

Database of DNA reunites families

By ZHOU WENTING
CHINA DAILY

BEIJING — Fu Ming'ai was reunited with his family on Sunday after 22 years.

He is one of the more than 1,400 abducted children who were helped by a national DNA database, which helps match trafficked children and their parents.

"This shows the superiority of the national database," Chen Shiqu, director of the Ministry of Public Security's anti-human trafficking office, said on Sunday. The database was established in April 2009, when the ministry launched a nationwide crackdown on human trafficking.

"The ministry's branches across the country have been ordered to take blood samples of unidentified children and enter the information in the DNA database. Meanwhile, parents who report children missing also have their samples deposited in the repository," Chen said. "The database will point out matches for parents and children."

DNA testing is accurate for both individual identification and kinship relations, and it is acknowledged as one of the most effective techniques to identify abducted children,

according to the ministry.

Fu, who was named Liu Qiang by his adoptive family in Shijiazhuang, capital of Hebei province, was picked up by his entire family at the railway station in his home city of Jishou, Hunan province.

"I resolved to find my parents, because I know I was kidnapped, not abandoned," said Fu, 26, a technician in an auto parts company in Tianjin. He remembered one day when he was 4, someone sprayed a substance in front of his face so that he could not open his eyes, and he was taken on a train.

Fu left a blood sample with the DNA database in July. One month earlier, his parents had their blood samples taken when police said this could help the search for their son.

"I prayed to the gods, even in my dreams, to give my son back. He finally returned," said 55-year-old father Fu Gaomao, who was informed on Thursday of the successful match.

"Abducted children are found matching with their biological parents in the information bank every day," said Zhang Baoyan, founder of Baobeihuijia, or Baby Back Home, a volunteer group that assists in the nationwide search for missing children and offers support to their parents.

Zhang said the platform works because DNA is more durable than a child's appearance or memories of families and home villages, which can fade in the years after a child is abducted. Moreover, it transcends provincial borders.

"Distracted parents in one province might not know some children were rescued elsewhere. Now they just have to wait at home after leaving their blood samples," Zhang said.

The past two years have seen a major role for the database, but she expects more parents in remote areas to go to the police to leave blood samples.

"Some farmers have weak legal awareness and don't know what DNA is," she said. "With the popularization of knowledge of the database, the possibility of matches will rise."

Zhang said the government should continue to toughen measures to tackle the scourge of child trafficking.

"On the one hand, the buyers' market, which is the source of the problem, should be blocked.

"On the other, the police should tighten penalties for traffickers. The cost of breaking the law is very low if they are only jailed for three or five years," she said.



SHU DONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

The 8.5-ton Tiangong-1 spacecraft and the Long March II-F rocket stand at the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center on Sept 20. The spacecraft is set to blast off at an appropriate time between Tuesday and Friday.

Forecasts signal late-week launch

By XIN DINGDING
CHINA DAILY

JIUQUAN, Gansu — Weather forecasts showed that Thursday or Friday might be suitable for launching the Tiangong-1 spacecraft, experts said.

The unmanned spacecraft, part of China's first spacecraft rendezvous and docking mission, was set to blast off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Northwest China at an appropriate time between Tuesday and Friday.

But the latest weather forecast showed that Tuesday and Wednesday would not be suitable for a launch, Cui Jijun, chief commander of the mission's launch site system, was quoted

by China National Radio as saying on Sunday.

A precondition for launching is that the average wind speed at the launch site should not be faster than 10 meters a second. The upper-level wind, at 300 meters to 25,000 meters above the Earth, should be no faster than 70 meters a second.

If the wind is too strong, the rising rocket carrier could wobble and pose a danger, experts said.

"Everything is ready now except for the right weather," Cui said.

On Sunday afternoon, all systems of the Tiangong-1 project went through a joint maneuver, he said. Before that, the 8.5-ton spacecraft, and the Long March

II-F rocket that will carry it skyward, were positioned onto the launch pad last Tuesday.

Engineers carried out check-ups on the conditions of the rocket and the spacecraft, among many other tests in the past few days. All preparation work is done except for fuel loading, he said.

Wang Xiaoping, a publicity official at the launch site, said that the fuel loading usually begins one day before the launch. Once the fuel is loaded into the carrier vehicle, the launch becomes "irreversible".

Tiangong-1, or Heavenly Palace 1, will serve as "a target spacecraft" for three rendezvous and docking experiments. The spacecraft rendezvous

and docking missions are expected to pave the way for the building of a planned space station scheduled for 2020, previous reports said.

Following Tiangong-1, an unmanned Shenzhou VIII spaceship will blast off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center later this year.

Lu Jinrong, chief engineer of the mission's launch site system, said that it is rare that two launches of China's manned space program are scheduled in half a year.

"In the past, the launch site carried out one launch a year, or even one every two to three years," he said.

"We are already in a high-frequency launch period."

Single migrant women face high abortion risk

By SHAN JUAN
CHINA DAILY

BEIJING — Young unmarried migrant women are facing a high risk of induced abortions in China and experts urged that they have better access to reproductive health education.

Among the 8 to 10 million induced abortions performed on the mainland each year, nearly 47 percent involve unmarried women younger than 25, according to Cheng Linan, director of the center for clinical research and training of the Shanghai Institute of Planned Parenthood Research.

