African Countries Visit Hunan

**Tang Ruimin**

With Spring warmth awakening the flowers, ambassadors of Madagascar, Mali, Cameroon and Burundi went to Changsha, Hunan Province, for the 8th Lecture Tour of African Diplomatic Envoys. More than 100 people from the Commerce Bureau, the Development and Reform Commission and the Academy of Social Sciences of Hunan Province, Hunan Normal University as well as SOEs and private enterprises took part in the activity. Officials of the Ministry of Commerce and Hong Yonghong, Director of the African Legal and Social Research Center of Xiangtan University, respectively gave special lectures on the development of economic and trade cooperation between China and Africa under the new circumstances and legal issues concerning investments in Africa. The ambassadors also visited the Hunan Hybrid Rice Research Center, the Broad Group, and Sany Group.

In his briefing, the Ambassador of Cameroon said his country was stable and peaceful, offered convenient transportation and was rich in minerals and forestry resources. The government had set up bonded zones and welcomed investments from Chinese enterprises to exploit the minerals and forests. The Ambassador of Madagascar said the country was among world leaders in the possession of different kinds of miner-

als, and was known especially for having 40% of the world's sapphire reserves; this offered bright prospects for exploitation by foreign investors. The Ambassador of Mali said that, thanks to vast arable land and the plentiful water supplied by the Niger River, Mali had become a leading agricultural nation in West Africa with cotton production ranked second on the continent. However, its planting and farming technologies, as well as the processing and storing techniques for agricultural products were comparatively old and underdeveloped, which hinder rural economic advancement. The envoy of Burundi, meanwhile, stressed abundant tourist resources with various famous drum dances, and expressed hope for ex-

changes with relevant Chinese art and cultural circles.

The Hunan Hybrid Rice Research Center, the Broad Group, and the Sany Group as well as the Municipal Government of Zhangjiajie respectively had discussions on possibilities for cooperation. The Hunan Hybrid Rice Research Center, known for its core scientist, the "Father of Hybrid Rice" Professor Yuan Longping, recently recorded a yield of nearly 1,000 kg per mu (1/6th of an acre), and expressed willingness to help the four African countries grow rice and realize the goal of grain self-sufficiency. The Sany Group, China's biggest and world leading engineering machinery manufacturer especially in areas such as building,



# Bridge of Cultural Exchanges

## —Story of Sheng Cheng, Recipient of Knight of the Legion of Honor Medal

**Zhang Yi**

Sheng Cheng, a native of Yizheng, Jiangsu Province, who lived to the age of 98, led a legendary life. In his early days he joined Tung-meng Hui (the Chinese Revolutionary League), went through the Revolution of 1911 and took part in the May 4th Movement of 1919. When studying in France he was involved in establishing the French Communist Party. After returning home, he threw himself into the movement of resistance against Japanese aggression and for national salvation. He was a fighter of the democratic revolution and a staunch patriot. He was from a family of Chinese traditional intellec-

tuals much influenced by Buddhism. He was proficient in French and English and also had a good grounding in German, Italian, Greek, Latin and Malay. He held professorships in the University of Paris, Peking University, Sun Yat-sen University and the National Taiwan University. He wrote and translated a great number of literary and academic works in French and Chinese and was a renowned scholar, writer, translator, educator and linguist all in one. At the age of 28, he wrote in French *Ma Mere* (*My Mother*) that caused a big stir in the French literary circles. The book was translated into 16

languages including English, German, Japanese and Spanish and popularized around the world. Due to his long-term important contributions to the Sino-French cultural exchanges and the development of French language, he was awarded the Knight of the Legion of Honor Medal (Medaille de Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur) by the French Government in 1984.

