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Front cover: In Los Angeles Disneyland, visitors show off paper-cuts handed out by Chinese patchwork artists from Yanchuan County, Shaanxi Province during the Chinese Spring Festival (2015)

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Award Ceremony of “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friendship Award” Held in Pakistan

Zhang Peng

It was April in Islamabad. Everywhere was permeated with the breath of spring, and neat and spacious roads lined with colorful flowers vying to outshine each other were further enhanced by the portrait of Chinese President Xi Jinping and welcome banners such as “China and Pakistan Are Faithful Friends”.

On April 20, 2015, the CPAFFC hosted an award ceremony of the “Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friendship Award” in the Islamabad Serena Hotel. President Xi and his Pakistani counterpart attended the ceremony presided over by CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin.

President Xi conferred the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friendship Award on four groups and three individuals for their long-term commitment to China-Pakistan friendship. The awardees included the All Pakistan China Friendship Association (APCFA) that works hard to facilitate people-to-people and cultural exchanges between the two countries, the National University of Modern Languages which, in cooperation with China’s National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, set up the first Confucius Institute in Pakistan, the National Management College promoting communication between

the two governments and peoples, the Pakistani medical team that participated in China’s Wenchuan earthquake relief in 2008, APCFA Chairman Mushahid Hussain Sayed, who has been actively publicizing China in Pakistan, Ali Ahmad Jan, voluntarily guarding the Gilgit China Martyrs Cemetery for the past 37 years, and former Pakistani Ambassador to China Masood Khan, a long-time advocate of China-Pakistan friendly cooperation. President Xi and President Hussain shook hands with the awardees and extended their congratulations.

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin met with the recipients before the ceremony. She expressed her congratulations and

Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain with the recipients of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friendship Award



appreciation of their long-term dedication to enhancing mutual understanding and friendship. "China and Pakistan are good neighbors, friends, partners and brothers. The China-Pakistan relationship, fostered with care by successive leaders of both countries, has seen sound and steady development, setting an example for bilateral relations," she said.

Representatives of the honored groups and individual recipients expressed their deep appreciation. APCFA Chairman Mushahid Hussain Sayed said excitedly: "Many thanks to the Chinese government and people for this award. The recipients are all outstanding representatives of various fields in Pakistan that have made prominent contributions to China-Pakistan friendship. In 1970, I visited China for the first time at the invitation of the CPAFFC and was honored to be received by Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Li Xiannian and other Chinese leaders of that generation. Their great contributions to the development of China-Pakistan friendly relations inspired me. Over the past decades, I have been to China more than 40 times and witnessed its fast development. I truly rejoice at the great achievements of our Chinese brothers. So, I am very enthusiastic about publicizing China's achievements in Pakistan so as to boost the development of my own country."

Muhammad Ismail Qureshi, Rector of the Pakistan School of Public Policy affiliated to the National Management College expressed his thanks to the CPAFFC for receiving his school's delegations on study tours. He said, among all the overseas study programs of the school, China was the only country receiving two delegations



CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin presenting the certificates to the awardees

every year. The study tours had further strengthened understanding between Pakistan and China, especially the exchanges and communication in public service and government functions. "Members of the delegations said upon their return that they benefited much. We hope to further our cooperation with the CPAFFC and also welcome it to organize delegations to visit Pakistan."

Although the 60-year-old Ali Ahmad Jan didn't speak English, he carefully prepared a three-page speech about the heroic deeds of Chinese construction workers building the Karakoram highway. He said solemnly: "In order to build the Karakoram highway, 110 Chinese workers sacrificed their lives and 88 are buried in Gilgit China Martyrs Cemetery." He went on after a brief pause to say, "The construction on the Karakoram highway began in 1966. Working conditions at that time were extremely difficult. I once saw a Chinese worker working on a bridge who fell off a cliff. I felt very sad and asked Chinese workers, 'why did you come to build the highway?' They told me,

'China and Pakistan are good neighbors. Building this highway shows the Chinese people's deep sentiments towards the Pakistani people and the highway also symbolizes the friendship between China and Pakistan.' I was deeply moved by Chinese workers' spirit of sacrifice and their friendship for the Pakistani people. So, when I heard that a cemetery for the Chinese workers would be built, I decided to be a guard though I was only 19 years old. Over the past 37 years, I have been guarding it voluntarily. I will stick to this glorious post and hand it down from generation to generation."

President Li Xiaolin expressed CPAFFC's willingness to strengthen cooperation with all friendship groups and individuals in Pakistan and organize more events that would enhance mutual trust and benefit both peoples in more creative ways to push the bilateral relations to a higher level. After the meeting, Li presented recipients with certificates of the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence Friendship Award". ■

Yu Zhengsheng Attends Reception Marking 45th Anniversary Of China-Equatorial Guinea Diplomatic Relations

Xu Liya

On April 29, the CPAFFC held a reception in Beijing to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Equatorial Guinea. Yu Zhengsheng, Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of Equatorial Guinea, spoke on the occasion.

Among the audience of some 150 were Abdul'ahat Abdulrixit, former Vice Chairman of the CPPCC National Committee and President of the Chinese-African People's Friendship Association; Li Xiaolin, CPAFFC President; Li Bin, Minister of the National Health and Family Planning Commission; representatives from the CPPCC National Committee, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Culture, as well as representatives of teachers and students from the China-Equatorial Guinea Friendship Primary School, the Equatorial Guinean delegation and diplomats of the Equatorial Guinean Embassy in China.

Yu Zhengsheng said bilateral relations had seen a healthy and smooth development. The two sides held identical or broadly similar views on major international and regional affairs and support each other in multilateral events.

Yu cited the example of the 2008



From left: CAPFA President Abdul'ahat Abudulrixit, Equatorial Guinean President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, CPPCC National Committee Chairman Yu Zhengsheng, wife of Equatorial Guinean President Obiang, and CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin with pupils of the China-Equatorial Guinea Friendship School at the reception

catastrophic earthquake in Wenchuan, Sichuan Province, when Equatorial Guinea had donated aid of one million euros, equivalent to one euro for every Equatorial Guinean citizen. This fully reflected the profound friendly sentiments of the Equatorial Guinean Government and people towards the Chinese counterparts.

This time, President Obiang had announced his country would donate funds for a primary school in Jinping County, Yunnan Province. To express its gratitude, the Chinese side would name the school "China-Equatorial

Guinea Friendship Primary School".

Yu said that, over the years China had rendered assistance within its power to Equatorial Guinea. Chinese medical teams had provided medical services to local people and Chinese enterprises had undertaken many construction tasks in the country. In turn, they had received care from the Equatorial Guinean Government and people, for which the Chinese side was most grateful.

At present, China faced a daunting task of developing itself and ensuring a bright future. The people of

ASEAN-China Governors/Mayors' Dialogue Launched in Bo'ao, Hainan

Xu Yan

On March 27, 2015, as an important program within the framework of the Bo'ao Forum for Asia (BFA) Annual Conference 2015, the ASEAN-China Governors/Mayors' Dialogue (ACGMD), organized by the CPAFFC and Hainan Provincial People's Government, was launched with the participation of 16 leaders from provinces and cities in China and ASEAN countries.

They discussed "Local Coopera-

tion: Driving Force to Build a Community of Common Destiny" and signed a Joint Statement of the ACGMD.

The Chinese participants included Governor Liu Cigui of Hainan Province, Mayor Huang Qifan of Chongqing Municipality, Vice Mayor Yan Qingmin of Tianjin Municipality, Vice Governor Wang Lixia of Shaanxi Province, Mayor Miao Ruilin of Nanjing City, Vice Mayor Xie Shuangcheng of

Hangzhou City and Vice Mayor Dong Xiaoli of Qingdao City.

Their ASEAN counterparts were: Vice Chairman Mansor B. M. Yassin of the Municipal Board of Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam; Governor Lorn Limthay of Kampong Cham Province and Vice Governor Trac Thai Sieng of Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Governor Made Mangku Pastika of Bali Province, Indonesia; Vice Governor

Equatorial Guinea were also working hard to build a strong emerging country. "I believe that through mutual cooperation, mutual support and mutual assistance, we will definitely reach our respective goals of development and bringing more benefit to the people of our two countries."

Obiang, on behalf of the Equatorial Guinean Government and people, expressed his gratitude to the Chinese side for hosting such a grand reception to celebrate the 45th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations. Though Equatorial Guinea and China were far apart geographically, the hearts of our two peoples were always closely linked. In the past 40 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, Equatorial Guinea-China friendship had never faltered.

"Our two countries have always supported and helped each other, and our peoples have treated each other

sincerely. Due to the sincere help from the Chinese people, the economic development of Equatorial Guinea is among the best in Africa, for which we express profound appreciation. China has helped Equatorial Guinea not only to develop its economy, but also train a large number of qualified personnel much needed in its development. Forty-five years' relationship has made our two peoples understand and trust each other, and become true friends."

He expressed the hope that the two countries would deepen their friendship, further their cooperation and promote new vitality to better benefit the people.

The President went on to say that, for a long time, many Chinese enterprises had taken part in Equatorial Guinea's economic development and rendered support and assistance to its national construction. The Equatorial Guinea-China Economic Forum would

be held in Dalian the following day and he hoped it would encourage more Chinese enterprises to take part in his country's construction to promote the implementation of the Long-Term Plan for 2020 Economic and Social Development which aims to achieve the country's industrialization so that Equatorial Guinea will end its dependence on Western countries and become a self-sufficient emerging country.

Equatorial Guinea had excellent investment environment and high return on investment and he hoped more Chinese companies would make investment in the country. To encourage this, the government would simplify formalities and provide convenience for Chinese enterprises.

At the reception, pupils from China-Equatorial Guinea Friendship Primary School staged a performance of song and dance with rich minority ethnic cultural features. ■

Keophilavanh Aphaylath of Vientiane, Laos; Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng of Penang State, Malaysia; Mayor U Hla Myint of Yangon, Myanmar; Provincial Parliament Member Celestino A. Martinez III of Cebu Province, the Philippines; and Vice Governor Punlop Singhasanee of Phuket Province, Thailand.

CPAFFC Vice President Lin Yi hosted the dialogue.

The participants introduced the resources endowment, cultural heritage, geographical advantages and visions of development in their respective provinces and cities. Chinese representatives focused on the opportunities brought about by China's Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road Initiatives (the Belt and Road Initiatives). Through their introductions, a general picture of the Belt and Road was formed in the minds of the participants, with Hainan as the bridgehead of the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road and Shaanxi the starting point of the Silk Road, while Chongqing, Nanjing, Tianjin and Qingdao

are strategic junctions on the Belt and Road.

Besides, Hangzhou Vice Mayor Xie Shuangcheng told those present how his city established friendship-city relations with Baguio of the Philippines though they are far apart geographically.

The participants from Bandar Seri Begawan and Bali emphasized the importance of harmony between humankind and nature, while those from Cambodia, Vientiane and Yangon briefed on the achievements of their respective countries in nation building and expressed their willingness to make greater efforts for ASEAN Community construction and furtherance of China-ASEAN relations.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng of Penang told of the significant position of his state in the Malaysian economy and its profound relationship with China. The participants from Cebu and Phuket stressed their goal to build their provinces into tourist resorts by the sea.

Based on their respective specific

local conditions, the participants put forward many suggestions and reached the following agreements on strengthening "10+1" cooperation:

1. To coordinate infrastructure planning and jointly build an efficient, effective and convenient network of connectivity.

2. To give full play to their respective advantages and promote cooperation in industry, trade and economy, finance and investment to upgrade the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area.

3. To promote the continuous development of the China-ASEAN "blue economy" and make joint efforts to build up the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road.

4. To further promote cooperation in culture, education, science, technology, sports and religion, and expand media and personnel exchanges to consolidate the social basis and public support for bilateral friendship.

5. To utilize international conferences in ASEAN countries as a way to enhance "10+1" pragmatic cooperation.



New Members of CPAFFC Executive Council

The Executive Council of the CPAFFC gained two new members in 2015 — vice presidents Lin Yi and Song Jingwu.



Lin Yi, born in Guangdong Province in 1966 and a graduate of Peking University, joined the CPAFFC in 1989 and has been engaged in people-to-people diplomacy ever since, serving successively as deputy director and director of the Fourth Division of the Department of Asian and African Affairs, deputy director general and director general of the Department of Asian and African Affairs, secretary general of the CPAFFC, deputy director general of the Tianjin Municipal Foreign Affairs Office and vice president of the Tianjin Municipal People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.



Song Jingwu, born in Shandong Province in 1959 and a university graduate, joined the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1976, serving successively as first secretary, deputy director and director of the Department of West European Affairs, counselor and division chief of the Department of European Affairs, counsellor and minister counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in France, deputy director general of the Department of Foreign Affairs Management; and director general of the Department of European and Asian Affairs of the CPAFFC.

While highly praising the convening of the dialogue, the participants reaffirmed that local cooperation which represents a basic and pragmatic form of cooperation among countries serves as an important platform for deepening exchanges and cooperation against the backdrop of globalization, and plays

an important role for all parties to seek common interests and promote peace and development.

The participants agreed that, by using the lever provided by the Bo'ao Forum for Asia platform, the ASEAN-China Governors/Mayors' Dialogue well demonstrated the openness, com-

mitment and progress at the local level in building a community of common destiny not only between China and ASEAN, but also in Asia as a whole. For that reason, it was agreed the event should be institutionalized and held annually during the BFA annual conference. ■

Photo Exhibition of “Zhou Enlai and the Bandung Conference” Held in Indonesia

Xu Yan

Sixty years ago, world attention focused on the Indonesian city of Bandung where leaders of the emerging “Third World” were meeting to establish their voice in global affairs. A major figure at the Bandung Conference was undoubtedly the late Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, whose achievements then were commemorated this April by China and Indonesia.

Organized by the CPAFFC and the Association of Indonesia-China Economic, Social and Cultural Cooperation (AICESCC), the opening ceremony of the Photo Exhibition “Zhou Enlai and the Bandung Conference” was held in Jakarta on April 23. Among the 200 Indonesian and Chinese guests were CPAFFC Vice President Lin Yi, Zhou’s nieces Zhou Bingde and Zhou Bingjian, AICESCC Chairman Sukamdani S. Gitosardjono and Indonesian Ambassador to China Soegeng Rahardjo.

The exhibition was one of several activities in commemoration of the 65th anniversary of China-Indonesia diplomatic relations and the 60th anniversary of the Bandung Conference (Asia-Africa Conference). It comprises three parts, which respectively introduce the international background of the conference and its proceedings as well as the history of China-Indonesia friendly relations.

Addressing the opening ceremony, Lin Yi said the conference marked the first time Asian and African nations

discuss their affairs without the participation of colonialist countries. Zhou Enlai, Indonesian President Soekarno and fellow leaders jointly proposed 10 principles governing international relations that formed the “Bandung Spirit” with peaceful co-existence and seeking common grounds while reserving differences as the core.

This still had great practical significance in guiding state-to-state relations, resolving international disputes and safeguarding world peace. Through vivid historical photos, the exhibition was being held to cherish the memory of the older generation of leaders of Asian and African countries, carry forward their legacy and advance future

cooperation.

Zhou Bingde expressed gratitude to exhibition organizers for their efforts. She said that the presence of Premier Zhou as head of the Chinese delegation to the Bandung Conference was a remarkable achievement of New China’s diplomacy. She hoped the exhibition would arouse awareness of people, especially the young, to value China-Indonesia friendship and world peace at large.

Huang Shuhai, who worked as Premier Zhou Enlai’s interpreter of Indonesian language at the Bandung Conference, recalled the international situation at the time and the great contributions made by the Premier in en-

Distinguished guests cutting the ribbon to open the exhibition



CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin Visits Vietnam

Yuan Mindao, Wu Jiong

*Vietnam and China are linked by
common mountains and rivers.*

*Both about the East China Sea,
Our friendship faces the rising
sun.*

*Drinking from the same river,
We see each other in the morning
and the evening,*

*And hear each other's roosters
crowing at dawn.*

Ah!

*Sharing common ideals, our
hearts are linked,*

*Red flags are fluttering over the
road to victory.*

The words of the song *Vietnam-China* vividly reflect the traditional friendship between China and Vietnam.

This is longstanding and well established after the two countries established diplomatic relations on January 18, 1950. In the long years of revolutionary struggle, the Government and people of China gave full military



Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang meeting with CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin and her party

and economic support to Vietnam in its wars against France and the United States. Since then, the two countries have conducted extensive cooperation

in the political, military, economic and cultural areas.