The statistics are based on the results from a recent nationwide survey.

"The rising trend of induced abortions is even more evident among migrants who usually have poor awareness and access to reproductive health knowledge and services, particularly about contraception," she said on Saturday at an event to mark World Contraceptive Day, which falls on Sept 26.

A 2008 survey involving more than 50,000 induced abortions in Beijing showed that roughly 70 percent of the women undergoing the procedure were migrants. For many, it was not their first abortion.

According to a nationwide study by the Chinese Medical Association (CMA), of all women having received induced abortions, nearly 56 percent had two operations and 13.5 percent had three or more.

"That not only causes the women certain physical or mental problems, but it also gives the country a huge economic burden of more than 3 billion yuan" or about \$470 million, she said.

Among Chinese women who became infertile, more than 88 percent previously had an induced abortion, a study conducted in 2007 showed.

Other potential health hazards include hemorrhage, uterine or pelvic infection, uterine perforation and cervical laceration.

Apart from low awareness, poor access to professional

consultations on contraception, particularly among single young women, is mainly the problem.

A 2011 survey by the CMA found that about 44 percent of those polled said they had difficulty accessing scientifically correct contraceptive information, compared with a global average of 15.5 percent.

Currently, the top three channels to get contraceptive information in China are the Internet, reproductive health education materials and magazines, it found.

However, up to 88 percent of the respondents still expressed confusion about contraceptive methods. Condoms and oral contraceptives are the most widely used kinds.

About half the respondents said they had acquaintances facing unintended pregnancies and during the past year, 44 percent of the females surveyed had taken morning after pills. Among single women suffering failed birth control, 39 percent used the rhythm method or withdrawal, nearly 33 percent used condoms, and about 19 percent took morning after pills.

A doctor surnamed Fang with the Beijing Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital said: "We had from time to time teenage girls having an abortion ...

who had little knowledge of contraception."

As with most Asians, the biggest obstacle for the Chinese to obtain such knowledge is that they are shy talking about sex in public and don't usually have sex education in school, said Qin Guoying, secretary-general of the China Women's Development Foundation.

To address the issue, the foundation formed an alliance with the CMA, with funding support from Germany-based pharmaceutical company Bayer, to pilot post-abortion care (PAC) in China.

PAC is a worldwide strategy to address abortion problems by treating women with complications and providing family planning knowledge to prevent future abortions.

As of 2001, more than 40 countries worldwide were using PAC, which has lowered repeated induced abortions by 25 to 50 percent, international studies show.

According to Cheng, well-trained nurses in gynecology and obstetrics departments are best-suited to deliver the service.

After an induced abortion, women are kept for medical observation for a while and nurses can approach them to disseminate the information, she said.

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Nanning now nexus for SE Asian students

By HUANG FEIFEI
AND HUANG ZHAOHUA

"When I was a little girl, I always dreamed of studying in China," said Cambodian Chea Sokna, who is now enrolled in the administrative management program at Guangxi University for Nationalities.

"Many overseas students come here for further study and I believe it's a good choice for me, too," she said.

Chea is among the many students from Southeast Asia studying in Nanning, capital city of South China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region.

Because of its proximity and cultural similarities, Nanning is one of the most active locales for educational exchanges between China and nearby Southeast Asian nations.

Since Nanning became the host of the China-ASEAN Expo in 2004, even more overseas students began arriving in the city.

In 1993, the university had only 19 international students, all from Vietnam. By 2009, the number had grown to 470. Students from Laos increased from 42 in 2003 to 88 in 2009.

Now growing numbers from Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar are also studying in Nanning. The total from Southeast Asia is increasing by almost 10 percent annually, according to a recent survey.

Wai Wai Lwin from Myanmar is a master's degree candidate studying applied linguistics at the university.

Like Chea, Lwin said studying in China was also a childhood dream.

"I was deeply influenced by my father, whose biggest wish was that his children learn Chinese well and promote sophisticated Chinese culture to the world," she said.

"Nanning is very similar to my hometown, especially the climate," she said. "The food is tasty and cheap — overseas students like it a lot."

Nguyen Thi Thuy Duong from Vietnam, a senior majoring in international trade at Guangxi University, said the reason she chose Nanning is "it is a frontier city for business cooperation between China and ASEAN" and a good place to put what she learned into practice.



Chea Sokna



Nguyen Thi Thuy Duong



Wai Wai Lwin



Nguyen Viet Anh

In recent years, Nanning has undergone rapid development brought by the China-ASEAN Expo.

"I have been studying in Nanning for two years. I think it is very modern and has had great changes these years," she said.

"What attracts me the most is the expo, where the culture and economic status of every Southeast Asian country is shown. It's so amazing that there seem to be no obstacles for people from different nations to communicate with each other well."

Nguyen Viet Anh, another Vietnamese student at Guangxi University, said Nan-

ning is a "lively and prosperous" city. She said her favorite place is Nanhu Park. "The night view there is really fantastic — so beautiful," she said.

Overseas students also expressed satisfaction with the learning environment in the city.

The Nanning city government has even established a scholarship fund for outstanding Southeast Asian students studying at its colleges and universities.

Each qualified student can receive up to 15,000 yuan a year, according to the city government.

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