### **Democratic Revolution and Anti-Imperialist Patriotic Movement**

Sheng Cheng was born in the Sheng family mansion in the ancient city Yizheng on February 6, 1899,

road-building and mining machinery, enjoys a large market share in Africa. All the four ambassadors invited the company to start business in their countries and set up machinery leasing centers. The Broad Group focuses on developing and constructing buildings with sustainable materials by using

standard factory production lines that can reduce construction costs by 30% compared with conventional ways of building apartments with minimum damage to the surrounding environment, which is very suitable for third world countries. The ambassadors of Cameroon and Madagascar said the

buildings constructed with sustainable materials offered a very practical new technology and they would like to send technicians to the company to learn it. They also welcomed the Broad Group to set up factories. Zhao Xiaoming, Mayor of Zhangjiajie, said, the city hosted a tourist festival of international folklore every year, and would be happy to have the drum groups of Burundi take part so as to enhance bilateral exchanges and cooperation.

The Lecture Tour of African Diplomatic Envoys pushed forward the mutual understanding and economic and trade cooperation between China and Africa, which has become a highlight and brand project of the CPAFFC's work related to the continent and is sure to blossom further. ■

**Ambassadors visiting the Hunan Hybrid Rice Research Center**



enrolled in the Nanjing Huiwen Academy in 1910 and, in 1912, into the Nanjing Railway School where he joined Tung-meng Hui (the Chinese Revolutionary League). At the beginning of 1914, he transferred to the Shanghai Nanyang Railway and Mining School, and in the summer of that year he was admitted into the preparatory department of the Shanghai Zhendan University where he met Xu Beihong and the two became intimate friends. He accompanied his elder brother to pay a formal visit on Sun Yat-sen and Han Hui. Encouraged by Sun's teaching "Do not forget revolution while studying, and do not forget study while making revolution", he organized the student union in the university and was arrested by the police of the Shanghai French Concession. However, Ma Xiangbo, founder of the university, bailed him out and he was able to continue his study. In 1917, having graduated from the preparatory courses of Zhendan University, he started to work at the Changxindian Peking-Hankou Railroad Noviciate Office. On the eve of May 4, 1919, students of Peking University were preparing to march against the government in protest at the "unequal treaty of national betrayal and humiliation" at the Paris Peace Conference called to settle issues from WWI. On hearing the news, he was full of patriotic zeal. After that, he initiated the Federation of Ten-member Groups of Railway Workers of Changxindian for National Salvation, and was elected as its head. He led railway workers to boycott Japanese goods, carry out strikes and support the activities launched by patriotic students in Beijing and Tianjin. In the struggle he got acquainted with some student leaders such as Zhou Enlai, Liu Qingyang, Guo Longzhen and Xu Deheng, as well as Wu Zhihui who sponsored the work-study program. Wu encouraged Sheng Cheng to



**Professor Sheng Cheng (L.2) with French Ambassador to China Charles Malo after receiving the Knight of the Legion of Honor Medal on March 14, 1985**

go abroad and wrote letters of recommendation to the Sino-French Education Association for Sheng Cheng and some others.

#### **Work-Study Program in France**

On November 22, 1919, Sheng left Shanghai for France by a British ship, starting his ten-year work-study program and Sino-French cultural exchanges. On January 9, 1920 he arrived in Paris. While studying French and mathematics at the High School of Vendome, he worked in a woodwork factory. At the time when he arrived in France, the center of the Dadaist Surrealism Movement popular in Europe (an anti-rationalism literary and art movement and trend of thought) had been shifted to Paris. Sheng, dissatisfied with the status quo since childhood, was attracted to the movement. He got acquainted with Pablo Picasso and Ernest Hemingway and even wrote a book of poems in French. In March 1920, he joined the French Socialist Party. At the end of that year, he and some other left-

ists split away to found the French Communist Party (FCP). He was elected secretary of the Languedoc Provincial Committee. On December 28, 1920, upon receiving a letter from Zhou Enlai, he went to Lyon to meet him, and Liu Qingyang, Guo Longzhen and Zhang Ruoming who had also come to France for study. In order to protect the legitimate rights of the Chinese students studying under a work-study program, in 1920 he was elected president of the Chinese Students' Association and together with Zhao Shiyan and Li Lisan organized the Labor Society in Paris. In 1921, he, together with Zhou Enlai, Zhao Shiyan, Li Lisan and Cai Hesen, mobilized the worker-students to carry out the "February 28th" struggle. In the summer of 1921, he entered the National Superior Agronomical School of Montpellier to study sericulture, and worked part time on a nearby farm. In the spring of 1922, he went to Italy to continue his study of sericulture. One year later, after obtaining the diploma in advanced sericulture with honor, he

## They Will Live in Our Hearts Forever

returned to the National Superior Agronomical School of Montpellier for further study and became a Master of Science in 1927.