The bilateral relationship has not always been plain sailing, and there

suring tangible results.

Mr. Sukamdani S. Gitosardjono said that the AICESCC had the honor to co-sponsor the exhibition with the CPAFFC, and he was sure the event would contribute to furthering mutual understanding and trust between the In-

donesian and Chinese peoples.

Representatives of returned overseas Chinese from Indonesia and a choir from Jakarta sang songs in praise of China-Indonesia friendship and in memory of Premier Zhou Enlai.

Madame Megawati Soekarnopu-

tri, daughter of the late President Soekarno and former President of Indonesia, sent a special representative to speak at the opening ceremony.

Besides Jakarta, the photo exhibition was scheduled to tour other major cities of Indonesia. ■

have been contradictions and even war between them. However, in terms of a thousand years of bilateral relations, there has been peaceful coexistence most of the time.

This year marks the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. At the beginning of the year, CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin paid a goodwill visit to Vietnam, starting a series of commemorative activities. From January 14 to 17, she paid a courtesy call on President Truong Tan Sang, met with Nguyen Thien Nhan, Chairman of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, and Pham Binh Minh, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister respectively.

In the meetings, Li elaborated on China's peaceful development and the importance of good China-Vietnam relations for regional peace. At the receptions celebrating the anniversary respectively hosted by the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations (VUFO) and the Chinese Embassy in Vietnam, she stressed the importance of treasuring and further developing the

traditional friendship.

She had a working meeting with Vu Xuan Hong, Chairman of the VUFO and Bui Hong Phuc, Vice President of the Vietnam-China Friendship Association, to discuss strengthening non-governmental exchanges, making plans for future people-to-people friendly cooperation. Li attended the signing ceremony of the China-Vietnam Non-Governmental Education Exchange Fund at Hanoi University and visited the construction site of the China-Vietnam Friendship Palace.

When Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang attended the APEC leaders' informal meeting in Beijing in October 2014, he met Li Xiaolin, so their second meeting only three months later meant they were quite familiar with each other.

Li expressed her pleasure at being able to visit Vietnam for the anniversary celebrations and noted that she had just paid her respects to the remains of Chairman Ho Chi Minh and visited his former residence where she

saw the books he had read. The leaders of the older generation of the two countries had defined the China-Vietnam relationship as one of "comrades plus brothers". By comrades, it meant having similar ideals and beliefs and the two countries were brought together by a common goal; by brothers, it meant being part of one family. Thus, it was necessary to consolidate and carry forward this traditional friendship on the historical basis laid by the older generation.

Truong Tan Sang wished Li's visit to Vietnam would be a success and recalled his meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the APEC Beijing Summit last year. He said that the Vietnamese side attached great importance to the development of bilateral relations and would as always cherish and develop this traditional friendship and the Vietnam-China comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership. At the end of the meeting, Li presented Chairman Truong with a Chinese calligrapher's rendition of the poem composed by Chairman Ho Chi Minh when visiting the Huangshan Mountains.

The meeting between Li Xiaolin and Vu Xuan Hong began with both recalling the traditional friendship between the two countries. Vu attached great importance to Li's visit to Vietnam for the 65th anniversary of diplomatic relations. He said he had a deep feeling for former Chinese President Li Xiannian and remembered that when Chairman Ho Chi Minh passed away, the former had come to Vietnam as a special envoy to offer condolences.

The relationship between the two parties and countries had deep founda-

Accompanied by VUFO Chairman Vu Xuan Hong, CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin visiting the construction site of Vietnam-China Friendship Palace



tions, having been forged and fostered by leaders of the older generation. In the course of development of the bilateral relations, the friendship organizations of both countries had done much good work. At present, they should carry out more activities to enhance mutual trust, said Vu.

Li Xiaolin told Vu that Chairman Ho Chi Minh had visited China many times during his lifetime and that the Chinese people treated him as a family member. She said that Chairman Ho liked to be in company with children and that when she was a child, she had taken part in some of the activities where he had been present, which left her happy memories.

She noted that, in recent years, the friendship organizations of both countries had cooperated in organizing a series of activities including the China-Vietnam Border Friendship Gala, the Friendship Gala of the Chinese and Vietnamese People, the China-Vietnam Bringing Light Tour, the visit to Vietnam by Chinese Aid-Vietnam veterans, etc., and had done much to promote the friendship between the two peoples.

“China is committed to peaceful development and follows the principles of amity, sincerity, mutual benefit and inclusiveness in its interaction with its neighbors. China cannot achieve its development in isolation from them, and vice versa. We would like to take the opportunity of the 65th anniversary of the bilateral diplomatic relations to maintain and further develop the traditional friendship and build a bridge of friendly exchanges between our peoples, especially between the youth to enhance mutual trust.



CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin talking with students when visiting Hanoi University

“To this end, we have suggested that, this year, the friendship organizations of our two countries organize tours in Guangxi to retrace the footsteps of Chairman Ho Chi Minh and remember the great achievements of and the militant friendship between the revolutionaries of the older generation.”

Vu Xuan Hong expressed appreciation for this suggestion. He said, during the war years, China was Vietnam’s vast rear area. Vietnam could not have won victory in its revolution without China’s support and assistance. He expressed happiness to see China’s achievements in its reform and opening up and spoke highly of the foreign policy pursued by the CPC since its 18th National Congress.

He hoped that, in the new situation, friendship organizations of both countries would strengthen cooperation and further solidify the basis of friendship between the two peoples to

promote substantial development of the bilateral relations under the guidance of the principle of “maintaining long-term stability, looking ahead, deepening good-neighborly relations and carrying out cooperation in all aspects” and in the spirit of good neighbors, friends, comrades and partners.

In her short visit to Vietnam, Li Xiaolin made extensive contacts with the personages of Vietnamese political, government and various social sectors, recalling the traditional friendship, elaborating on China’s diplomatic principles concerning major-country relationship and its neighboring countries. She urged both sides to strengthen cooperation, expand common grounds, and make joint efforts to safeguard China-Vietnam comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership so as to lay a sound foundation for the smooth proceeding of the activities marking the 65th anniversary of the bilateral diplomatic relations. ■

Profound Friendship Between Kith and Kin

Wu Jiong

In early March it was still cold in Beijing, but in Bangkok over 2,000 kilometers south, it was very hot. In such a time of seasonal change, a 50-member Chinese youth delegation headed by Li Xikuei, Secretary General of the CPAFFC, made a six-day visit under the Thai-Chinese Young Executive Program (TCYEP) to inject even more warmth.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. To enhance exchanges and understanding between Chinese and Thai young people, solidify the basis of China-Thailand comprehensive strategic partnership and develop successors to carry on China-Thailand friendship, the TCYEP, jointly sponsored by the CPAFFC, the Chinese Embassy in Thailand and the Thai-Chinese Culture and Economy Association (TCCEA), was held from March 1 to 7.

This involved 50 people from each side under the age of 45 representing political, economic, financial, medical, health, cultural, educational and media circles.

They were divided into groups identified by five colors, each member having a friend from the other country. By visiting and living together, they enhanced mutual understanding and forged friendship. The interactions between the participants showed that the close relationship between China and Thailand is like a family.



Thai Princess Sirindhorn having a cordial conversation with CPAFFC Secretary General Li Xikuei and Chinese Ambassador Ning Fukui (center)

A participant from the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) said he had been to many Southeast Asian countries, but, he preferred to travel to quiet places and so had intentionally avoided Thailand because of a perception it was always crowded with tourists, including many from China. This time, as a member of the Chinese youth delegation, he felt more relaxed than when travelling on his own and the visit had been more rewarding.

He not only learned about Thai local customs and practices and enjoyed its beautiful scenery and delicious food, but also found that Thai young people perfectly combined tradition and mo-

derernity in their way of life and experienced the close China-Thailand friendship.

The head of the Thai youth delegation said there existed deep fraternal friendship between Thailand and China. This activity had furthered mutual understanding and built a bridge of friendship for future cooperation. He had visited China almost once every two years and was always amazed at its rapid progress and tremendous process of change. Now he had made so many young Chinese friends, he would visit China even more often.

A Thai delegate engaged in textile trade said he had made more trips to China in recent years for doing busi-

ness with his Chinese partners and this had enabled him to speak a little Chinese. Some Thai participants who had studied in China could not only speak Chinese, but had also installed WeChat, a popular instant messaging system in China, in their mobile phones.

Despite their busy schedule, top leaders of the Thai Government and Parliament and even a member of the Royal Family received the delegation, with the help of the Chinese Embassy in Thailand and the TCCEA.

On March 5, on behalf of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, Deputy Prime Minister Pridiyathorn Devakula met with all the participants and welcomed the Chinese youth delegation's visit. He said that the youth exchange activity held on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of diplomatic ties would further promote friendly relations between the two governments and enhance the friendship between the two peoples.

Since the two countries signed the communiqué on the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1975, much progress had been made. Last year, Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha made a successful visit to China and had talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping and other top Chinese leaders. Vice Prime Minister Pridiyathorn said there was certainly room for greater development.

He also briefed the delegation on Thailand's economic and investment policies and answered questions. When a Chinese delegate from the Xinhua News Agency asked about the development of e-commerce in Thailand, the Deputy Prime Minister said, he knew that the Chinese Government attached great importance to this, leading to great development of other industries

such as logistics. The Thai Government would carry out policies and regulations in line with its national conditions and encourage more innovation and development in the e-commerce. Thailand would welcome Chinese enterprises to be involved in the development of e-commerce in Thailand.

On the morning of March 5, Pornpetch Wichitcholchai, President of the National Legislative Assembly (NLA), took time off to meet the Chinese and Thai youth delegation during the NLA session and briefed them on assembly work. He hoped that the youth of the two countries would increase contacts, deepen mutual understanding and carry forward the Thailand-China friendship.

After the meeting, he invited the delegations to observe the NLA session. Sitting in the public gallery on the second floor of the Assembly Hall, the Chinese and Thai young people watched the assemblymen speaking passionately and debating heatedly. For the Chinese youth, though they did not understand what was being said, the

visit to the NLA, a core organ of the country's political system, was highly worthwhile.

It is a great honor to be received by members of the Royal Family for ordinary Thai people, let alone foreign visitors. When news came that Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn would give an audience, both the Chinese and Thai delegation members were overjoyed.

Born in Bangkok in April 1955, she is the second daughter of Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej. She admires Chinese culture, especially likes reading Chinese classic novels, Tang and Song poetry, and *The Historical Records*, and has great attainments in literature, music and painting. Her love of the Chinese language has greatly helped the popularization of Chinese language teaching in Thailand. She has published ten books about her visits to China, objectively introducing Chinese culture to the Thai people.

Since 1981, she has traveled all over China. On February 26, 2004 during her 18th visit to China, the

The launching of the Thai-Chinese Young Executive Program





Thai National Legislative Assembly President Pornpetch Wichitcholchai briefing the TCYEP participants from both countries on the work of the assembly

CPAFFC conferred upon her the title of Friendship Ambassador in recognition of her contributions to the promotion of Thailand-China friendship.

On the afternoon of March 5, Princess Sirindhorn cordially met the delegations. She listened to the reports by the heads of the two sides, Chinese Ambassador to Thailand Ning Fukuei, TCCEA President Bhokin Bhalakula, and fully affirmed the importance of the Thai-Chinese Young Executive Program.

Li Xikuei, leader of the Chinese delegation, thanked the Princess for

meeting them in the midst of her pressing affairs, conveyed warm regards to her from China-ASEAN Association President Gu Xiulian and CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin. Li said Princess Sirindhorn, an old friend of the Chinese people and the CPAFFC, had, over the years, worked hard to promote Thailand-China friendship and that she fully deserved the title of Friendship Ambassador.

He expressed the CPAFFC's willingness to work together with the Princess to make continuous efforts to fur-

ther the people-to-people friendship between the two countries. Li spoke highly of the student lunch project financed by the Princess, saying it reflected her profound thinking on education, public welfare and environmental protection. He wished the Princess a happy 60th birthday and good health.

After the reports, Princess Sirindhorn stood up from her seat and came up to the head of the Chinese delegation and Chinese Ambassador to Thailand, talking with them cordially in Chinese. Her plain and simple dress and amiable smile showed her love of and closeness to the people. In conversation, she said jokingly, that it was a pity the age limit for the TCYEP participants was 45 as she would have joined if younger.

Princess Sirindhorn had pictures taken with the TCYEP participants who were divided into three groups. The sun was setting when she rose from her chair and waved goodbye. The sunset rays reached the Palace's reception hall through the windows and shone on her smiling face. It was the most beautiful scene.

The profound friendship between our two countries and peoples made us feel like we were one family. Time with friends always seems short. Just as Li Xikuei said at the farewell reception, "We have met too late, the get-together is too short and the parting too hard." But through this six-day activity, the beautiful story of "China and Thailand are kith and kin" will be told by more people. We have reason to believe that such visits will be more frequent, more new friends will be made, and friendship between our two peoples will be long-lasting. ■

CPAFFC Secretary General Li Xikui (L.3) with Thai students



That Kind Gentleman from China And His US Hosts

Zhang Yang

A Chinese young man in Iowa

"He's always kind to everyone, always like this," Eleanor Dvorchak murmurs, looking out of the car window at paddy fields in Hebei. The vast green farmland sent her mind wandering back to Iowa 30 years before.

In 1985, the Dvorchak family received a call from Mrs. Sarah Lande, a member of the Iowa Sister States, a non-profit NGO, asking if they would like to receive the member of an agricultural delegation from Hebei Province to stay for a few days. Why not? Eleanor and husband Thomas said to each other. Their two sons, Gary and Mark were studying in college, so their room was available.

Many years later, they told the rest of the family the decision stemmed from their interest in China, and having a Chinese guest would be no trouble at all.

Yet, at that time, the China-US relations were still shrouded in the on-going cold war. From the founding of the PRC to the end of the 1960s, in order to prevent China and the Soviet Union from forming an alliance and encroaching on American interests in Asia, the United States adopted a policy of military encirclement, economic blockade and diplomatic isolation, so that relations were in a deep freeze. Not until the 1970s did they begin to ease against the backdrop of changing international



An agricultural delegation from Hebei Province visited the U.S. in 1985. The photo shows Xi Jinping (L.1) and three other delegation members with the Dvorchaks

situation.

Diplomatic relations had been established just six years when the Dvorchaks made their decision, but there were few bilateral exchanges, and the people of the two countries still had limited knowledge on each other. It was quite an admirable decision full of goodwill to open one's door to Chinese strangers.

Soon, the Dvorchaks met at home a polite, kind young Chinese man who was curious about everything in the United States. It was his first visit to that country. In addition to asking questions about American society, culture and agricultural technology, he also told his host family many things arous-

ing their own strong interest in China. Because of him, the couple and their daughter paid a visit to China in the following year to see for themselves what had been described by their Chinese guest.

Three days and two nights went by in a flash. Upon departure, the young man presented the Dvorchaks with a bottle of the Chrysanthemum liquor made in Hebei. Eleanor treated him to homemade pop-corn. "I kept the liquor for years and shared an occasional glass with friends on a special occasion. It reminded me of my Chinese friend," Thomas recalled. One might have assumed the story ended then.

Reunion of old friends

In 1996, after retirement, Thomas and Eleanor moved to the warm southern state of Florida, planting trees and flowers and helping homeless pets. At the beginning of 2012, a call from their old friend Sarah Lande in Iowa changed their settled lives again. “I remember she asked whether we would like to go back to meet a Chinese friend,” Thomas told us during a dinner. “You know there’s quite some distance between Florida and Iowa, and the climates are different. We were in our seventies, so we don’t really feel like going all that way.” However, then they were told: “He’s the Vice President of China now, the man who stayed in your house 27 years ago”. This immediately helped the Dvorchaks to make up their mind to go.

On February 13, 2012, Vice President Xi Jinping visited the United States. He met with the US President Barack Obama and other high-ranking US officials, emphasizing the impor-

tance of the sound development of Sino-US relations and win-win cooperation. On February 15, Xi traveled in the rain and snow to Iowa to see his old friends, including the Dvorchaks.

The visit 27 years earlier left him with a deep impression. During that visit, he not only learned advanced agricultural technology from the U.S., but also realized that the people of China and the United States had much in common, and there’s huge space for cooperation. “To me, you are America.” His words warmed the hearts of everyone present.

At the end of the reunion, Xi invited various American friends to visit China later in the year. Unfortunately, the Dvorchaks could not join the trip due to their health condition. Instead, their daughter Paula visited China in June as a member of the Iowa Old Friends Delegation headed by Governor Terry Branstad.

