

briefly

SHANGHAI

Advanced patrol boat to be built

A contract has been signed for the building of China's largest and most advanced patrol vessel.

The vessel is scheduled for completion in July 2012, according to a source from Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Company, which signed the contract to build the ship with Shanghai Maritime Safety Administration on Thursday in Shanghai.

Known as *Haixun 01*, the patrol vessel will be 128.6 meters long with a tonnage of 5,418 tons.

The ship will be able to accommodate 200 people rescued at sea and will be equipped with devices to offer basic treatment and surgery to anyone injured.

Clothes on for the camera

A trade association for wedding photographers in China is calling for a ban on naked portraits of newlyweds, a new trend among the country's young couples.

The Shanghai Wedding Trade Association said the practice disrespects the institution of marriage and warned it would press the government to ban any studio that takes such photos.

"We don't advocate such wedding photographs as they are out of keeping with the conservative traditions of Chinese people," He Lina, vice-president of the association was quoted as saying by local media.

GANSU

Wall collapse kills student

A wall at a store in Gannan Tibetan autonomous prefecture in Northwest China's Gansu province collapsed on Friday, leaving one student dead and two injured.

The store wall was part of a school building in Maqu county. It toppled over at 7:50 am, injuring three students, a county government official said.

One of the injured students, a 10-year-old, later died in hospital. The two others, both 9 years old, are in a stable condition.

HEILONGJIANG

Heavy snow delays flights

Continuous heavy snow has delayed flights, caused massive traffic pileups, forced expressways to close and schools to cancel classes in Northeast China, local authorities said on Friday.

Heavy snow began to fall in most parts of Heilongjiang province on Thursday afternoon, and more than 20 flights scheduled to arrive at or leave from Taiping International Airport in the provincial capital Harbin were delayed.

BEIJING

Mines to get rescue teams

China plans to set up seven national emergency and rescue teams for mining accidents and six teams for accidents involving hazardous chemicals, according to a notice released by the Office of Work Safety Commission of the State Council.

It said by the end of 2011 seven emergency and rescue teams will be formed in Heilongjiang, Shanxi, Hebei, Anhui, Henan, Sichuan and Gansu, where the country's large mines are located.

Jail for fake placentas

Three people have been sentenced to jail after being convicted of fraud by selling fake human placentas made of rotten meat, a local court said on Friday.

Zhao Shouhong, a judge with Beijing Huairou People's Court told China Daily that Zhang Yingxin, Li Chaoping, and Jin Xuti, all natives from East China's Anhui province, were convicted of selling 3,174 man-made placentas to swindle 146,800 yuan (\$24,466) out of three victims from January to May this year.

Li was sentenced to six years and eight months in jail and fined 7,000 yuan, and Jin was sentenced to a jail term of five years and seven months and fined 6,000 yuan, according to Zhao.

CHINA DAILY - XINHUA

Court rules against HIV job seeker

By ZHANG YUE
CHINA DAILY

HEFEI — A court in East China's Anhui province on Friday ruled against a man who claimed he was denied a job because he is HIV positive, in the Chinese mainland's first such discrimination case, one of his lawyers said.

The plaintiff, who has been identified only by his alias Xiao Wu, lost his case against the education and labor departments of Anqing city in Anhui, said Li Fangping, one of his attorneys.

"We were very shocked and disappointed when we heard the verdict," Li told China Daily on Friday.

"We will definitely appeal," Xiao Wu, who did not appear in court on Friday, learned about

the verdict from his attorneys and said he felt deeply sad.

The man, in his early 20s, had been confident about the outcome until he heard the result.

"I was not only angry, but also I cannot understand why my demand was rejected," he told China Daily on Friday.

"My contact with my students will be no more than as one of their peers. I do not understand why I am regarded as not qualified as a teacher."

He said he will show his determination to carry on with the case by appealing to a higher court.

The lawsuit alleged city officials denied the plaintiff, a recent college graduate, a teaching job after a medical screening revealed he had HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

The screening was conducted after he had already passed written tests and interviews.

Cao Yijiang, chief judge in the case, said the court made the ruling in line with the Teachers Law, which stipulates that a teaching job requires applicants to have both mental and physical qualifications.

According to the teaching qualifications defined by the Ministry of Education, applicants for teaching positions should not be carrying infectious diseases such as AIDS.

Before Friday's ruling, attorney Li Fangping said the Employment Promotion Law would be up for scrutiny if his client lost.

"It contains a clear rule that (employers) cannot violate a person's employment rights because he or she carries a dis-

ease," Li said last month when the case was heard.

Li said the education department had defended itself by saying the decision was made "with the interests of the students and the public in mind".

Xie Aiping from the city's human resources and social security department said on Friday morning that she thought it might be better for Xiao Wu to abandon his case.

"For the case of Xiao Wu, we just did what we should do according to the recruitment policy, which says that HIV carriers cannot be recruited as civil servants," Xie said.

She said that in recent years the department had rejected similar cases, in which applicants tested HIV positive.

"None of them has filed a

lawsuit about this," she said. "Most of them turned to medical treatment. Personally, I would suggest that he stop suing and receive medical treatment from now on."

Xie, a mother, said she would not agree to her child being taught by an HIV carrier.

Yu Fangqiang, a coordinator from Beijing Yirenping Center, a civil society that promotes welfare, benevolence and equality, said he was shocked by the ruling.