### Publication of French Novel *Ma Mere* Causes a Sensation In International Literary Circles

In 1928 he accepted the offer to give lectures on the ancient classic text *I Ching* (*The Book of Changes*) and China's sciences at the University of Paris. The theme of the Introduction, the first lesson of *The Book of Changes* he gave, was "Different roads lead to the same destination". As he realized, Eastern and Western thought could communicate with each other, and he came to understand the famous dictum that "Human beings are one and moral principles do not have two standards". In June 1928, a biographical novel *Ma Mere* he wrote in French was published by the Paris Attinger Publishing House. This novel full of national features and local customs was written with heartfelt feelings and in a simple style. He told most interestingly a story about an old family and through an ordinary Chinese

woman's diligent, courageous, modest and simple life revealed to the world the Chinese history of the half century since the Opium War. French Poet Paul Valery known in France as "the 20th century Victor Hugo", wrote a long preface for the novel in praise of it. Romain Rolland, George Bernard Shaw, Maurice Maeterlinck, Andre Gide, Mme. Marie Curie and Bertrand Russell, among others, all highly appraised it. Later, it was translated into 16 languages including English, German, Italian, Spanish, Dutch, Hebrew, etc., and circulated in many countries in Europe, America, Asia and Africa. *Ma Mere* became a best seller in the world and Sheng Cheng a noted writer attracting extensive appreciation. He soon joined the French Writers Association. Some parts of *Ma Mere* were selected for inclusion in French secondary and primary school textbooks. Up to now the book is still listed as one of the world-famous books that French university students of liberal arts must read. In 1929, *Ma Mere et Moi*, the sequel of *Ma Mere*, (also known as *Mother and Son in the Chinese Revolution*)

and his first French poetry anthology *La Muse Endolorie* were published. *Ma Mere* is a gem of cultural integration and a monument of Sino-French cultural exchanges. In 1930, Sheng Cheng was listed in *Who's Who*.

### Return Home to Teach in Prestigious Universities

In October 1930, Sheng Cheng arrived in Shanghai via Hong Kong. Once home, he paid a visit to Ma Xiangbo, Zhang Taiyan and Cai Yuanpei respectively. Cai Yuanpei in the name of the Chinese Pen Society held a reception in Cangzhou Villa to welcome and introduce him to well-known personages in the cultural circles including Yang Xingfo, Hu Shi, Xu Zhimo, Lin Yutang, Yu Dafu and Shen Congwen. In 1931, recommended by Cai Yuanpei, Sheng was appointed professor of French language in Peking University, teaching French poetry and novels and the history of French literature. In August 1931, his book *A Record of Ten Years' Work-Study Abroad* came off the press. In 1935, he worked as an editor in the Zhonghua Book Company and was engaged in writing and translation. After the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression broke out in July 1937, he went to Guangxi, Guangdong, Changchun and Lanzhou and taught in several prestigious schools such as Guangxi University, Sun Yat-sen University and Lanzhou University. In the winter of 1947, he went to Taiwan with his wife and five children upon invitation to teach in the National Taiwan University. But, who could have known then that the family would be stranded there for 18 years? As the Chiang Kai-shek Regime ruled Taiwan with an iron fist as its last stronghold, Sheng Cheng was deemed a dangerous leftist. In 1953, because he refused to rejoin the Kuomintang, he was dismissed from the National Taiwan University. He then had nowhere to continue his