Eleanor always joked about becoming a famous “landlady” after Xi’s

visit. Several media outlets contacted her, hoping to hear more about the story between the American old couple and the Chinese vice president. What we did was simply receiving a Chinese delegation, the couple repeatedly insisted. Such honesty and warmth may originate from the Croatian immigrant family into which Eleanor was born. However, the most precious part of this story is the natural amity between China and the United States, two great nations with similar vast territory, rich culture and industrious people.

Reunion in China after 30 years

The year 2013 arrived quietly. In August, Gary, the older Dvorchak son, settled down in Beijing with his wife and two daughters for work. Around the same time, his younger brother Mark took many business trips to China. The son of their sister Paula attended Chinese language courses at school. The link between the Dvorchak family and China has grown ever closer.

In early 2015, the Dvorchaks decided to visit Gary and his family in Beijing, and they hoped to meet their famous Chinese friend during the visit. By now, this man had become the president of China.

No matter how occupied with his duties, the kind young man from years ago cherished profound feelings towards his former American “landlord and landlady”. In April 2015, President Xi Jinping hosted a private welcoming dinner for the Dvorchaks and their family, reviewing the shared memory with his old friends coming from afar.

“He even remembers every detail from back then. Either he has a very good note taker, or he has an amazing

Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping meeting his old friends in Iowa during his visit to the U.S. in 2012



memory!” As soon as they left the dining room, the Dvorchaks could not wait to start talking to each other in an excited way. They did not notice the dinner had lasted nearly two hours and the streetlights along the Chang’an Avenue had been lit up.

Of the reunion between old friends after nearly 30 years, what remains unchanged is the sincere friendship; what has changed the most is the fast progress of China. During the visit, the Dvorchaks were shown with all kinds of new developments in the country — towering skyscrapers, convenient high-speed trains, enterprises with advanced production and R&D capability, and innovative schools focusing on education for all-round development of the students.

“This is amazing, unbelievable.” Sitting in the Café on the 38th floor of the new CCTV tower, they marveled to each other.

The Dvorchaks repeatedly said that they hold dear to the 30 years of friendship with President Xi Jinping. Now, the younger generations of the Dvorchak family have established close ties with China. They hope this friendship will be passed on to future generations and serve as a bridge of China-US friendship.

“Probably Gary’s daughter will find a Chinese boyfriend when she grows up,” Eleanor joked, blinking at the rest of us and making everyone in the room burst out laughing. Amid the laughter, we began to picture what stories there would be between China and this family and the people of the United States they represent in the next 30 years. ■

Drawing on International Experiences to Build General Practitioner System

Liu Chang



The Royal Dutch Medical Association delegation having a discussion with the Beijing Municipal Health and Family Planning Commission

Established in 1849, the Royal Dutch Medical Association seeks to promote the academic research and development in medical care to provide high-quality service. At the invitation of the CPAFFC, a 25-member RDMA delegation visited Beijing from March 15 to 20 for in-depth discussions on the general practitioner system with China’s National Health and Family Planning Commission, Beijing Municipal Health and Family Planning Commission, Peking University Health Science Center and Desheng Community Health Service Center.

Unlike specialist doctors in big hospitals, a GP works in primary-level

medical institutions to provide basic services such as treatment of ordinary ailments and disease prevention. Since 1989, when the School of General Practice was set up in the Capital Medical University, the GP system has been gradually introduced to China. To improve the quality of grassroots medical services and enable people to have affordable medical care, the State Council issued guidelines on the establishment of the GP system in July 2012.

The target by 2020 is to provide every 10,000 urban and rural residents with access to two to three qualified general practitioners.

In the Netherlands, average life

expectancy is 78 for men and 83 for women, while the infant mortality rate 4‰. Most of the country's health indicators are higher than the United Kingdom and the United States. Total expenditure on medical care amounts to 11.9% of GDP, which is US\$5,038 per capita, ranking the first on the Health Consumer Index of the European Union. Besides its strong economic foundations, the complete general practitioner system has also contributed to the country's achievements in medical care.

According to Mr. Rene Heman, Vice President of the Royal Dutch Medical Association, the Netherlands has around 9,000 GPs, most of whom work in private clinics and provide direct medical services for community residents, being responsible for 85% of total medical needs and yet accounting for only 4% of the total cost of medical services.

The GP plays a vital role in meeting people's needs for basic medical care, regulating the medical market and controlling medical costs.

From the exchanges between the delegation of the Royal Dutch Medical Association and relevant Chinese departments and institutions, there is an obvious gap in the general practitioner system and other areas between China and the developed countries that needs closing.

First is the positioning of general practitioners. By the definition of the World Organization of Family Doctors, they are supposed to provide comprehensive medical services to every person seeking medical care and when necessary, arrange for other medical professionals to provide relevant

services outside their remit. In China, general practitioners are still regarded as community doctors, and community hospitals and clinics, which are large in number but with limited resources, keep them at the bottom of the pyramid. Due to various reasons including low pay and under-appreciation of their importance, it is hard for community hospitals to attract talents.

This could even lead to a vicious circle in which patients lose trust in community hospitals as they lack qualified professionals, and doctors working in community hospitals, who have few patients and feel undervalued, choose to change their career or seek to move to big hospitals.

A delegation member, Professor Pieter van den Hombergh of the University of Amsterdam, said the general practitioner is a very admirable job with a good social status in the Netherlands. For patients, he or she is usually the first point of contact when visiting a clinic almost like a doorkeeper. Most GPs are self-employed. Residents can choose to register with a GP who is paid by a medical fund based on the number of registered patients. An insured person can receive specialist treatment and compensation only through GP recommendation.

Second is the improvement of the medical insurance system. In China, because of an incomplete medical insurance system, patients lack easy access to affordable medical services on the one hand while hospitals operate in the red on the other. Big hospitals are able to strike a balance through large-scale market operation, but for community hospitals where most general practitioners work, it is difficult to make

ends meet. This has resulted in low GP income which is about one-third of that of specialist doctors in big hospitals, and high charges for medical services.

Faced with similar high costs, patients prefer to see doctors in big hospitals even if it means long waiting time in queues rather than going to community hospitals. General practitioners thus fail to play the role of saving patients' money and relieving big hospitals' pressure.

According to Mr. Heman, medical funds and medical insurance companies will evaluate a GP according to surplus they get from the premium. If the health conditions of the insured is not ideal in general, or the medical cost rises because of insufficient disease control, the medical fund and medical insurance company may terminate the contract and the general practitioner's reputation will suffer. This leads to an emphasis on quality in the system.

Third is building trust between doctors and patients. The GP concept is introduced to China from abroad and there are misconceptions about the term. Patients often regard general practitioners as akin to the "barefoot doctors" of the past, while many others think that general practitioners, unlike specialist doctors, are capable of treating all kinds of diseases. Professionally trained general practitioners are insufficient in China at present as few universities run a suitable course. This has resulted in a number of problems including low professional education and rank, outdated knowledge structure and insufficient clinical experience. Thus, the GP cannot win patient trust in their professional expertise.

Professor Paul Mertens from

Erasmus University in Rotterdam said general practitioners in the Netherlands had developed from the family doctor. Every resident needs to choose a general practitioner every year and pay certain amount of the cost for basic treatment. A GP needs a good background of medical education and practice including a three-year professional medical internship.

He or she studies the patient's record and current condition to decide if treatment is possible, or whether referral to a specialist doctor for further diagnosis and treatment may be justified. A long-term service relationship, rich practical experience and comprehensive knowledge structure have formed the foundation of trust between doctors and patients.

As the saying goes, "Advice from others may help one overcome one's short-comings". By learning the experience of developed countries including the Netherlands and improving its general practitioner system, China may find the cure for the lack of medical resources.

Through receiving this delegation, we have seen the role of international professional organizations in providing intelligence support and advice for reform and development of relevant fields in China. The CPAFFC can contribute more to the country's social and economic development by bringing into full play its advantages in this regard. ■

Saying Farewell to Mayor Garcetti at Beijing Airport

Zhang Heqiang



The writer of the article with Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti

Sometimes work at the CPAFFC can be filled with many unexpected and joyful encounters. Last November 23, when I returned from a visit to New Zealand, my colleague asked me if I could see off Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti at Beijing Capital International Airport the next morning. When I agreed to go, I had no inkling it would turn out to be such an interesting and delightful experience.

Mayor Garcetti had been visiting at the invitation of the CPAFFC. Before coming to Beijing, he and his del-

egation visited Guangzhou, a sister city of Los Angeles.

Having ushered the Mayor into the VIP lounge at the Terminal 2, we exchanged greetings and swapped business cards. Apart from his normal card, he also gave me five of his exquisitely-made square-shape cards with Los Angeles landmarks such as Lax Airport, seaport, beaches, concert hall and Hollywood printed on the back. I gladly accepted them and found it hard to hide my pleasure of having collected such a treasure.

Elected officials in Western countries are known to be talkative, yet Mayor Garcetti is an exceptionally good conversationalist. Eloquent and well-informed, he is a rare communication master. He spoke of President Xi Jinping as a remarkable Chinese leader, whose foreign policy succeeded in helping China build an image of responsible major country in the international community.

China and the United States share a lot of common interests, he said. If our two countries work together, we can deal with many global issues such as climate change, pandemics in Africa and terrorism. Jointly chaired by then Vice President Xi Jinping and US Vice President Joe Biden, the US-China Governors' Meeting held in LA in 2012 was a great success. Xi and Biden both delivered excellent speeches. Xi also talked about his personal experiences in the U.S., which moved all present.

This was his first trip to China since his election. Although he had had high expectations, the outcome still far exceeded his expectations. His trip covered Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Shanghai and Beijing, each place offering a warm reception and hospitality. He visited companies such as Huawei, BYD, Tencent and Wanda and signed quite a few cooperation agreements.

He specially mentioned Mayor Chen Jianhua of Guangzhou, describing him as candid, friendly and full of charm. In a three-party event involving Guangzhou, L.A. and Auckland of New Zealand, Mayor Chen arranged artists to sing for foreign guests, while

the Mayor of Auckland also showed his artistic talent. Mayor Garcetti promised to arrange for artists to sing for Mayor Chen on his reciprocal visit.

To address the challenge of climate change, the three cities signed a tripartite cooperation agreement, urging global efforts to save energy, reduce emissions and protect the environment.

Mayor Garcetti said, the weather had been just gorgeous during the couple of days he spent in Beijing. With no less of humor, he said that he had brought "LA Blue" to Beijing. He recalled that, when he was a child, the air in Los Angeles was so polluted his eyes were sometimes irritated to tears. Now, the city enjoys clean air. He hoped this experience would be of some help to Beijing. At present, his city is a member of the advisory committee of the "Global 40"; he hoped to help some Chinese cities join the advisory committee so as to make joint efforts to address climate change.

He also proposed a US-China mayoral conference on climate change be held in Annenburg during the coming seventh round of US-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue. Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang and US Vice President Joe Biden would be invited to attend the opening ceremony. He hoped for CPAFFC assistance in this regard.

Apart from work-related topics, we also talked about our families. Pointing to an elderly man sitting next to him, Mayor Garcetti introduced him as his father, a lawyer, who had served as LA county district attorney and that in 1984 when he was 13 years old, he

had visited China with his father. Their joint visit this time revealed a completely different China, however.

I was surprised to know that Mayor Garcetti took the Beijing subway all by himself and that during his stay in China he even learned to use WeChat and built WeChat friend-groups. He praised WeChat instant messaging system as really good and more convenient than Facebook, and added me as a WeChat friend. Right away he sent a photo of President Xi Jinping waving his hand and jested with me saying that President Xi was very satisfied with my work and was waving hello to us.

I could not sit still. I took out my mobile phone, handed it to my colleague, had a picture taken with the mayor and sent it to him through WeChat. At that moment, we were all busy sending or receiving messages.

On parting, I said to the mayor that since Los Angeles is the western gateway of the U.S., there would be occasions that I would ask him for a favor to meet visiting Chinese delegations in the future. He readily agreed.

On my way home, I unexpectedly received a voice message from Mayor Garcetti on WeChat: "Mr. Zhang, thank you for your hospitality. I look forward to seeing you again".

The brief meeting at the airport with Mayor Garcetti left a deep impression on me. I could not help but asking myself a question: Is this the typical mayor of a metropolis of the 21st Century who is adroit at communicating and learning, capable and yet down-to-earth? This is certainly a question worth pondering. ■

Sidelights on Peking Opera and Kabuki Joint Show

Zhang Yaqin

On April 2 and April 3, Chinese Peking Opera and Japanese Kabuki were performed on the same stage to sell-out audiences at the Beijing Mei Lanfang Grand Theater. Two classics of Peking Opera, *Farewell My Concubine* and *The Great Enthronement*, were performed respectively in the first half of the show, followed in the second half by a famous Kabuki play, *The Mirror Lion — A Spring Entertainment*.

More than two weeks in advance it had been hard to find a single ticket given the presence of a host of performers of the highest artistic level from the China National Peking Opera Company (CNPOC) and Japan's Shochiku Co. Ltd.

The 1,800-plus people lucky enough to obtain tickets were certainly not disappointed by the intoxicating and enthralling theatrical performances.

The event was co-sponsored by the CPAFFC, the China-Japan Friendship Association (CJFA), the CNPOC and the Shochiku Co. Ltd., with support from the Chinese Ministry of Culture, the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs and the respective Chinese and Japanese embassies.

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin wrote a message of congratulations. CJFA President Tang Jiaxuan, CPAFFC Vice Presidents Xie Yuan and Song Jingwu, as well as Japanese Diet members and the Japanese Ambassador to China and his wife attended the event

and met the main performers, while leading Chinese and Japanese media provided extensive coverage.

I

Of particular interest was the presence of Kikunosuke Onoe, a well-known Kabuki dan (female role) performer who comes from a well-known Kabuki family and now shoulders much responsibility for the future of the art.

In 1979 after the signing of the Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty, Shochiku was the first Japanese cultural delegation to visit China, gaining acclaim for the same play, *The Mirror Lion — A Spring Entertainment* with Baikou Onoe, Kikunosuke's grandfa-

The Chinese and Japanese artists on the stage after the performance



ther, in the leading role.

It is a much praised part of Kabuki classical repertory in which the leading actor plays two roles, first, a graceful charming girl, and then later a powerful and bold male lion.

Thirty six years later, playing the same role as his grandfather, his exquisite and expressive performance brought round after round of applause from the audience reflecting their hopes for more cultural exchanges between the two countries.

Kikunosuke said with emotion that this performance in China was fated to take place and was a heavy mission he should undertake.

The CNPOC contributed some of its most outstanding young performers including Ma Xiangfei, Liu Kueikuei, Wang Fang and Zhu Hong to appear with their Japanese Kabuki colleagues and carefully chose a traditional repertoire. The story of *Farewell My Concubine* is well known to Japanese audiences, and *The Great Enthronement*, a story of happy reunion, is often played during the New Year festival.

Peking Opera fans in the theater expressed their delight at the chance to watch Chinese Peking Opera and Japanese Kabuki side-by-side enabling the similarities and respective characteristics of these two performing arts to be discerned. Many Japanese in the audience said delightedly that it was really a rare chance to enjoy genuine Kabuki and at the same time Peking Opera in Beijing.

II

Off the stage, participants exchange experiences in performing. Kikunosuke asked the Chinese perform-

ers about Peking Opera's origins and development and showed great interest to learn its body movements and footwork. They shared their knowledge about the characteristics, acting skills and stage design of each genre, and also discussed the materials of hair and beard used by characters in the show and composition of the musical accompaniment.

All agreed the shared performance had realized a long-cherished wish of deepening exchanges between the theatrical circles of the two countries.

Despite similarities between the two genres, however, each has its own peculiarities. Peking Opera usually uses implied stage settings, while Kabuki needs to build real stage scenery. To express their respect for the guests, the hosts arranged for Kabuki to be performed in the second half of the show. But how could the palace setting be completed during the intermission of only 15 minutes?

Unexpectedly, with the concerted efforts of about 20 stage hands from both sides, the changes were completed in a very short time. The audience could not help feeling amazed, saying jokingly that, in the twinkling of an eye, a palace had sprung from the ground.

When it was time for performers of the two sides to answer curtain calls together, a small problem arose. Performers wearing shoes are not allowed to step on the Syosadai (the scenery stage of Kabuki).

