

Govt cuts budget on overseas trips, vehicles, receptions

The central government has continued to cut its annual budget for overseas trips, vehicles and receptions this year.

Central government departments will spend a maximum of 6.15 billion yuan (891 million U.S. dollars) on the “three public consumptions” in 2017, down 31 million yuan from 2016, according to the Ministry of Finance (MOF).

Expenses on overseas visits will reach no more than 1.88 billion yuan, while 3.5 billion yuan was budgeted for the purchase and maintenance of government vehicles and 761 million yuan for official receptions.

The MOF said the 2017 budget will give a priority to funding important overseas visits, reception of foreign guests, as well as participation in international meetings.

In addition, central departments will need to replace their vehicles with greener cars in line with Beijing’s policy on emission reduction, the MOF said.

China has long been bedeviled by officials using their expenses accounts to travel in the name of official visits, use work vehicles on personal errands, and enjoy luxurious receptions and accommodation.

However, the frugality campaign launched by central authorities is driving down the expenses in a bid to build a cleaner and more transparent government.