The statue of Sheng Cheng at the Sheng Cheng Square



teaching, so he began to devote himself to the cultural exchanges between China and Western countries and academic research. He translated *Le Cimetière marin* (The Graveyard by the Sea), representative poem of Academician Paul Valéry of the Institute of France, into Chinese, wrote a research monograph *Dante* and a great number of treatises on Western literature, particularly that of France, published two volumes of prose works and essays *Reminiscences of Paris* and completed his writing of the books *Fine Arts of the Tang Dynasty*, *A Study of Wen Tingyun* and *A Research on Morality in State Administration in the Analects of Confucius*. In 1964, upon the request of UNESCO, he translated the novel *Travels of Lao Can* into French, which was published in Paris.

#### Return to France to Continue Sino-French Cultural Exchanges

In March 1966, after more than 30 years, he returned to France, his second home. He found his French could not keep up with the changes in the language, so, although he was already 67, just as he had done during the years of work-study, he left Paris and went to Avignon in the south of France to attend training courses and mix with local people to brush up his French. Sometimes he could pick up more than 100 new expressions a day. After two years of hard work, he returned to Paris and showed one of his newly-written poems to Mrs. Valéry and won her praise: "Your French is good again." In the following ten years, he was engaged in cultural communications in Paris. He gave lectures on *The Book of Changes* at the old-style Chinese private school he had set up. Each term there were around 10 students from different countries attending his class. The school lasted nine years. His admirers even organized the Club of Sheng Cheng. They met every week and asked him to be the

main speaker. In addition to all this, his modern writings and poetry won wide popularity in France. In 1975 and 1977, Radio France Culture invited him to lecture on China's May 4th Movement and the 1911 Revolution. The tape recordings were issued by Alliance Française and some of the lectures were selected as grammar teaching materials for French secondary and primary schools.

#### Awarded the Legion of Honor

On October 10, 1978, accompanied by his wife, sons and daughters, he returned via Hong Kong to his motherland. The Party and Government showed great care for him. In 1979, he was offered the first-rank professorship of French language at the Beijing Language Institute (now the Beijing Language and Culture University). After returning home, he published a collection of poems written in French, *Ma Mere* (Chinese version), *A Record of Ten Years' Work-Study Abroad*, memoirs, a collection of essays and books on lingual studies. In 1984, the French Government awarded him *Medaille de Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur* for his long-term important contributions to France-China cultural exchanges and the development of French language. On March 14, 1985, on behalf of President Francois Mitterrand, French Ambassador to China Charles Malo issued him the most honored medal of France at his residence. The envoy, on behalf of the French Government and people, highly praised Sheng Cheng as the only



Chinese writer who wrote in French and as a poet who had been closely attached to French language for half a century from 1929 to 1979.

#### Buried in his Ancestral Home

On December 16, 1996, Sheng Cheng passed away of illness in Beijing at the age of 98. At the funeral, people paid their last respect to his remains. The French Embassy in China presented a big flower basket in the design of French national flag with the elegiac couplet: "Mr. Sheng Cheng, Pioneer of Sino-French Friendship". On January 15, 1997, according to his last wish, the Yizheng Municipal Government buried him in the Sheng family cemetery in Qingshan Village. This old man who had moved about from place to place finally came to the end of his lifelong journey and rested in peace in his beloved mother's arms. In 2003 in memory of Sheng Cheng, the Yizheng Municipal Government appropriated a special fund for building a Sheng Cheng Square. At the center of the square there is a bronze statue of him. On the west side of the statue is an open history book made in marble on which are engraved passages of *Ma Mere* embodying his love of his motherland and attachment to his home place. ■

# My Experience of 60 Years: Work for Promotion of Nepal-China Relations

**Niranjana Bhattarai (Nepal)**

I joined the Chinese language class for the first time at Banaras Hindu University in 1951. The Government of Nepal sent me to Beijing University in 1958 for further studies. Former Prime Minister and distinguished Nepali leader Tanka Prasad Acharya had written a letter introducing me to Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala who became Prime Minister in May 1959 bid me farewell by making a brief speech at a gathering of students of Banaras Hindu University and

wished success in my studies in China. Thus for nearly sixty years, I have been privileged to have actively participated in promoting Nepal-China relations.