After considering various options, they finally adopted the option of rapidly laying a red carpet on the Syosadai after the end of Kabuki performance. In this way performers of both sides were

finally able to stand side by side to answer curtain calls. For answering the curtain calls, Peking Opera performers had to wait with makeup on for more than one hour after finishing the first half of the show, while Kikunosuke, dripping with sweat just after finishing the lion dance, had to stand on stage with heavy lion crown on his head. All got a prolonged standing ovation.

III

Exchanges between Peking Opera and Kabuki have a long tradition. As early as about 100 years ago, Peking Opera master Mei Lanfang performed *Celestial Beauty Scattering Flowers* in the Imperial Theater in Tokyo. A Japanese Kabuki delegation paid its first visit to China in 1955. In the 1980s and 1990s, *Dragon King* was created jointly by troupes of these two types of drama.

In 2007 the CPAFFC invited Japanese Shochiku Grand Kabuki Chikamatsu-za to visit China. In 2008 *The Peony Pavilion* jointly performed by Japanese Kabuki artist Tamasaburo Banto and the Suzhou Kunqu Opera Theater delighted audiences in both China and Japan. There is no lack of Kabuki fans in China and Peking Opera fans in Japan. However, due to many reasons such as enormous expense of performance and tight schedule, they have never been performed together before.

At the beginning of this year, the Shochiku Co. Ltd. told the CPAFFC that it intended to send a Kabuki delegation to visit China and wished to have a shared performance with Peking Opera. The CPAFFC made extensive contacts to discuss selection of repertoires, the schedule, fund raising and

staffing, so that it only took half a month for an outline agreement to be reached between the Shochiku Co. Ltd. and the CNPOC and undertaken by the Mei Lanfang Grand Theater.

Normally, many free tickets are offered to selected personages for performances of cultural exchanges; this time, however, tickets were sold at a low price to benefit the audience, and we used all kinds of promotional means such as WeChat, MicroBlog as well as posters and one-page brochures. Despite less than two months of preparatory time, all tickets were sold. In the theater we saw many young people interested in traditional cultures of the two countries and deeply touched by the profound and meaningful contents of the traditional arts.

Behind the performance was the aspiration of the relevant personages and organizations of various circles for cultural exchanges and friendship between China and Japan. This meeting in “Pear Garden*” was witnessed by artists and cast members of the two theatrical troupes who had cooperated fully and the audience and media who responded enthusiastically.

This year, the CNPOC will celebrate its 60th birthday and Shochiku Co. Ltd. the 120th anniversary of its founding. We sincerely hope that the two operatic troupes dedicating themselves to inheriting and innovating traditional arts will continue to create classical works and train young performers. May new chapters of mutual learning between the two arts be endlessly written.

***Pear Garden — the theater (originally of a college of dramatics founded by imperial decree in the Tang Dynasty)**

Shaanxi Youth Folk Art Troupe Performs at Los Angeles Disneyland

Liu Tong



At the central square of Disneyland in Los Angeles during the Chinese Spring Festival, a group of Chinese children wearing horn-shaped braids or white towel kerchiefs on their heads performed the waist-drum dance to the rhythm of typical northern Shaanxi folk music. The wonderful performance given by the Shaanxi Youth Folk Art Troupe at Disneyland was part of a cultural exchange with the United States under the “Rainbow Bridge Project”.

At the square, the youngsters performed a variety of formations and high leaps with red silk ribbons tied at their waist. The dance reflected the honest, simple, warm, optimistic and staunch character of the people of northern Shaanxi. Many visitors who were queuing for a photo op with

Mickey Mouse were drawn to the scene by the lively music and were reluctant to leave even when the performance was over.

Tyra Donaldson, a 40-year-old tourist from Wyoming, said excitedly that the children’s dance was amazing and that she had never seen such dances before. “How happily and dynamically they danced, and how beautiful their costumes were!”

When the performance came to an end, warm applause rose from the audience. Many visitors came up to the young performers and asked to have pictures taken with them. Yao Yi, a little performer from the Ansai Waist-Drum Dance Team, said excitedly when interviewed, “I feel deeply honored to be able to come to the United States and give performance



Guo Rulin (L.1) , a patchwork artist from Yanchuan of Shaanxi Province, presenting a piece of his work to the Walt Disney Company

on behalf of our country. I should win glory for our motherland and demonstrate the elegant demeanor of our northern Shaanxi people and the charm of Ansai waist-drum dance.”

On the other side of the square, Guo Rulin, a peasant artist of patchwork art from Yanchuan County of Shaanxi, showed visitors how to make patchworks and gave paper-cuts to the visitors who were waiting in line. His works were very much liked and aroused great excitement.

Invited by the Walt Disney Company, the troupe participated in the “Chinese Spring Festival Special Performance Tour” in Disneyland from February 20 to 25.

The 20-member troupe, composed of young performers of *yangge* dance and waist-drum dance aged between nine and 11 and patchwork artists, came from the Disney Luochuan Youth Yangge Dance Team, the DSM Ansai

Youth Waist-Drum Dance Team and the Cummins Yanchuan Cloth Painting Cooperatives under the Rainbow Bridge Project.

On the evening of Feb. 20, the troupe held a launching ceremony at the Disneyland Hotel attended by Kevin Callahan, Vice President of the Walt Disney Company, and Disney Ambassador Jessica Bernard. They said that the CPAFFC’s participation in the event was of great importance to promoting US-China cultural exchanges, and hoped that the two sides would take it as an opportunity to further promote cooperation between the young people of the two countries and people-to-people cultural exchanges.

At the ceremony, *Red Lily Blossoms*, a Northern Shaanxi folk song, sung by a young performer from the Ansai Waist-Drum Dance Team received favorable comment. Patchwork

artist Guo Rulin presented his cloth painting *The New Year Ushers in Good Fortune* to the Disney Company, hoping that the friendship between the Chinese and American people, like the message implied in the painting, would develop continuously and be passed on from generation to generation.

The troupe also visited the headquarters of the Walt Disney Company and participated in the special activity “*Newsies—Get Up and Go Event*” organized by the company. The activity, as a part of the initiative “Disney Magic of Healthy Living”, aims at letting children experience the joy of healthy living through a simple dance choreographed with inspiration gained from the Broadway musical *Newsies*.

The Chinese children, learning the movements from a group of performers of the musical, danced joyously with their American counterparts on the square. At the end of the activity, they gave the American youngsters the waist drums, paper-cuts, dough figurines and cloth paintings they had brought with them.

The Rainbow Bridge Project is an innovative project of people-to-people diplomacy initiated by the CPAFFC in October 2012, aiming at building a bridge of cooperation and mutual benefit between transnational corporations and Chinese old revolutionary base areas.

It is hoped the Rainbow Bridge Project will take traditional Chinese folk arts to all corners of the world to facilitate people of other countries to learn about China and Chinese culture. ■

CPAFFC Delegation Visits France

Xing Shuhua

Invited by the Objat Municipal Government, a CPAFFC delegation headed by Lu Hongwei, Deputy Director-General of the Department of European and Asian Affairs, visited France from February 12 to 16. The delegation attended the opening ceremony of “Ardent Chinese Dream: Exhibition of Chinese Woodcut New Year Pictures”, and had working meetings on the 2015 and 2016 cooperation projects respectively with the Association of Cultural Encounter Centers (Association des Centres Culturels de Rencontre - ACCR), the Secours Populaire Français (SPF) and the National Committee of Local Government Cooperation (CNCD) under the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Department.

Publicizing Traditional Chinese Culture

The exhibition, co-sponsored by the CPAFFC and the Agency for the Development of International Relations and Cooperation in Culture and Economy (Agence pour le Développement des Relations Internationales et des Coopération par la Culture et l'Économie - ADRICCE) of France and organized by the Beijing Art Museum, opened in Objat, a city in the Department of Corrèze, on the evening of February 13.

The month-long event, with 73



sets (85 pieces) of typical Chinese woodblock New Year prints, was timed to coincide with the Chinese Spring Festival to familiarize French visitors with traditional Chinese culture.

During the opening ceremony, Lu Hongwei and Qi Jixiang, President of the Professional Committee of Repair and Restoration of Cultural Relics of the Chinese Society of Cultural Relics, were interviewed by reporters from the French national TV channel FR3 and the Corrèze radio station TOTEM.

Lu said, “Cultural exchanges and cooperation between China and France are of great importance and to hold Chinese cultural events in small French

cities is especially important to help French people to get in touch with and know about traditional Chinese culture. This will enhance friendship between our two peoples and further promote bilateral relations. The CPAFFC has always worked hard to bring more and better traditional Chinese art to the French people and to all parts of France.”

Qi Jixiang gave a detailed briefing about the history and implied meaning of the Chinese New Year pictures and the importance of protection and inheritance of the art form.

Objat Mayor Philippe Vidau, stressed the significance of the first

ever exhibition of its type in the Mid-Pyrenees Region. The Objat City Library would hold a China Month during which about 100 books on China would be introduced to readers. He hoped that, in the future, more Chinese cultural activities would be held in the city.

Mme Colette Golfier, Vice President of the ADRICCE, said that traditional Chinese culture had distinctive features and unique charm and that the exhibitions and performances co-sponsored by her organization and the CPAFFC were much loved by both the French and Chinese people.

The success of this exhibition had once again proved that the people of our two countries had good feelings and respect for each other's cultures, which was a good foundation for cultural exchange projects such as the exhibition on ancient Chinese architecture to be held in Limoges and the China tour of the exhibition of French porcelain in China in 2015.

The French visitors at the opening ceremony said the New Year pictures with lively forms, bright colors and rich contents not only vividly reflected the Chinese people's aspirations for a better future, but also brought out the strong festive atmosphere of the Chinese lunar New Year and the charm of traditional Chinese culture.

Gerard Bonnet, President of the General Council of Correze, spoke highly of the event and invited the CPAFFC to organize more exhibitions in Tulle, capital of Correze.

That evening, the French TV Station, local radio stations and newspapers all gave coverage on the exhibition.

Meetings with French Cooperative Partners

The delegation had three working meetings during its stay in Paris.

The ACCR, a subordinate of the French Ministry of Culture, has over 40 group members in France and other European countries. It aims to arouse people's interest in ancient architecture and provide an exchange platform for artists of different countries to learn from each other by organizing a variety of modern art and cultural activities.

During the Fourth High-Level China-France Forum on Local Government Cooperation in France in November 2014, the CPAFFC signed a cooperation agreement with the ACCR and extended an invitation for an ACCR delegation to visit China in early December. With the help of the CPAFFC, the ACCR has established contacts and signed a letter of intent on cooperation with Wuxi Media Group.

The CPAFFC delegation and the ACCR discussed the possibility of organizing the Peking Opera Troupe of the National Academy of Chinese Theatre Arts to undertake a performance tour in France in August 2016. The ACCR said it would contact all cultural centers of its network and make active efforts to have it realized.

The SPF, one of the largest non-profit national philanthropic organizations in France, is CPAFFC's important cooperative partner in France. The two organizations have cooperated in carrying out a number of public welfare projects including providing emergency aid to Sichuan earthquake-hit areas, construction of Friendship Water Cellars and donation of school buses, and these projects have produced good

social effect.

Youth exchanges are an important component part of the cooperation between the two organizations, and there have been six exchanges of delegation visits so far. The CPAFFC delegation proposed that the SPF organize a 50-member French youth delegation to visit China in early August 2015.

As the SPF has close contacts with French local governments at various levels, the delegation on behalf of the CPAFFC also extended an invitation to the SPF to organize a mayoral group to visit China this October.

As 2015 is the 70th anniversary of the founding of the SPF, all kinds of celebrations are being held across France. The SPF wished that the CPAFFC would attend its World Conference in Marseilles from November 20 to 23 to discuss together with aid organizations from other countries the topics of strengthening cooperation and promoting world peace and development. The SPF also expressed the hope that the CPAFFC would organize a youth delegation to participate in the global youth gathering in Paris on August 19.

During its stay in Paris, the delegation also had a meeting with Jean-Claude Levy, representative of the CNCD, and discussed with him the details of the Summing-up Meeting of the Fourth High-Level China-France Forum on Local Government Cooperation jointly sponsored by the CNCD and the delegation of the Alsace Region. They also discussed relevant matters about holding the Fifth High Level China-France Forum on Local Government Cooperation in Chengdu in May 2016. ■

Ceramic Bas-Reliefs of the *Divine Comedy*: A Gift from Italian Master Engo Babini

Xu Nianrui

The aim of the China Jingdezhen International Ceramic Fair (CJICF), held annually since 2004, is to promote ceramic cultural exchanges and world ceramic development. Over a hundred foreign ceramists attended in 2009, when Engo Babini, a famous Italian carving master, introduced his elaborately created ceramic bas-reliefs of the *Divine Comedy* to enhance Sino-Italian friendship and ceramic cultural exchanges.

At the opening ceremony, he spoke on behalf of foreign participants, saying excitedly they had come to this wonderful fair in Jingdezhen, the home of porcelain, to display their best works. He expressed his sincere wish that all participants would take the opportunity to realize common development of the ceramic industry and culture.

The Italian craftsman said he looked forward to exchanges with ceramic experts in the city. In his words, oriental inspiration and western ideas should complement and be shared with each other so as to play a leading role in innovation and development of world ceramic culture and art.

The *Divine Comedy*, the epic poem written by the famous Italian poet Dante Alighieri between 1307 and 1321, is composed of 14,000 lines in three parts — Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. The poet uses fantastic stories

and metaphorical symbolisms to depict his experiences of travel in hell and purgatory to reveal the sin of theocracy in the church at that time and express people's opposition to the shackles of feudalism and evil forces within the church. The poem, written in rich and vivid language, played a great role in the development of the Renaissance and the productive forces of capitalism and in unifying Italy's ethnic languages and literature.

From 1991 to 1993, using great creativity and skill, Babini turned the infinite space and fantasies described in the *Divine Comedy* into a hundred ceramic bas-relief tiles, each depicting a theme from a section or chapter. His works vividly represent and interpret the great poem of Dante. The fact that he gave this ceramic works to Jingdezhen as a gift showed deep friendly sentiment towards the Chinese people.

During his visit to Jingdezhen, he had exchanges with many local experts. He knew that in the Yuan Dynasty, the famed Italian traveler Marco Polo had wanted to visit Jingdezhen, but failed due to poor transportation at that time; that in the Ming Dynasty, Matteo Ricci, a scientist and missionary, visited Jingdezhen; and that in the Qing Dynasty, Giuseppe Castiglione who served as a court painter introduced Western painting artistry to the Chinese senior

ceramic painters in the Management Office of the Qing Court and imperial kilns.

Hence, Babini had wished to visit Jingdezhen for many years and had finally realized his long cherished dream. During his stay, he visited the Porcelain Carving Workshop and the Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, had exchanges with ceramists, and appreciated their works mirroring famous Chinese poems and albums of famous carving works. He learned the different styles and specialties of ancient and modern works of Jingdezhen, and appreciated works by Chinese masters of ceramic art, such as Liu Yuanchang, Tang Ziqiang, Xiong Gangru and Professor Zhuo Guozhen of the Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute.

He felt their lifelike and vivid portrayal of things were characteristic of the unique charm of oriental art. Their modern ceramics were creative combinations of oriental inspiration and western ideas, he believed.

On October 20, the third day of the fair, municipal leaders gave Babini a ceramic sculpture entitled *Spring* by master Liu Yuanchang as a gift in return.

After returning home, to enhance Italian people's understanding of Chinese ceramics, Babini vigorously promoted the CJICF and publicized the great development of ceramic industry and culture in Jingdezhen. He

When Yangzhou Lacquerware Meets Japan

Gao Rongwei

Lacquerware is the most representative handicraft of Yangzhou with a history of more than two thousand years. It originated in the Warring States Period (475-221 BCE), thrived in the Han (206 BCE – 220 CE) and Tang (618 - 907) and peaked in the Ming (1368 - 1644) and Qing (1644 -1911) dynasties.

Yangzhou lacquer articles were sent to International Expos in 1910, 1915 and 2001 for display and won the golden award every time. As one of the most traditional Chinese crafts, Yangzhou lacquerware is renowned for its unique workmanship and superb artistry.

Well-known in Japan

Japanese lacquerware originates from China, having entered the country as early as 200 BCE along with the general introduction of Chinese culture during the Han Dynasty

Because of the similar geographical environment and a rich source of lacquer trees, Japan started to organize lacquer production and gradually formed its own unique industry. At first, Japanese lacquerware had only one color — red, because Japanese thought

food on the plate had a soul and red was considered its representative color. Later, black lacquer appeared, representing the color of the universe and was that of the soul.