"This will be a huge blow to all the HIV carriers in China as this refuses their basic rights for a job application," he said.

The civil society wrote a letter to the Ministry of Health, appealing for the ministry to clearly define which occupations are not suitable for HIV carriers.

"I think Xiao Wu did a fantastic job, no matter what the result was," Yu said, "because this will encourage more HIV victims to fight against discrimination."

AIDS has long had a heavy stigma attached to it in China, with sufferers forced into hiding. However, there have been recent signs that attitudes are changing.

The government has started talking more openly about HIV prevention and control in China, although people with HIV/AIDS still encounter huge discrimination in employment, education and healthcare.

Official statistics say that at least 740,000 people are living with HIV but campaigners say the actual figure could be far higher.



Buses, trucks and motorcycles wait for diesel at a gas station in Langzhong, Sichuan province, on Thursday.

PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Shortage of diesel leads to longer lines at gas stations in NW China

Sinopec promises to increase its production to ease congestion

BEIJING — China's diesel shortage has paralyzed traffic on a pivotal expressway in Northwest China, with trucks waiting in long lines to fill their fuel tanks.

Truck driver Zhang Manku said he waited for eight hours on Thursday to fill up at a gas station in Ningqiang, a county in Shaanxi province close to Sichuan province.

"I drove into Shaanxi from Sichuan on the Hanning

(Hanzhong-Ningqiang) Expressway at 9 am and crept along as part of a 20-km queue of trucks. It was 5 pm when it was my turn."

Gao Xiang, an official with the expressway administration, said more than 1,000 trucks were stranded at the Shaanxi-Sichuan border on Thursday.

"Dozens of road workers were mobilized to divert traffic," Gao said.

The congestion eased slightly on Friday but most truck drivers still had to wait at least two hours for diesel, he said.

Gao said the congestion will likely persist during the coming weeks unless the diesel shortage is resolved.

Sinopec, China's major oil

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ZHANG MANKU, A TRUCK DRIVER

refiner, supplies 100 tons of diesel daily to Ningqiang city.

"So many vehicles are waiting that we have set a limit for each truck," said Dui Jinyu, a sales manager at Sinopec's Shaanxi branch.

He said the company was trying to increase diesel supplies and he promised that there will not be a price hike as a result of the shortage.

"We'll give priority to buses, as well as trucks that

transport vegetables, fruits, live pigs and other agricultural products closely related to daily life," Dui said.

To ease the shortage, Sinopec has promised to increase the scale of its processing of crude oil. The company said it will process 4.27 million barrels per day this month, up 9.9 percent year-on-year and 1 percent from October.

Some of its oil refineries have also cut their produc-

tion of petrol and industrial chemicals to make room for additional diesel refining.

The company said it will also import 200,000 tons of diesel to supplement supplies in some regions.

The unprecedented diesel shortage has led to the closure of many gas stations and lineups of trucks can be seen in many cities.

Experts blame the shortage partly on the "blackout policy" adopted by some local governments to meet their emission reduction goals as many factories have been hoarding diesel supplies to use for the generation of electricity so they can continue production.

XINHUA

Chinese vase breaks record

LONDON — A Chinese vase discovered during a routine house clearance in a London suburb sold for 43 million pounds (\$69 million) on Thursday — 40 times its estimated value and an auction record for any work of art from Asia, said the auctioneer who sold it.

"It's a world record for a piece of Asian art," said Helen Porter from the West London auction house Bainbridges.

"It was part of Asian Art Week, so there were a lot of buyers over for that and the room was absolutely full of Chinese people bidding against each other," she said.

The hammer price did not include 20 percent in fees and taxes.

"It (the bidding) went on for half an hour. We don't know exactly who the buyer is. I believe they were buying on behalf of someone, but I believe they were Chinese," she said.

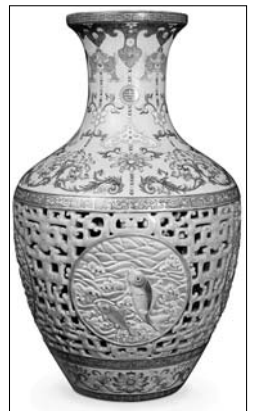
The sale highlights the intense and growing competition among wealthy Chinese buyers for rare pieces of Chinese heritage. Anything associated with imperial China appears to be particularly attractive.

According to the auctioneer, the vase dates from the 1740s, from the Qianlong (a famous emperor in Chinese history) period, and would have resided "no doubt" in the Chinese royal palace and have been fired in the imperial kilns.

The auctioneer said it was a mystery how the 16-inch-high (0.4 meter) piece ended up in London. Its provenance was described simply as belonging to an English family collection, probably acquired during the 1930s.

In October, auction house Sotheby's sold a Chinese Qing Dynasty vase for \$32.4 million. Sotheby's Asian auction series of art, jewelry, wine and watches in Hong Kong raised \$400 million.

CHINA DAILY-REUTERS



PROVIDED BY AP PHOTO

This Chinese vase sold for \$69 million at a London auction on Thursday.

SHARING HONOR AND PRIDE

PHOTO BY WANG XIAOXUE / XINHUA

Students admire the medals of two peacekeeping policewomen back from Haiti in Zhongguancun No 3 Elementary School in Beijing on Thursday. Five peacekeepers shared their experiences in Haiti with the students and teachers.



CHINA DAILY - XINHUA