### Arrival in Beijing

When I arrived in Beijing in November 1958, there was a heavy snowfall with the temperature dropping to minus 20 degree Celsius. It was very cold for me, as I had not experienced such freezing temperature before. But the next day when I was going to my

class I saw many teachers and students cleaning the snow in the street with brooms. Seeing teachers and students in simple dress working without feeling the cold encouraged me tremendously and inspired me to move ahead.

When I was studying Chinese language I felt it was necessary for Nepali Buddhist scholars to study modern China as well as the history of China. Dr. Chen Hansheng, the head of the world history research group of the Philosophical and Social Sciences Department under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, helped me to study ancient and modern China and discover the biography of revered Budhabhadra. Professors Liu Danien and Ma Hong of the academy guided me to study history of Nepal-China relations. Due to their cooperation, I was able to write my first book on *China and Nepal's Relations with Her* to introduce China to Nepalese people. It was published by Nepal Academy in 1961 on the occasion of signing the Border Treaty between Nepal and China and included in the gifts presented to Chinese leaders on behalf of the Nepal delegations.

**As guest of the Nepalese Embassy in China, Premier Zhou Enlai toasting with Niranjana Bhattarai to lasting Sino-Nepalese friendship in 1970**



### Foreign Students in Beijing University

Foreign Students who had come to study in China from different countries

were given special attention for their convenience and opportunities, which were not extended to Chinese students in those days. The teachers and the other officials treated them like their own family members. Once I asked a boarding official whether I had any letter from my home. The official was so kind that he went to the post office himself to find out whether I had received any. The teachers were similarly very kind and always prepared to help us secure good results in our studies. Even the teacher's family members extended their cooperation for enhancement of our studies on various occasions. The University organized tours of important places and cultural events to enrich our knowledge of China and Chinese culture.

#### Tenth Anniversary

I arrived in Beijing on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. The government decided to celebrate the anniversary in various ways from construction of ten large official buildings and roads to organizing cultural events. I was among the foreign students who participated in the 10th anniversary parade. I happily joined other foreign students in laying bricks in the construction of the Great Hall of the People; I was invited to participate in the grand reception to celebrate the anniversary after its completion. It was my honor to meet Premier Zhou Enlai as well as the great artist Mei Lanfang at the reception.

#### Other Activities When Studying in Beijing

I used to invite Nepalese visitors to Beijing and entertain them. Some, like the first table tennis team from Nepal. In 1959, I was happy to take

around Beijing the Buddhist delegations led by Mahasthvira Bkikshu Amritanandha. I took them to the White Dagoba constructed by the great Nepali architect Arniko. President Zhao Puchu of the Buddhist Association of China presented a book to the delegation *Chao Xiang Liang Tu Jing*, a classical book of Chinese iconography.

In 1960 Prime Minister Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala visited China and signed a preparatory agreement to appoint a joint commission of experts of both countries for border inspections and prepare a draft for signing the boundary treaty. I received him at the airport and I was invited to dinner hosted in his honour. I felt special gratitude to him when he gave me some cash to buy books on history of Nepal-China relations. I also had the honor of meeting Premier Zhou Enlai in Nepal at a lunch hosted by the Nepal Council of World Affairs when he paid a return visit to Nepal and signed the Treaty of Peace and Friend-

ship. The Chinese Premier still remembered me from my time as a student in Beijing. I have felt that he continued to give me attention when I was in Beijing working in the embassy.

#### Return after Studies and Founding Language School

I returned from Beijing after completion of my two-year studies of modern and ancient Chinese language. After returning to Nepal, I founded the School of International Languages in Kathmandu in 1961 to provide facilities and help Nepali students to have knowledge of the outside world. Chinese language was taught here from the very beginning. As the school grew, many more languages were added. Initially, all the teachers were unpaid volunteers who were employed by foreign organizations in Nepal. At the present time, the school has more than 6,000 students and is incorporated under the national Tribhuvan University as Bishwa Bhasha Campus.