In the Tang Dynasty, Yangzhou was a well-known developed city, an important port for foreign trade and a metropolis along China's southeast coast with thousands of permanent foreign residents. Its economic prosperity attracted many skillful craftsmen who contributed to its highly developed handicraft industry. Lacquer-making craftsmanship including colored drawing, carved red, bodiless and mother-of-pearl inlaid lacquerware reached very high level.

Yangzhou's specific natural environment and its long and rich culture produced an eminent monk Jianzhen who managed to reach Japan by sea at the sixth attempt to bring the splendid culture of the prosperous Tang Dynasty in 753.

Jianzhen, Abbot of the Daming Temple, took with him several dozen pieces of lacquerware made in Yangzhou and many disciples and craftsmen. His disciples not only had a thor-

ough and profound understanding of Buddhism, but were also well versed in Buddhism art such as temple building, statue molding and painting, while the large number of craftsmen introduced their lacquerware skills.

Thus, Jianzhen was revered by Japanese people as the "Founder of Japanese Vinaya School", "Ancestor of Japanese Medicine", and "Benefactor of Japanese Culture".

Fight Over Origin of Lacquer Between China and Japan

On the basis of traditional Chinese craftsmanship, Japan developed its own lacquer craftwork technique by using gold and silver as decorative patterns, which they call "maki-e". To make such lacquer objects, gold or silver powder is added to the lacquer liquid, and the objects are then polished when the lacquer coating is dry. Sometimes it uses mother-of-pearl and filamentary silver to embed flowers and birds as well as auspicious patterns.

After the 10th century, Japanese lacquer gradually formed its unique "Japan style" and when these works were brought to China they were loved

also made quite a few ceramic carving works to further ceramic art exchanges between Italy and China. In 2011, he took 18 pieces from his ceramic carvings to the CJICF, which were displayed in the China Jingdezhen Porcelain Museum and received high praise from Chinese and foreign craftsmen

and experts.

During the fair, he expressed his willingness to continue to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with Chinese ceramists, create works reflecting the new times and promote common prosperity of ceramic culture and art of Italy and China.

Note: The CJICF is hosted by China's Ministry of Commerce, China Light Industry Association, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade and the Jiangxi Provincial People's Government, and involving participation by ceramic manufacturers and buyers from China and other countries.

by Chinese emperors. Qing rulers not only purchased them in large numbers, but also set up a lacquerware workshop at court.

Modern Japanese lacquer production is market-oriented and designed for people's daily life, and at the same time continues to expand its application domain. Ishikawa Prefecture known as the "home of lacquerware" in Japan has a lacquer making history of more than 600 years. Its lacquer articles are famous at home and abroad for their solidity and resplendent characteristics.

Modern Japanese lacquer is rich and colorful in expression and innovative in techniques. It shows the delicate and exquisite national character as well as the concise, bright and lively features of modern times. Japan has made fast progress and become a major lacquer producing country. People know that the word "Japan" is the name of the country, but few have known that "japan" originally means lacquer.

Chinese academics holds that the lacquer culture originates in China and the Japanese lacquer developed under Chinese influence and that lacquer trees only grow in the Qishui River Valley of China's Shaanxi Province. However, their Japanese counterparts don't agree. They assert that Japan has its own independent tradition of lacquer culture which has emerged and developed without Chinese influence; lacquerware is a symbol of the Japanese national culture.

China has neither applied for a patent on lacquer culture from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, nor asked Japan to withdraw its inappropriate claims. Therefore, Japan, as a rising star, can continue to own, develop and further

improve its lacquer techniques and make greater contributions to humankind.

"Home Visit" of Jianzhen Statue

With the concerted efforts of both China and Japan, the Lacquer Statue of Jianzhen enshrined in the Toshodai Temple in Nara made a "home visit" to China in 1980. The activity was held to commemorate this great messenger of cultural exchange.

The news that the Lacquer Statue of Jianzhen would return to Yangzhou created a big stir in the city. The statue enshrined in the Toshodai Temple is a dry lacquer statue of the Tang Dynasty. It is said that, after Jianzhen passed away, one of his disciples who was good at lacquer art made the statue in memoriam. It is 84 centimeters high and looks very lifelike, embodying the resolute, steadfast, decisive, serene and respectful life of the monk.

The statue in kasaya with closed eyes and smiling lips and hands on knees is valued as a national treasure of Japan.

Remembering the contribution the monk made more than a thousand years ago to cultural exchanges between China and Japan, the people of his hometown gave his statue a grand reception. The marigold yellow vehicle carrying it started from Shanghai and drove slowly on the highway lined with willow trees on both sides. It passed through cities of Changzhou and Zhenjiang, crossed over the Yangtze River and finally arrived in Yangzhou.

At the ancient Guazhou Ferry used by Jianzhen three times on his journey, people waved Chinese and Japanese national flags, banners, bouquets and ribbons; in the urban area of Yangzhou, tens of thousands of people

lined the streets.

Kyojun Morimoto, Elder of the Toshodai Temple of Nara, who escorted the statue could not hold back his tears and time and again expressed his gratitude for the kindness of Yangzhou people. He said in excitement, "A spring rain welcomed Jianzhen when he landed in China yesterday, and today the sunshine greeted him in his hometown. It is such perfect weather for him to see his hometown after over a thousand years!"

The statue's return gave Yangzhou an opportunity for the first time to make a replica. Zhang Changming, former Deputy Director of the Yangzhou Lacquerware Factory, recalled that having obtained the consent of the Japanese side, lacquer artists and sculptors in Yangzhou applied the same technique in the reproduction with full sincerity.

There is a sitting statue of the Vairocana Buddha enshrined in the Toshodai Temple. It was made by Yijing, a disciple of Jianzhen, together with some Japanese monks, and, with a height of 339 centimeters, is Japan's biggest dry lacquer statue by far. Its calm and solemn facial expression, full and grand figure and the soft and natural folds of its kasaya, are characteristic of Tang Dynasty Buddha statues and in conformity with the spirit of the Ritsu school of Buddhism.

It also suggests that the statue was built after Jianzhen and his disciples introduced dry lacquer statue techniques to Japan. On the right side of the statue, there is a standing figure of the pharmacist Nyorai, and on its left, the Thousand-hand Bodhisattva. The three lacquer statues are considered "national treasures" of Japan.

Statues of the Vairocana Buddha and Jianzhen are the finest works of bodiless lacquer statues. They are extremely precious objects of cultural heritage in the history of art and lacquer and crystallization of cultural exchanges between China and Japan. It also indicates that the lacquer craftsmanship of Yangzhou has had great influence on Japan.

Ever-Burning Stone Lanterns

During Jianzhen Statue's tour in Yangzhou, Elder Morimoto said emotionally, "The year before last, Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping satisfied my wish to accompany the statue on its home visit. I felt overwhelmed afterwards and didn't know what to bring to repay the Chinese people." Later the Elder decided to give Yangzhou saplings of sakura (cherry tree) and a stone lantern as gifts.

Pointing at the stone lantern that had just been put in place in front of the Jianzhen Memorial Hall, he said, "This is carved out of Japan's finest Aji stone in the style of the Tenpyo Period — the 8th century when Japan was greatly influenced by Chinese culture. It has been reworked three times for perfection. The stone lantern is a symbol of Sino-Japanese friendship and I wish its light will never extinguish."

The Statue of Jianzhen enshrined in the Toshodai Temple would once again visit Yangzhou in November 2010, delighting senior craftsmen of the Yangzhou Lacquerware Factory. The year 2010 saw the 30th anniversary of the Statue of Jianzhen's return to China and the 1,300th anniversary of Japan moving its capital to Heijo-kyo (now Nara).

On May 23 of that year, Yangzhou formally established friendship-city relations with Nara and invited the Statue of Jianzhen to make another trip to see the great changes of his hometown after a 30-year break. To mark the occasion, Yangzhou Lacquerware Factory made a batch of scaled down statues of Jianzhen — 1,000 sitting and 1,000 standing ones. Although these statues were much smaller than the original one, the techniques used were the same.

In April 2007 during his visit to Japan, the then Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said in his speech that the lights of the stone lanterns, one in the Daming Temple in Yangzhou and one in the Toshodai Temple in Nara had been burning for 27 years, which symbolized the prospect of long-lasting friendship between China and Japan.

To enhance friendly exchanges between Yangzhou and Nara, craftsmen of Yangzhou Lacquerware Factory were assigned a glorious task of making a statue of Jianzhen the Distinguished Monk as a gift to Japan. After repeated modifications, a final design was completed. Jianzhen would stand on a ship-like base. The total height was 2.17 meters, of which Jianzhen's height was 1.65 meters. It took over a month from design to completion with the participation of 150 craftsmen and technicians. The technique of "dry lacquer statue" introduced to Japan in the Tang Dynasty was adopted. It is said it will not crack in a thousand years.

The Statue of Jianzhen made by Yangzhou lacquer masters "sailed" to Japan in June 2007, which was reported by the Japanese media, playing an important role in deepening friendship between the two countries. ■

The Exhibition of Photos and Gifts of Zhangzhou's Foreign Affairs Activities sponsored by the Zhangzhou Municipal People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (ZMPAFFC) opened in the Zhangzhou Archives on January 15. The permanent exhibition is divided into two parts covering friendship city activities and international exchanges.

On display are over 200 photos taken and more than 70 gifts received during the city's external exchanges since 1985 when Zhangzhou was upgraded from a prefecture-level city to a full city. The exhibits vividly represent exciting moments of the city's external exchanges, show the friendship between the people of Zhangzhou and other countries and reflect the development of the city's foreign affairs work.

The exhibition, open to the public free of charge, aims to increase the public's knowledge about the city's foreign affairs work so as to gain their support, and inspire



Exhibition of Photos and Gifts of Zhangzhou's Foreign Affairs Activities

Zhang You

them to be actively involved in the Belt and Road Initiatives to write a new chapter in the city's opening up.

Zhangzhou's First International Friendship City

Which was the first foreign city to form friendship-city ties with Zhangzhou? A yellowing old photo displayed for the first time provides the answer.

In the 1980s, the early days of reform and opening up, there existed a strong atmosphere of friendship between China and Japan. Zhangzhou, a city that had just begun its contacts with foreign countries, strived to open itself to the world through friendship-

Zhangzhou and Isahaya of Japan signing the agreement on the establishment of friendship-city relations on April 15, 1991



city ties with other countries. With the help of Fujian Province and Nagasaki Prefecture, Zhangzhou and Isahaya City opened friendly contacts. On April 15, 1991, the two sides signed the agreement on the establishment of friendship-city relations and have since carried out frequent exchanges and cooperation in the fields of economy, science, technology, culture and education.

Why Did the Australian Prime Minister Come to Zhangzhou in 1986?

On May 24, 1986, the then Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke stood in the front of the rostrum with a

speech draft in his hands. A red banner with white-colored words both in Chinese and English — International Wool Co., Ltd. — and Chinese and Australian national flags were impressively hung on the wall. This photo recorded Hawke's attendance at the unveiling of the International Wool Co., Ltd. in Zhangzhou.

In 1985, Zhangzhou as one of China's first coastal economic open zones got a fresh start in its opening up to the outside world. Its external contacts became increasingly active and cooperation with foreign cities expanded to cover more areas. Zhangzhou Woolen Mill and Macquarie Group

On May 24, 1986, Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke attending the opening ceremony of International Wool Co., Ltd. in Zhangzhou during his official visit to China



Ltd. of Australia jointly set up the International Wool Co., Ltd. as the first joint venture in Zhangzhou.

Philippine President Corazon Aquino's Visit to Zhangzhou

In April 1988, during her state visit to China, Philippine President Corazon Aquino made a special trip to Zhangzhou to trace her roots and pay respect to her ancestors. On April 17, she planted a Chinese fir (arau caria cunninghamii) in Hongjian Village, her ancestral home. Today, this tree of friendship has grown tall with luxuriant leaves.

Visits of Narcissus Princess of Hawaii in Zhangzhou

The contacts between Zhangzhou and Honolulu date back to over 200 years ago. The ancestors of Zhangzhou people took narcissus bulbs to Honolulu and planted them there. Since then, narcissus has become one of the important ties of cultural and business exchanges between the two places. Starting from 1950, the Chinese Cham-

On June 12, 2008, the delegation of Hawaii "Narcissus Queen" visiting Zhangzhou



On April 17, 1988, Philippine President Corazon Aquino planting a Chinese fir (arau caria cunninghamii) in Hongjian Village

ber of Commerce of Hawaii has been holding the contest of Narcissus Queen and Narcissus Princess every year. On March 4, 2013 Zhangzhou and Honolulu formally twinned as friendship cities.

On display are precious photos of visits to Zhangzhou by successive delegations of Narcissus Queens. In 1988 a nearly 100-member Narcissus Queens delegation came to Zhangzhou and stayed at the Overseas Chinese Travel Service (now the Overseas Chinese Hotel). People crowded

the street where the hotel was located, waiting to catch a glimpse of Narcissus Queens.

Narcissus and Tulips

In recent years, Zhangzhou and Wageningen of the Netherlands have kept close contacts thanks to flowers. Since 2006, delegations of Wageningen have visited Zhangzhou eight times. The increased exchanges in the areas of flowers, food, education and manufacturing industry between the two cities have brought about the establishment of friendship-city ties.

At the exhibition, there is a photo dated April 8, 2012 showing crowds cheering and confetti fired from small cannons showering down at the unveiling of the Sino-Europe Agricultural Development Center (SEADC). The SEADC, built with investments from Wageningen University and Research Center, the International Association of Horticultural Producers and the Sino-Europe Technology Promotion Center, formally went into operation in the Zhangzhou Development Zone.

Aalt Dijkhuizen, President of Wageningen University, inaugurated



Ni Yuefeng, Deputy Governor of Fujian, and Aalt Dijkhuizen, President of Wageningen University of the Netherlands, unveiling the plaque of the SEADC on April 8, 2011

the center. Chris Buijink, Vice Minister of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation of the Netherlands, and other Dutch friends officiated at the inauguration. The establishment of the SEADC has facilitated training of qualified personnel for agriculture and food industry for Zhangzhou.

Thanks to Friendship Cities, Foreigners Have Become China Experts

To strengthen contacts and cooperation between Wageningen and Zhangzhou, the city has sent delegations many times.

In 2011, a Wageningen city delegation visited the “Garden on the Sea” — Gulangyu Island of Xiamen. The guests were attracted by the buildings there of architectural styles of different countries. They strolled to the Haoyue (Bright Moon) Park where they saw a tall stone statue of Zheng Chenggong by the seaside.

Mayor Geert van Rumud, head of the delegation, asked with curiosity whom it was. Lian Sile, Deputy Director of the Zhangzhou Municipal

Foreign and Overseas Affairs Office, replied: “He was a Chinese national hero in the Ming Dynasty. He made great achievements in Taiwan.” Mayor Lumud suddenly realized, saying humorously, “I see. He is Zheng Chenggong. Our ancestors suffered defeat at his hands.”

In his contacts with Zhangzhou, Mayor Lumud had become very interested in China and had gained much knowledge about Chinese history and traditional culture.

Barometer of China-Japan Relations

On the opening day of the exhibition, a gift from Date City of Hokkaido,

Japan aroused people’s interest.

Date City and Zhangzhou began their friendly contacts in the autumn of 2005, and formally formed friendship-city ties on April 7, 2010. This exhibit, a desk clock, was a gift to the ZM-PAFFC from the Date Japan-China Friendship Association. The guide said humorously: “In 2012, the 40th anniversary of the normalization of China-Japan diplomatic relations, Japan’s unilateral action — ‘islands purchase’ — seriously damaged the Sino-Japanese relations. As if understanding human nature, the clock stopped unexpectedly. This year as the tense bilateral relations eased a bit, the clock began ticking again.”

Li Hong, Deputy Director of the Fujian Provincial Foreign Affairs Office, looked at the clock carefully and then uttered, “Look! The clock shows the wrong time. It seems that China and Japan are out of step with each other in their relationship.” This humorous remark made everyone laugh. ■

Mayor Li Jianguo and Mayor Geert van Rumud drinking a toast at the signing ceremony of the agreement on the establishment of friendship-city relations between Zhangzhou and Wageningen on May 12, 2009



Ten Doctors Awarded 2015 Most Beautiful Doctors of China's Overseas Medical-Aid Missions

Our Staff Reporter

A commonweal activity to commend Chinese doctors and medical teams on overseas medical-aid missions that have made prominent contributions to global medical and health services, especially those battling the Ebola epidemic, was launched in January.

