

China's defense budget transparent: Finance Minister

Chinese Finance Minister Xiao Jie Tuesday shrugged off concerns over China's military transparency, saying there was no opacity in the country's defense budget. "Let me be very clear, there is no such thing as opacity in China's military spending," Xiao told a press conference on the sidelines of the country's annual parliamentary session.

China's defense budgets used to be included in a report on the draft central and local budgets submitted to lawmakers for review and approval during the National People's Congress (NPC) session.

This year, however, the report available to media made no mention of the exact figure.

"We made some new changes in the way we compiled the files," Xiao said.

The minister explained that the defense budget, along with the budgets for foreign affairs and public security, was included in a draft budget submitted to lawmakers.

A finance ministry official told Xinhua Monday that the defense budget this year would stand at 1.04 trillion yuan (about 152 billion U.S. dollars), up 7 percent year on year.