Premier Zhou Enlai having a cordial conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Bhattarai



### Participation in the Boundary Treaties

I was included as an interpreter in the Nepali delegation to Beijing on the occasion of signing the Boundary Treaty between Nepal and China. Nepal and China sincerely wished to delineate the traditional border between the two countries in the spirit of give and take. Therefore there were no problems during the border negotiations. King Mahendra and President Liu Shaoqi signed the agreement on behalf of their respective governments. This border has since remained one of peace and friendship.

### Assignment in the Embassy

I was appointed First Secretary to the Nepali Embassy in Beijing in 1967. It was the time of “cultural revolution”. The “revolution” had created difficulties for the Chinese population and also the foreign embassies in Beijing with demonstrations against their respective countries. At that time, prompt representation of Nepali government and warm reception of them by the Chinese side averted the undesirable impact of the activities.

In the year 1970, when Nepal’s crown prince was married, Premier Zhou was invited to Nepal. But because of busy schedule he could not go to Nepal, instead accepted an invitation to a banquet hosted by myself in his honour at the Nepali embassy in Beijing. He spent almost four hours in the embassy and that ceremony has been one of the most memorable events in my life.

### Second Assignment

I was appointed a second time to the Nepali embassy in Beijing in 1976. Premier Zhou Enlai had passed away in

January 1976. When I met my Chinese friends, I shared their grief, as Premier Zhou had been so kind and considerate to me. I have sent my book *Nepal and China* to the Memorial Hall constructed in his honor.

In my second assignment to Beijing, I witnessed the succession of Chairman Mao’s government and establishment of Deng Xiaoping’s leadership for modernization of China. At this time I met Deputy Premier Deng Xiaoping many times in arrangements for visit to Nepal. I am very happy to note that after the modernization China could join the space race. In 1978 an air agreement was signed for air flights from Nepal to Shanghai.

### In Charge of the State Visit of King Birendra

After completion of my tour of duties I returned to Nepal in early 1972. I went again to China with the foreign minister for preparation of the state visit of King Birendra at the invitation of President Dong Biwu in 1973. I went to China as an in-charge of the programs of the visit. On this occasion Premier Zhou Enlai was leading the Chinese team for official talk and hosted an official dinner in honor of the Nepali guests. I also participated in the arrangement of the visit of King Birendra to Tibet.

### My Other Visits to China

I returned to Beijing in 1982 to inspect the administrative and economic aspects of the Embassy and again later in 2002 on the occasion of unveiling of life size bronze statue of the Nepali Architect Arniko. It was a significant occasion for remembering the long relationship between the two countries to

have the great Nepali architect Arniko honored by high-ranking Chinese and Nepali officials who were gathered to attend the ceremony. I also visited long desired Wu Tai Shan and made prayers to Manjushri and also visited the Shari-ra and Ashoka stupas constructed by Arniko.

### Release of Chinese Language Book

My latest visit to Beijing was in 2007 to organize the ceremony to release my book *Nepal and China* (in Chinese language). It was very gratifying to be among the distinguished scholars whom I had known and admired for many years, and to be honored by their presence. On that occasion Chen Haoshu, President of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries released this book.

Thus in my humble way I have contributed for promotion of friendship between our two countries. It gives me great satisfaction that the trend line of our relations remained moving upward without any zigzag in between. My fourth book *Nepal and China* in English is already published and is going to be released soon. Since retirement I have continued to study new developments in China and give advice when asked by the government.

I have written four books; two Nepali, one of them translated into Chinese, one in English and scores of articles in Nepali and English for issues relating to Nepal-China relations. It is my hope and belief that the publications are appreciated by most readers.

**This was the last manuscript of the author who passed away on August 29, 2010. ■**