Dubbed the 2015 “Boundless Love — Finding Most Beautiful Doctors of China’s Overseas Medical-Aid Missions”, it was jointly sponsored by the CPAFFC, National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC) and the Health Department of the General Logistics Department of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA).

China has sent over 20,000 doctors and nurses on medical-aid missions to more than 60 countries and regions in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Oceania since 1963 when the first medical team went to Africa. Braving hardships, these medical workers displayed high medical skills and noble medical ethics, helping not only to promote medical and health development in the recipient countries and improve public health, but also deepened the friendship between the people of China and these countries. Their actions show the Chinese people love peace and cherish life.

The awards ceremony was held in Beijing on March 24. Ten Chinese medical workers received the “Award of Most Beautiful Doctors of China’s Overseas Medical-Aid Missions”; 10 more won the Nomination Award; the World Health Organization received the “International Health Promotion Award”; Doctor Xu Xun, who died of illness during his mission in Mozambique, received a posthumous Special Award.

CPAFFC President Li Xiaolin, NHFPC Vice Minister Ma Xiaowei and Deputy Chief Liu Dianrong of the Health Department of PLA’s General Logistics Department presented the awards.

The following are brief introductions of the recipients of the main award.

Wang Yu

Wang Yu (male), associate chief physician, is Deputy Head of the Emergency Department of the First People’s Hospital of Yueyang, Hunan Province. He went to Sierra Leone in April 2013, working as a member of the 16th medical team on a two-year medical-aid mission. With a strong sense of mission and responsibility and under extremely difficult conditions, he worked with selfless devotion risking his life in the fight against Ebola. He organized lectures on health and prevention of infectious diseases for the staff of the Chinese Embassy and management personnel of Chinese companies, and went, together with specialists of China Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and experts from Hunan, to remote camps of Chinese companies several times to conduct field investigation, report on the epidemic situation and introduce preventive and disease countermeasures through popularizing knowledge on prevention of common infectious diseases such as malaria, typhoid fever, hepatitis and lassa fever, etc.



Lu Hongzhou

Lu Hongzhou (male), chief physician and professor, is Secretary of the CPC Committee of the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center. He joined the first training team to Sierra Leone in November 2014, working as a medical expert and serving as the deputy secretary of the team's CPC Branch.

Lu Hongzhou and his teammates worked at the forefront of every epidemic area in Sierra Leone despite the harsh conditions and with no thought to personal safety. He also shared his rich clinical experience in treatment of infectious diseases. His fluent English greatly assisted with training of local teachers. Considering the actual conditions of the trainees, who were grassroots medical workers, public health personnel, primary-level organizers and community volunteers, the training courses were conducted in plain language with a variety of drills and operational practices, imparting key knowledge on the prevention and control of Ebola. He worked out the training program and compiled teaching materials in English, applying China's experience in prevention and control of acute infectious disease to deal



with the Ebola epidemic, which yielded good results and was highly praised by local and international organizations as well as the President of Sierra Leone.

The two Chinese medical teams, with a total of 28 members, trained over 4,000 social workers and education personnel for Ebola prevention and control, including more than 3,200 community medical workers and organizers and over 1,000 professionals, covering urban and rural areas of western Sierra Leone.

Li Jin

Li Jin (male), chief physician, is Vice President of 302 Military Hospital of China. He served as the head of the first medical-aid team to Sierra Leone from September to November 2014.

In September, he headed a 30-member medical team to carry out the aid mission of prevention and control of Ebola. They courageously rose to the challenge and successfully accomplished the mission. By making full use of his professional advantages, he led the team to carry out work on hospital transformation, process design, personnel training and establishment of regulations according to the disinfection and isolation requirements set for infectious disease hospitals and turned the hospital into a specialized one for admitting patients with deadly infectious diseases within a week. Professional training for local medical staff was carried out to improve their knowledge of prevention and control of infectious diseases and raise their professional skills. The courses



were taught by methods of demonstration, group exercises and videos. In all, 68 categories of process specification and rules and regulations with a total of 243 articles have been developed concerning medical record keeping, drug and infection control and emergency treatment, etc. Medical care plans such as reception procedures, diagnosis and treatment regimen, patient education and discharge processes were

greatly improved. He worked in the hospital every day and made rounds of the wards every week. He was always the first to enter the in-patient area and took his turns on duty. He not only performed well his role as the team leader, but also as a member, coordinating patient transshipment, specimen collection, body transport and guarantee of water and electricity supply. His exemplary role spurred all the team members. In the two months after the team's arrival in Sierra Leone, the hospitalization capacity of the target hospital ranked second in

Wang Zhenchang

Wang Zhenchang (male), chief physician, is Vice President of the Beijing Friendship Hospital. He was the leader of the 24th Medical Team sent to Guinea in August 2014. He led a nine-member team to the Ebola epidemic area and carried out a smooth transition with the 23rd Medical Team.

The medical team fully cooperated with the Ministry of Health of Guinea and the China-Guinea Friendship Hospital (CGFH). It allocated equipment and instruments it had brought from China to the CGFH, greatly improving its hardware situation. The team built an International Medical Center in the CGFH. Through actively applying for cooperation-fund projects and making the most of China's medical experts and education resources, the team trained clinicians for Guinea and received high acknowledgement and great support from the Ministry of Health of Guinea and the CGFH president.

Since the outbreak of Ebola, the Chinese Government has sent four batches of medical experts to assist overseas Chinese in Guinea to fight Ebola. Wang Zhenchang, who also served as head of the expert group for training, provided strong support for the experts. He contacted the local govern-

ment to implement various training programs. Having taken into consideration the actual situation of Chinese companies in Guinea, he added a training program for their Chinese employees in addition to training local people. This greatly ensured health of the Chinese people concerned. Training courses have been organized respectively in the CGFH, the People's Palace, Ministry of Health, Ministry of International Cooperation and other major functional departments, with effective results. Nearly 2,000 local people have been trained for Ebola prevention and control work.



Wang Jing

Wang Jing (female), is a nurse of the Beijing Friendship Hospital. She went to Guinea in August 2014 with the 24th medical team, working as nurse-in-charge.

She volunteered to join the first medical team to go to Guinea after the

outbreak of the Ebola virus together with nine other members. She was put in charge of the team's secretarial, publicity and disinfection work. She organized disinfection of their residence regularly. In the hot and humid climate of Guinea, she wore protective clothes



and carried equipment weighing more than 10 kilograms on her back to disinfect their living environment. Being the team secretary, she had a lot of paperwork to do every day, involving minutes of the team committee meetings, reports

of team affairs and publicity materials. During the outbreak of Ebola, the team members were divided into two groups, working in turns in the China-Guinea Hospital. Wang Jing was in the second group because of the particularity of

work in the operation room. She visited the operation room in her spare time to learn about the actual conditions from the paramedics there and imparted her knowledge on nursing to them without reservation. This won her high praise.

Zhang Yueming

Zhang Yueming (male), deputy chief physician, is deputy head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the First Hospital affiliated to Suzhou University. He was a member of the 10th medical team, working in Guyana from June 2012 to June 2014.

Zhang Yueming has solid theoretical foundation, strong professional skills, excellent communication ability and high English proficiency. While in the Georgetown Public Hospital, he worked closely with colleagues, to successfully carry out minimal invasive gynecologic surgeries such as complex laparoscopic ovarian cyst removal and hysterectomy, as well as all kinds of difficult obstetrics and gynecological surgery, setting several records in the medical history of Guyana. His high professional skills, strict working style and good English communication ability won him the trust of the Guyanese people, the hospital and the Ministry of Health. Four months after his arrival in the country, the Ministry of Health of Guyana and the Georgetown Public Hospital invited Zhang Yueming to work as the head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the Georgetown Public Hospital, a member of its medical advisory committee and the ministry's committee on maternal mortality. He took charge of the general management of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and participated in formulation of national health policies. During his tenure, Zhang Yueming vigorously promoted departmental standardization, improved patient treatment, optimized the layout of maternity wards, set guidelines for diagnosis and treatment, established and improved the management system and strengthened medical staff training. His efforts achieved a record low number of maternity deaths in Georgetown Public Hospital, resulting in a sharp drop of the maternity mortality rate of the country. In 2013, Guyana met the United Nations Millennium



Development Goals for the first time. His work received high acknowledgment from the Guyanese Government, the public and media.

Zhang Yueming was also appointed as instructor and examiner of the resident doctors' training program of Guyana's Ministry of Health and gave public lectures on obstetrics and gynecology for the country's continuing education to train local doctors together with American colleagues. In September 2013, sent by the Ministry of Health of Guyana, he visited the Cleveland Clinic of the United States on behalf of the Georgetown Hospital to carry out academic exchanges, during which he gave lectures to American resident doctors.

Zhang Yueming, together with his teammates, traveled to remote forest areas of Guyana many times to provide free medical consultation and treatment, becoming very popular. His excellent work and outstanding contributions won him high recognition and praise from the Guyanese Government. Before returning home, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana conferred on him a Certificate of Honor.

Wang Jinhua

Wang Jinhua (female), chief superintendent nurse, is head nurse of the VIP Clinic of Changzheng Hospital affiliated to the Second Military Medical University. From March 2013 to March 2014, she worked in the Royal Gendarmerie General Hospital of Cambodia on a medical assistance mission and served as head of the expert group of the Changzheng Hospital. Under her leadership, the entire group of experts overcame unimaginable hardships and successfully accomplished the mission of medical aid to Cambodia with high professional skills and noble medical ethics and in the spirit of healing the wounded and rescuing the dying. They won respect

and praise from the Cambodian Government and people and were awarded the peace medal and the China-Cambodia Peace and Friendship Medal.

Due to the lack of medical resources, many regular examinations could not be carried out in hospitals in Cambodia. The medical team under the leadership of Wang Jinhua, adapted to local conditions and carried out training in various forms to help local doctors quickly master appropriate techniques and advanced medical concepts. For over a year, the medical team provided treatment for nearly 10,000 patients, cured



more than a thousand people suffering from infectious, common and frequently-occurring disease, and successfully performed about 200 operations, including highly difficult ones such as cerebral trauma, radical tumor resection, aneurysm incarcerated operation and reduction of fracture.

Zhai Wenliang

Zhai Wenliang (male), chief physician, is deputy head of the Department of Orthopedics of the 175th Hospital of the PLA. He was the head of the 16th team sent to Zambia on a medical-aid mission in January 2013. He and his 10 team members worked in the Maina Soko Military Hospital for a year. Faced with backward medical facilities and inadequate sanitation, Zhai Wenliang worked hard to improve and create conditions to popularize medical and health care knowledge and carefully summarized their experience working in Zambia. The book *Military Doctor's Handbook on Medical-Aid*

Mission to Zambia compiled under his leadership, provides an introduction and multi-aspect analysis of the medical-aid work in Zambia, providing good reference for future medical teams.

In his year-long work in Maina Soko Military Hospital, Zhai Wenliang successfully carried out the hospital's first colonoscopy examination and biopsy, repaired the 24-hour dynamic electrocardiogram (ECG) and the treadmill exercise ECG, put in place the first ultrasonic image and text workstation



in Zambia, maintained the water treatment system of hemodialysis for extended service, performed 38 surgical operations and gave emergency treatment to over 100 orthopedic patients. His excellent work won him high recognition from the Zambian government and the military.

Huang Fan

Huang Fan (male), is a physician of the First Affiliated Hospital of the Anhui Medical University and a member of the first medical-aid team working in South Sudan from December 2012 to January 2014.

The Juba Teaching Hospital where the medical team worked is directly under the Ministry of Health, and the largest and the only teaching hospital in the country. The conditions there are simple and crude. It lacks auxiliary examination instruments and essential drugs. There are high risks of being infected with HIV/AIDS and falciparum malaria.

Immediately on their arrival in January 2013, the medical team joined in the clinical work, making the rounds of the wards, seeing patients at the outpatient department, performing surgical operations and giving emergency treatment to patients. They did all they could to cure every patient.

In June 2013, a patient with a breast tumor was transferred from a local hospital to the Juba Hospital. Her

condition was bad as the surface of the tumor had been ulcerated and infected and was bleeding. With limited auxiliary examination equipment and a shortage of blood supply, the Chinese medical team still decided to perform tumor resection on the patient. Huang Fan and another doctor of the team did the operation. The patient received careful nursing from the medical team after the operation and soon recovered. The success of this operation removed the doubts of local medical staff about the technical expertise and group spirit of the Chinese team and received high praises and full acknowledgement of the Juba Teaching Hospital.

Besides working in the Juba Teaching Hospital, Huang Fan and his teammates went to South Sudan's oil-producing regions and villages to give free medical treatments three times to several hundred patients. Those who needed surgical operations came to the Juba Teaching Hospital to seek further treatment from the Chinese doctors.



They all received operations with no case of complications or medical negligence. This has made the medical team known to more people in South Sudan.

Huang Fan sorted out a complete set of surgical instruments that suited his usual practice, drafted in English operation consent forms for different categories of surgical operations, and figured out a way to communicate with local patients. He also got local doctors involved in the work and made sure that every operation would have the participation of at least one young backbone local doctor. In this way he hoped they would pass on what they had learned to more doctors in the hospital.

Wang Zhihui

Wang Zhihui (male), is Director of the General Planning Division of the Health Department of the Logistics Department of the Navy. He is also in charge of the Navy's overseas medical-aid services. Between 2010 and 2014, by overcoming such difficulties as an ailing father and an unattended child, he worked four times for a total of 352 days on the Navy's hospital ship Peace Ark which sailed to 18 countries in Africa, Southeast Asia and South Pacific, covering 110,000 kilometers (58,890

nautical miles) on humanitarian medical services and emergency relief missions. The hospital ship provided treatment to 72,812 foreign patients and performed 647 surgical operations. On the last three missions, as the head of the medical group of the Mission Command Post and liaison officer on medical affairs, he made specific plans for organization of medical service and medical relief work and contributed to the success of these missions. He has participated in four missions of the hos-



pital ship out of the total five. As one who helped create and participated in the medical services of the Peace Ark, he made outstanding contribution to the success of the hospital ship's overseas medical missions. ■

Xin Nian Hao!

Julie Brink (Denmark)

Happy New Year – *Xin nian hao!*

This is heard again and again in the Concert Hall in Aarhus. Both Chinese and Danes greet one another, and all are here to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

It all started in humble surroundings in 2002. It was in a shopping mall in the outskirts of Copenhagen. In spite of lack of space and facilities the celebration was a relative success, and the interest to follow up was definitely there. The event moved to different places in Copenhagen, but it wasn't easy to find a good venue.

In our association we had a vision to make it a great event for all of Denmark. In 2005 we decided to leave Copenhagen and the event there and start another place.

We found a good partner in the Concert Hall of Aarhus. It is a very convenient location to cover all of Denmark as Aarhus is located centrally in Denmark whereas Copenhagen though capital is at the outskirts. Aarhus is also the second biggest city of Denmark.

But most important the facilities are in top. It is the biggest concert house in Northern Europe, and we have plenty of room both in the foyer and on the balcony. As an example there are two stages in the foyer area, and we are able to alternate. That gives a good flow.

The celebration is always on a Sunday to enable guests from all of Denmark to attend. Usually around



The Concert Hall in Aarhus, Denmark crowded with people

4,000 – 5,000 comes during the day. That is quite a lot! It is both Danes and Chinese, old and young. Many families attend as it is free. That it is free is important to us, we wish all should be welcome and have a happy day.

The cultural meeting is alpha and omega of the celebration. We all meet one another with interest and curiosity and a wish to become a little bit wiser. It is a common ground where we meet on equal terms.

Part of it is that both Danes and Chinese get inspiration from one another. In the concept is that we also have Danes practicing Chinese culture. For instance Danes show *taiji*, and acupuncture is demonstrated by Danes. Danes play mahjong – they are quite good at it and invite passing Chinese

to join them. That is also the cultural meeting.

But of course there are many Chinese as well showing what they can. This couldn't be done without a lot of Chinese willing to lay an enormous effort in showing the Danish people Chinese culture. We are very thankful to the Chinese citizens for their support.

Then the Chinese Embassy ensures that there is a new high quality performance every year. There is a troupe in Denmark for all the New Year's celebrations around the country, and they give us part of their show. That is a mainstay and a treat.

In short without the backing of the Chinese community and government it would be a very sorry event!

But performances are one thing.

The idea is also to have some of the atmosphere of a Chinese market. Naturally food is important, and we work hard to make it authentic, but here we could do better.

Then we have stalls selling different goods as the ones one could image. But we mix the cards and have a wider definition. Only requirement is that it should be related to China.

As an example the bank Forex attends because it has many Chinese customers. It has a stall and hands out yellow balloons. Lebara is there and gives away prepaid cards to enable guests to phone home to China for free to send a New Year greeting to family and friends. The Casino advertises their special New Year event and gives away free entrance cards.

Besides stalls there are many other things to catch the eye. We have different exhibitions. It could be paintings or a photo exhibition, but also other angles such as demonstration of what the Chinese invention paper can be used artistically.

We have a children's corner where children can try to use chopsticks or

learn to count to ten in Chinese. Naturally there are demonstrations of *taiji* and acupuncture and mahjong and calligraphy and hand pulled noodles ...

And each year there is something new relating to this year's animal according to the Chinese zodiac calendar. Lately we even had live animals – snakes, horses and goats.

It is a big job coordinating it all, and nobody is paid. It is all done by volunteers. But three things make it worth it all:

One is that it is right in the eye fulfilling our purpose as an association.

The second is the sight of so many happy guests.

And thirdly the income is welcome. We earn relatively little because our priority is that it should be free. Those who have a professional stall pay us 100 euro, and we earn a little selling goods and arranging the lottery. All in all the income is around 1,500-2,000 euro.

Thanks to support from the municipality of Aarhus and the Concert Hall we pay no rent. That is also one of the reasons for our choice of location.

Naturally the Chinese New Year is still celebrated in Copenhagen, both with a public event organized by the Chinese community and by a closed performance arranged by the Chinese Embassy. Besides more and more municipalities with friendly relations with China started to celebrate the Chinese New Year

But the biggest event is in Aarhus.

The Friendship Association Denmark-China

Established in 1952, Danmark-Kina is one of the oldest friendship associations with China in the world. We are unpolitical and financially independent.

We have many activities. Many are among the usual of friendship associations as for example: publish a magazine (the biannual *Danmark-Kina*), arrange public meetings, assist organizing events and run a subscription department for Chinese periodicals. More unusual could be we rent a Chinese dragon, organize boxes for schools learning about China etc.

The celebration of the Chinese New Year in Musikhuset Aarhus is in a league of its own.

How It All Started

The first public celebration of the Chinese New Year in Denmark took place in 2002. It was to mark that it was 100 years since the first Chinese immigrated. Before 1902 a few official Chinese delegations and some sailors visited Copenhagen, but they all left. It had been noticed that the Chinese aroused great interest, though.

At that time in Europe it was popular to watch "exotic" people. So accordingly the Danish entertainment park Tivoli

imported different groups of people, and in 1902 it was time for the Chinese. A caravan of 34 Chinese – men, women and children – arrived and was fenced in at Tivoli. The fence was there for a good reason: customers had to pay to see the Chinese. That was in their own interest as they were paid for being there.

The Chinese created a small village with handicrafts and shows. It was extremely popular, no less than 135,320

tickets were sold during the summer.

In spite of the fence what can happen did. Some of the Chinese fell in love with Danes. So when the season ended they stayed. The first marriage between a Chinese man and a Danish woman took place in 1904. Others stayed to work in Denmark, and all in all half of the group became Danish citizens.

Now there are around 10,000 Chinese in Denmark.

Observers Report on the Election of President of The Republic of Uzbekistan

Sun Chi

I. Things You Might Not Know

1. What is it like in Uzbekistan?

Located in a narrow stretch of land from east to west, Uzbekistan has the largest population in Central Asia. Renowned as one of the most important countries along the ancient Silk Road, it has a rich culture and history.

The cotton and wheat designs on its national emblem introduce Uzbekistan as a great agricultural country. Given the cold weather upon our arrival in late March [1], we were amazed to see ample supply of fresh vegetables and fruits contrary to the stereotypical impression of a dry inland country.

It is true that the best way to get to know a country is to pay a visit. The star and crescent on the emblem reflect its Islam beliefs. We visited the capital, Tashkent, and the ancient town Khiva full of mosques, some newly built while others have remained empty for centuries; either way, one can easily imagine how it would feel to be part of a grand religious service with 5,000 worshippers.

It was intriguing to see how a religious country with thousands of years of history would deal with a new political system typified by this presidential election.

2. What was significant about the presidential election in Uzbekistan?

The election process started on December 26, 2014 with four candi-



International observer Hu Chunmei and others checking the ballot paper

dates — incumbent President Islam Karimov nominated by the Liberal Democratic Party, Hatamjon Ketmonov from the People's Democratic Party, Akmal Saidov from the Milliy Tiklanish Democratic Party, and Nariman Umarov from the Adolat Social Democratic Party.

The Central Election Commission (CEC) organized 9,058 polling stations, including 44 in Uzbek representative offices in foreign countries. The Regional Election Commissions recruited more than 90,000 people to ensure a smooth process.

About 300 international observers were invited from 43 countries and five international institutions such

as the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The CPAFFC delegation visited six polling stations in Urgench on March 28 and observed the ballot counting at Section 22 later that evening, and attended a press conference on March 29 when the CEC announced that 91.01% of the 20.79 million registered voters had gone to the polls. On March 30, the result was announced that Islam Karimov was re-elected with a clear majority.

This did not come as a surprise as the country has been enjoying long-term political stability and effective governance under President Karimov.

Observing the process, we noticed many details that could serve as experience and provide inspiration for others in one way or another.

II. The Things You May Want to Know

1. Observation at polling stations

The CPAFFC delegation visited the following six polling stations in Urgench:

- i Section 22 with 1,305 registered voters; 54% had voted by 10:00.
- ii Section 19 with 2,150 registered voters; no statistics by 10:30.
- iii Section 17 with 1,350 registered voters; 75% had voted by 11:00.
- iv Section 45 with 1,737 registered voters; 63% had voted by 11:40.
- v Section 28 with 2,403 registered voters; 74% had voted by 14:00.
- vi Section 12 with 1,181 registered voters; 90% had voted by 14:30.

2. Impressions

We did not choose the capital city as our primary choice for observation, even though it was possible Urgench might not represent the highest election standard. Even so, what we saw and heard at the polling stations still left a deep impression.

i Rule of laws and transparency

In the brochures prepared for international observers, the most common phrase was “in accordance with Articles XXX”. These articles from the Election Law and regulations concerning detailed conduction provided the legal basis for the election. Although I am not a legal professional, I think it would be hard to find any fault with the legal procedures. It is fair to say the electoral preparatory work had been

well organized, showing the ambition of Uzbekistan to reach the international standard.

Uniform layout and standards were applied in all polling stations, regardless of the size, which guaranteed to a certain extent equal right of voting.

The four candidates all had their party representative on site to observe the voting process. All the voters filled in their ballots in the enclosed room. The ballots were folded and then put into a transparent box. The whole process was open to local citizens as well as observers.

Frankly speaking, it was somewhat tedious seeing the same thing at every polling station we visited. Yet, it was the very blessed for the people of Uzbekistan to enjoy equal voting rights.

ii Focus on details and people's livelihood

President Karimov had been known for his policies focusing on the livelihood of the people, and these were

well practiced even during the election.

First, the setting up of polling stations. One could set up if an area had 300 voters. This provided convenience for people to vote in their neighborhood. The CEC sent out information to every individual voter and informed them where to register in advance. Regional electoral commission staff would have to go to vote in their own registered polling stations before starting their work elsewhere, however.

Second, the layout of the polling station. For every polling station, there was a CEC office, a nursing room and a clinic. The nursing rooms were especially well decorated with colorful furniture, dolls and all kinds of picture books. Standing in them, one had the impression of being in a kindergarten.

For big polling stations, there were six to seven enclosed voting booths while in smaller ones there were perhaps only two. Even so, one booth provided all the conveniences for the physically challenged voters.

A nursing room at a polling station



We were told that voting boxes were taken to the door of those who had difficulty in getting about, and young people who had just come of voting age would receive flowers.

Just as Chinese Ambassador Sun Lijie said at a joint interview with the media, “Exceptional attention paid to details and human concern has fully shown the achievements in Uzbekistan’s economic and social development and its democratic reform.”

iii Full media exposure and well-prepared materials

The CEC accredited over 340 representatives of domestic and foreign media to cover the election. Hu Chunmei, an international observer from the CPAFFC was interviewed when visiting Section 22.

The CEC prepared for the media and observers sufficient materials in Russian and English, the format and contents of which were edited according to international standards. An informative brochure *Questions and Answers* impressed me most. It provided legal references, candidate nomination procedures, voter qualification, equal media exposure of the candidates and the budget for the election, etc.

III. Conclusion

Positive feedback came from the local citizens, media, and international observers. Ambassador Caetano de Zulueta, head of the observer mission of the office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, said: “I must note Uzbekistan’s positive experience in the creation of the Central Election Commission as an independent election body, as well

as the introduction of constitutional amendments establishing the status of the CEC as an independent body.[2]” It was a clear indication the election that had been carried out in fairness guaranteed by law and transparency had got favorable appraisal from the international community.

The Chinese delegation stated: “The election was conducted in accordance with the Election Law of Uzbekistan and the generally recognized principle of international law. It proceeded smoothly and peacefully with no violations of the law or regulations. The election was legal, democratic, transparent, and fair. The people of Uzbekistan have been guaranteed their right to express their political preference through voting.”

Besides the opinions above, I have some personal views of the visit.

Uzbekistan remains one of the important countries on the Silk Road. Although our visit was short, we had close encounters with this famous ancient trade route. For instance, it was prominent in a big picture poster hung on the wall of the State Academy of Tourism and Trade that also served as a polling station; we encountered stories about it in local museums; and we saw the great influence it had had on the country in the past and in contemporary times. Interestingly, I found one of the candidates actually promoted as his main foreign policy the revival of the Silk Road [3]. All this coincides with the Belt and Road Initiatives put forward by China.

This coincidence brought me back to the presidential election being held in such an ancient religious country. When modern politics is introduced

into an ancient civilization, there are bound to be sparks. As an inland Asian country adopts the political practices of Western developed countries, the great cultural differences will make it hard for the whole process to proceed flawlessly. Yet, amid these conflicts, Uzbekistan has shown the world an opportunity of coexistence between different cultures, religions, countries, and nationalities at a time when the theory of the Clash of Civilization prevails in the world.

China can draw inspiration from Uzbekistan’s presidential election on how to develop its grassroots democracy with Chinese characteristics under its present national conditions, and how to strike a balance between its national interests and the world expectation.

This trip only took me to one Central Asian country, but I have seen the Chinese Dream, the Belt and Road Initiatives, the rule of law and a harmonious world.

Notes

1. The CPAFFC delegation was composed of international observer Hu Chunmei, assistants Zuo Fengqiang, Wen Guangmei and Sun Chi.

2. “Presidential Elections: In the Name of a Bright Future.” P5, *Uzbekistan Today*, March 20, 2015.

3. ...The revival of the ancient cross-border route of human civilization — the Great Silk Road, which unites the East and West, which has become a milestone in the institutional strengthening and expanding of economic, political, cultural and humanitarian cooperation; the promotion of a strong brand “Great Silk Road”. Akmal Saidov, *Memo*, edited by CEC.

A Stalwart Fighter for New China All Her Life

—In Memory of Comrade Lu Cui

Shu Zhang

The Spring Festival had just ended when I received a phone call from Lu Lanqin to tell me that her mother had passed away. I was saddened by this sudden news, even though she had lived a remarkable 101 years. And she will always live in our hearts.

The mother of Lu Lanqin was our beloved Comrade Lu Cui, an outstanding woman who worked hard for New China all her life. I got to know her through my work at the China Society for People's Friendship Study (PFS).

Through reading books about Edgar Snow and Helen Snow, I learned that they sympathized with the Chinese revolution and supported the student movement. When Edgar was teaching in the Department of Journalism at Yenching University and Helen was attending lectures there, student leaders such as Huang Hua from Yenching University, Huang Jing from Peking University and Yao Keguang (also known as Yao Yilin) from Tsinghua University often had meetings at Snow's home, analyzing the situation in China, planning strategy and organizing publicity activities.

The Snows understood the great significance of their activities. Under the leadership of the underground Communist Party of China (CPC), the students in Beijing took to the street to promote a mass petition in December 1935, which became the famous December 9th Movement to Resist Japan



Lu Cui with Helen Snow during the December 9th Movement in 1935

and Save the Nation.

Edgar Snow, as a foreign journalist, covered the event. He noticed Lu Cui, a Tsinghua University student, walking in the front of the parade. She was a member of the university's student committee for national salvation. Valliant and heroic in bearing, she spoke to the masses through a megaphone in her hand. The students were barred from entering the city as the Xuanwu Gate was closed.

Lu Cui spotted a gap under the gate large enough for a slim person like herself to get past. Risking her life, she wormed her way through to the other side and drew the door bolt. The two huge gates which had been tightly tied with iron wires refused to open. Just at

this moment, the police came, arrested her and took her to the detention house.

When Edgar Snow learned about her arrest, he went to visit her at the detention house and was admitted as he was a foreigner. Lu Cui talked with him in English, a language the policemen could not understand. She told him that she made the call that all Chinese should unite to resist Japanese aggression and that Chinese should not fight fellow Chinese and should never be conquered people.

The American journalist was touched by the call for justice made by this 21-year-old Chinese young lady and her courage and determination. He filed a news report to *New York Herald Tribune*, calling her China's "Joan of Arc",

which appeared on December 17, 1935.

Helen Snow was also very sympathetic with the student movement. She supported and cooperated closely with Edgar in his work in every way. Later when the Kuomintang Government promulgated the “Emergency Measures of the Kuomintang Government for Maintenance of Social Security” and sent army troops and police to arrest patriotic students. Yao Keguang, head of the underground CPC committee of Tsinghua University managed to get Lu Cui to the Snow home at No. 13, Huijiachang (site of the Zhong’an Hotel today), where she stayed for over a dozen days.

Later, Lu Cui received instructions to go to Shanghai. The Snows drove her to Qianmen Railway Station and only left when they saw her boarding the train safely.

Lu Cui had always kept contact with the couple. Helen said more than once that Edgar and Lu Cui were the first and lifetime builders of the bridge

of friendship between the people of China and the U.S. Lu Cui had given Helen a woolen sweater. She liked it very much and only wore it on formal occasions when she had visitors.

Helen died in her wooden house in Madison, Connecticut in 1997. Comrades Huang Hua, He Liliang and Gong Pusheng went to the United States specially to attend her memorial service. Lu Cui asked them to convey her remembrance and prayers.

During her student years at Tsinghua University, Lu Cui absorbed progressive ideas and started her revolutionary career. In 1936, the All-China Student Federation of National Salvation was founded in Shanghai and she headed its publicity department. In this capacity, she attended the World Youth Congress held in Geneva and New York. When she arrived in New York, the *Workers’ Daily* published on Nov. 12, 1936 her photo and an article with the title *China’s Joan of Arc in New*

York on the mission of peace and the sub-title “22-year-old student leader says her country’s fight to rid itself of Japanese shackles is vital to the peace of the world”.

Afterwards, she toured the Americas and Europe, making speeches on Chinese people’s resistance against Japanese aggression to save the country. In 1939, she visited Canada where she made speeches in 27 cities and raised funds for the aid-China medical mission headed by Dr. Norman Bethune and the International Peace Hospital. Upon returning home, she worked in the Central China Bureau of the CPC Central Committee in Yan’an, the headquarters of the New Fourth Army and Jiangsu-Anhui border area successively.

From 1947 until the founding of New China, she worked as China Secretary in the Secretariat of the Women’s International Democratic Federation (WIDF), representing the women’s fed-

In August 1936, Lu Cui (in the middle of the front row) in Geneva with the Chinese delegation to attend the first World Youth Congress



eration of China's liberated areas. During this period, she also attended the World Congress of Women and the World Peace Congress held respectively in Bucharest, Copenhagen, Paris and Warsaw.

After the founding of New China, she actively participated in the work of the All-China Women's Federation and was the head of its international department. After the "cultural revolution", she served as a vice president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. In 1991, when the China Society for People's Friendship Study was set up under the leadership of Huang Hua, she and her husband Zhu Ziqi both became its advisors. I also joined the PFS after retirement and got to know them at its functions.

In November 2009, at the invitation of Gerald R. Sherratt, Mayor of Cedar city and President of Southern Utah University, I, on behalf of the PFS, went there to attend activities in celebration of the city's 158th anniversary and the unveiling ceremony of the statue of Helen Snow.

Lu Cui could not go for health reasons. She dictated a letter over the phone, in which she talked about the Helen she had known and expressed her gratitude. She said in the end, "I think it is of great significance to erect a statue of Helen Snow. It shows people's affirmation and praise of her high moral character, her pursuit of ideal and her outstanding contribution, as well as their lasting memory of her as a staunch woman. It will also inspire more people, especially young successors, to make continuous efforts to enhance understanding and friendship between the Chinese and American people." I handed this letter to Mayor

Sherratt.

In her international activities, Lu Cui had close contact with many international friends who supported China in anti-fascist war and the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and became good friends with them. Beside Edgar and Helen Snow, she also maintained close interactions with Anna Louise Strong. Since they first met in Yan'an, contacts between them never ceased. When she returned to the United States, Anna Louise left her fighting weapon she always carried wherever she went — a silver colored typewriter — with Lu Cui in Shanghai. Later, Lu Cui took it to Yan'an and handed it to the Party organization.

Anna Louise came to China for the fifth time in 1958 and spent her last 12 years in the country. Lu's family and she lived in the compound of No.1 Taijichang Street, the present site of the CPAFFC. Living close by, they met almost every day. They shared with each other their past stories and enjoyed the fruit of their struggle.

Another couple was Max and Grace Granich. They were in China in 1936 and 1937. They started a publication *Voice of China* in Shanghai to publicize the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. When she escaped from Beijing to Shanghai, Lu Cui received a lot of help from the Granichs and their home became her refuge. They met again in the autumn of 1979 and that was their last encounter.

Lu Cui visited the United States as a member of a delegation headed by CPAFFC President Wang Bingnan. In Boston, the Granichs hosted a reception with an attendance of over a hundred people. This reunion moved Lu

Cui very much and left a deep impression. She said, "When they gave me, their silver-haired 'Chinese little sister' warm hugs with slightly trembling hands, I was so moved that I could not hold back my tears."

Dr. Hervert K. Abrams was another of her friends. He was an army doctor working with the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. Between 1945 and 1946, he went to work twice in the liberated area in Shandong. He had an intense struggle with the KMT government in the distribution of relief materials in China and was successful in getting a batch of wheat flour and other goods for the liberated area. He also saved a wounded American pilot.

Lu Cui got to know him in Linyi, Shandong in 1946. She was suffering from spinal disease and was confined to bed. When Dr. Abrams learned of this, he immediately arranged for flights to carry her and Zhou Shunying, her sister-in-law who was taking care of her, from Linyi to Qingdao for treatment.

Lu Cui described the flight in an article, "The two small planes were flying side by side in the sky, just like two boats sailing on the sea. I and my sister-in-law could see and wave to each other through the window of the planes. It took half an hour to reach Qingdao. Dr. Abrams came to the airport to greet me."

During their sixth visit to China in 1991, Dr. Abrams and his wife met Lu Cui again. Dr. Abrams donated a large number of photos of the Chinese army and civilians he had taken in Shandong and other precious historical materials to the Museum of Chinese Revolution. Lu Cui repeated Chairman Mao Zedong's words that we should not forget



The author (R.1) visiting Lu Cui in hospital

all those who have done something good for us.

The international friends that Lu Cui had kept lifetime friendship with also included Dr. Samuel Rosen, his wife Helen and their family. In this family friendship is passed on from generation to generation. In the 1930s, Dr. and Mrs. Rosen showed concern for and supported the Chinese people in their struggle against aggression and oppression for national liberation.

They collected medical supplies and sent them to the liberated area through the China Defense League set up by Soong Ching Ling in Hong Kong. Dr. Rosen was a famous otologist who had made breakthroughs in the treatment of the deaf and cured numerous patients. He had visited China nine times on study tours, for visits or lectures to carry out exchanges with the Chinese medical circles.

It was arterial aneurysm that brought his sudden death in Beijing during his visit to China in November 1981. With the help of Dr. Wu Weiran, his ashes were buried under a tree in

the Beijing Friendship Forest. His son John, a pediatrician, John's wife Margaret and daughter Judy are also very friendly towards China. They have contributed to the medical and women exchanges between China and the U.S. They often come to China and visit the strong and tall tree under which the ashes of their father had been buried.

Lu Cui had contact with so many international friends that it is impossible for me to name them all.

No. 13, Huijiachang in Beijing was where Mr. and Mrs. Snow lived from October 1935 to November 1937. They had organized many activities in this courtyard house and most significantly, they respectively set out from here for northern Shaanxi to interview Chairman Mao Zedong and other leaders of the CPC and learn about the life of the military and civilians there.

They sorted out their notes and re-organized the interviews and other material upon returning. Edgar then wrote the famous book *Red Star Over China* and Helen *Inside Red China*. The old house had been taken down after liber-

ation and a new building, the Zhong'an Hotel, stands in its place.

Hao Guangning, manager of the hotel, is a thoughtful woman. She attaches great importance to the history of this place and has turned the hotel into a revolutionary education base. In the lounge, books by Edgar and Helen Snow are on display and videos about them are broadcast on the big screen. Photographs of them are hung in the corridors and rooms. Those Chinese and foreign guests who have lived here all learned about the contributions these two Americans made to the friendship between the people of China and the U.S.

The hotel manager paid particular attention to Lu Cui's experiences with the Snows. In December 2011, she wished to make a special call on Lu Cui at her home and asked me to take her there. She told Lu Cui of her efforts in restoring the old site in commemoration of the Snows. Lu was happy at the news and took out a piece of paper, on which she wrote her congratulations.

She gave each of us a copy of her book *Morning Stars* republished by the People's Daily Press, and autographed it. Her signature, expansive, vigorous and forceful, was just like the person herself. On May 15, 2014, we visited her at the Beijing Hospital accompanied by her daughter Lanqin, and had a picture taken with her. The smile on her face has convinced us that she had lived a happy life. Her extraordinary life, reflected on her smiling face, will always be remembered.

March 1, 2015

The author is a vice president of China Society for People's Friendship Study

Welcome, President Mr. Xi Jinping

Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani (Pakistan)

The Chinese President His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping is arriving today on state visit to Pakistan after taking over the office of President of the People's Republic of China on March 14, 2013. This visit is taking place in the backdrop of a very important geo-political & regional situation apart from further boosting the exemplary Pak-China relations. This visit is also very important from the Pakistan's political & economic point of view as we are currently engaged in Pak-China Economic Corridor project which if implemented in letter and spirit will enhance our economic activities many folds and the country will ultimately prosper.

The visiting Chinese President who is also Head of the ruling Communist Party is expected to lead China for the next decade. Since assuming leadership, he has initiated an unprecedented and far-reaching campaign against corruption, called for further market economic reforms, governance according to the law, strengthening legal institutions, and an emphasis on individual and national aspirations under the neologism "Chinese Dream". President Xi Jinping introduced this new term to lay out his vision of a stronger nation based on the Chinese path, the Chinese spirit and Chinese strength. This led some analysts to the view that he could pursue a more assertive foreign policy during his decade in power. His Excellency actually wants that the world second largest economy should take its



Chinese President Xi Jinping shaking hands with the writer of the article

rightful place in the world whereas the great nation works hard for the Chinese renaissance.

The 61-year-old Chinese President Xi Jinping belongs to a very committed family. He is the son of veteran Chinese revolutionary figure, Mr. Xi Zhongxun who was one of the founders of the People's Republic of China. Mr. Xi Jinping was known as "intellectual youth" at his early young days while he was working in remote village of Liangjiahe for around 6 years and was considered as very sincere and honest. He served as a local Party secretary in Hebei Province before going to Fujian and Zhejiang Provinces at senior positions where he showed his extraordinary capabilities. Less than a decade

back in 2007, he was named as Party chief in Shanghai, a very important position for central leadership.

China and Pakistan share a border of just 523 kilometers but are the strongest neighbors and their relationship is ahead of normal diplomatic relations which was established in 1951. Most importantly the people to people interaction is more than anything. This visit was very much awaited by Pakistanis from last few months. China-Pakistan relationship has inspired plenty of florid language, invoking "iron brothers" whose "all-weather friendship" is "higher than the Himalayas and deeper than the oceans" and "sweeter than honey". These words need to be translated in realities by taking full advan-

tage of Chinese experiences in all fields of life. We in Pakistan must prepare ourselves to enjoy the fruits of economic development and socio-economic prosperity.

Decades-old China-Pakistan relations witness strategic cooperation and partnership in recent years apart from political and cultural interactions. Both countries are serious in breakthrough on economic issues as well. Recently, long term plans like China-Pakistan Economic Corridor have been finalized and various MOUs signed in this regard to materialize the Chinese investment in Pakistan. The economic corridor is mainly about cooperation in three areas viz. energy, transport and industrial parks which will be a new platform for the growth of China-Pakistan strategic cooperation in the next five to ten years. Current year also has a special significance for China-Pakistan relations as the year 2015 has been declared as "Friendly Exchange Year".

This visit is an excellent opportunity for the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to prepare a proper plan to get benefited from China. The Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had been declared as friendly region with Xinjiang Region of China in 2008 whereas Peshawar and Urumqi, Abbottabad and Kashgar established sister-city ties in 1985 and 2007 respectively. All these gestures can be used in a proper and favorable manner. Various NGOs under the banner of Pak-China friendship can play a vital role in promoting this friendship as deep rooted love between people of both the countries.

The writer is Secretary-General of the Pakistan-China Friendship Association Khyber Chapter.

Socio-Economic Progress I Saw During My Visits to China

R. Jinith De Silva (Sri Lanka)



The writer of the article (R.1) relaxing with Chinese elders in Shanghai

My relationship with China goes back more than 30 years. I have visited China eight times and saw some beautiful places.

In 1997, I received an invitation from the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. During that visit I was able to fulfill a childhood dream and see the Great Wall of China, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It is the longest man-made structure in the world and spans more than 8,000 kilometers. Construction of the Great Wall began in 700 BC. Even a large truck can drive on the Great Wall. It was built by the ancient Chinese to protect them from their enemies. It is a clear example of knowledge and courage of the Chinese people.

The ethnic village in Yunnan Province is another place I like. It demonstrates various traditions, cultures and everyday life of the minorities of China. Fifty-five minority communities live peacefully with the majority Han. It is a great example to the rest of the world. The Chinese government has laws to protect the rights of minorities. It also protects languages, religion, traditions and festivals of minorities. The Chinese government also works hard to develop the regions where minorities live to make their lives happy and prosperous.

I was able to see the terracotta army in Xi'an during my visit to China in 2007. It was amazing. The terracotta army has about 8,000 sculptures of soldiers, horses and

chariots. All sculptures are built to the size of real soldiers. It is said that the first ancient emperor of China built this army to protect him after his death. The story is that a peasant named Yang Zhifa had found the head of a terracotta warrior accidentally, while digging a well in 1974. Today more than two million tourists visit Xi'an annually. In 1987, UNESCO included the Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor and the Terracotta Warriors in the world heritage list. Weapons carried by the terracotta warriors do not get corroded. The Chinese believe that this is because of a coating on the weapons nearly two thousand five hundred years ago.

I also visited West Lake in Hangzhou in Zhejiang Province in 2011. West Lake is a beautiful natural lake surrounded by mountains. Its beauty and serenity inspired me to write this article. According to history, the aesthetic value of West Lake was identified somewhere in the 9th century. In June 2011, UNESCO declared West Lake as a world heritage site. It said the cultural landscape of Hangzhou West Lake best represented the aesthetics of garden design of China and around the world.

I visited Henan Province in 2007. The ancient Silk Road goes through this province. Because Buddhism first arrived in Henan Province from India before it came to other parts of China. There are important Buddhist temples in this area. These include the White Horse Temple, the Shaolin Temple and the Longmen Grottoes.

The White Horse Temple is one of the most revered Buddhist shrines. The original temple was built in 68 AD. It is the first Buddhist temple to be

built in China and is an important part of China's Buddhist history. According to legend, two Buddhist monks from India riding a white horse delivered Buddhist scriptures to Luoyang, hence the name of the temple. The temple covers an area of 34,000 square meters and has more than 100 halls and rooms. It is from here, that Buddhism was spread throughout China and to many other Asian countries. Even now it is esteemed as the home of Chinese Buddhism.

Longmen Grottoes is located in south suburbs of Luoyang City. Longmen Grottoes houses more than 2,300 Buddhist niches, more than 100,000 sculptures and 40 Buddhist pagodas. They scatter on the eastern and western cliffs on both sides of the Yi River. The construction of the grottoes began during the period of Northern Wei (386-534) and had continued for more than 400 years. Longmen Grottoes at Luoyang is one of three most famous groups of grottoes in China. It was included in the list of world heritage by UNESCO in 2000.

The Shaolin Temple is one of the most famous temples in the world. This temple is the cradle of famous Chinese martial art, Kung Fu. It is also the birthplace of China's Chan Sect Buddhism. The temple is located 14 km northwest

from Dengfeng City and on the slopes of Shaoshi Mountain. It was first built in 495 AD during the Northern Wei Dynasty. The imposing temple consists of seven courtyards. It spreads over 57,600 square meters. The Hall of Thousand Buddhas, which is also known as the shrine of Vairocana is one of the largest and best preserved buildings of the temple. It also houses bronze statues, jade statues and murals of the Ming Dynasty. To the west of the temple, there is a 243 brick forest and masonry stupas of different sizes and architectural styles. These stupas were built across a 1,000-year span from the Tang to Qing Dynasties. It is the largest group of tomb pagodas in China. It is also the graveyard of monks. Presently teaching Kung Fu has become a lucrative business and there are 81 international Kung Fu schools in this city.

I have noticed fast trains in China during my visits after 2010. They were unbelievable. Today we can see them in every major city of China. The average speed of these trains is about 300 km per hour. The fast train service has greatly reduced the time taken to

The writer receiving a memento from CPAFFC Vice President Wang Yunze in 2007



travel between cities. A normal train takes about 12 hours to travel 1,200 km from Beijing to Shanghai. The fast train takes only 5 hours. Chinese fast trains provide facilities similar to an airline. Thus most Chinese people enjoy a modern and convenient train service.

I also saw the development of Chinese universities in Shanghai, Beijing, Nanjing and Hangzhou. They have worked hard to develop their universities to the same level of other famous universities of the world. My daughter also studies in Shanghai Jiao Tong University. This university has a history of more than 100 years. Jiao Tong University provides excellent modern facilities to students.

The traditional polyphonic choral performance of the Dong ethnic minority



Another significant feature I noticed during my visits to China is how the elderly people assembled in parks in the mornings and the evenings. They sing, do exercises and aerobics. I think people gather in parks mainly for social exchange and their love for music. They believe music is a good medicine for the heart and the mind. These elders spending the evening of their lives forgetting pressures of life is a serene sight. A sense of comradeship was evident everywhere. Elderly Chinese people singing the song *I love you China*, accompanied by two accordions in the Jingshan Park of Beijing is an unforgettable sight to me.

Another interesting fact I noticed was most Chinese people carry a bottle of tea. The Chinese introduced tea to the world. Ancient Chinese monks got used to drinking tea. Then they served tea to devotees who visited temples. Now most Chinese people drink tea throughout the day and during meals.

The Chinese eat a little rice with several dishes of fish, meat and vegetables. They also drink soup. They usually do not mix rice and other dishes together. Instead they eat each item separately with chopsticks. The Chinese eat fruits for dessert, mainly watermelon. I did not see them eat other desserts like ice cream.

I asked a few of my Chinese friends about this. They said they ate watermelon and other fruits to support their farmers. Chinese recipes usually do not use sugar and salt. They also drink tea without sugar. They start dinner around 5.30 pm. Chinese families eat dinner together while discussing their day's activities.

They organize banquets to welcome guests. They follow some interesting traditions during these banquets. One such tradition is toasting. Unlike in Europe there are several toasts in a Chinese banquet. They usually toast with a shot of Maotai, popular liquor in China. They usually conclude a toast with words *ganbei*. *Ganbei* means bottoms up. These toasting rituals are designed to show respect and friendship and to build and strengthen relationships with the guests.

The Chinese people are punctual. It is an admirable quality. They provide us a time table when we visit China with invitations from Chinese associations. We have to work according to the time table. The work ethic of the Chinese people is admirable. They are not lazy. They work hard and effectively. Their ambition is to develop their country and make it one of the best in the world. I have tremendous admiration and respect for China and the Chinese people.

Finally I have to say that I have seen so many changes in China. But amidst all these changes there is one element of Chinese life that remains constant. It is the hospitality of the Chinese people.

The author is Vice President of the Sri Lanka China Society.