

# Giant QR code mocked as unscannable

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A giant QR code in north China's Hebei Province has left people wondering what to make of the design, which can only be scanned from high above the ground. [Photo/Xinhua]

The QR, or quick response, code in Xilinshui, a village in the city of Baoding, is made up of 130,000 Chinese juniper trees arranged to cover an area of 6.7 hectares.

The code directs mobile users to an account that promotes local tourism.

The account is managed by Haomeng Linshui Agriculture Technological Co Ltd, which claims to offer a wide range of services, including agricultural tourism and catering businesses.

The story has aroused public interest but has been mocked as a publicity gimmick with many people asking how mobile phone users are supposed to scan the code.

"Aren't we supposed to power off our phones on airplanes?" was one comment on Weibo.

"First of all, you need a helicopter," read another.

Xilinshui boasts forests, clean rivers and beautiful mountains. It was named

one of the most beautiful villages in Hebei in 2015, according to the Baoding government.

QR codes are becoming increasingly popular in China, particularly for making mobile payments, and for publicity purposes.

By the end of June 2017, China had 724 million mobile phone users.

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## [Anti-telefraud app aims to boost security](#)

A new anti-telefraud app that can identify phone numbers used in frauds and filter out phishing websites is being shown at an internet security event in Shanghai that concludes on Sept 24.

The annual event, first held in 2014, is part of the country's effort to provide security in cyberspace.

The app was co-developed by the anti-telecom crime office of the State Council and e-commerce giant Alibaba.

The Central Leading Group for Cyberspace Affairs was established in 2014 and has enacted a cybersecurity law and regulations, tightened supervision and cracked down on online crime.

"Cybersecurity includes the security of the people as well as the nation," said Shen Yi, deputy director of the Cyberspace Governance Study Center at Fudan University. He said internet security cannot be evaluated solely by technical indicators but also had to bring public benefits.

China's web users are enjoying a cleaner internet environment since various governmental departments have acted to clean up cyberspace. In a recent campaign led by the National Office Against Pornographic and Illegal Publications, an investigative team seized 50 suspects, destroyed 118 websites and took down 913 online billboards that were considered pornographic or that traded in personal information.

The office closed 73 illegal livestreaming platforms in the first half of this year and imposed lifetime bans on 1,879 streamers who severely violated regulations.

In 2016 alone, Chinese law enforcement confiscated more than 16 million illegal publications and banned more than 14,000 websites deemed harmful.

Internet forums are also being targeted. The Cyberspace Administration of China published a list of rules in August, requiring real-name registration on bulletin boards. Many believe it will contain the spread of obscenity,

violence, terrorism and false information. The regulations will take effect on Oct 1.

To standardize the way internet companies collect, store, use and transfer private information, several government departments have examined the privacy policies of 10 popular domestic internet products and services. The move aims to prevent criminals from illegally obtaining personal information from the internet. Internet companies are also playing an active role in the fight against cybercrimes.

In May, a piece of malicious software called WannaCry attacked computers worldwide. Internet security companies, including Qihoo 360, Tencent and Kingsoft Security, have since increased their security services.

A total of 1,116 “internet police offices” have been set up by the Ministry of Public Security and internet companies including Baidu and Tencent in an attempt to investigate illegal information posted on their websites.

Twenty-one universities have cybersecurity colleges, and China plans to create up to six international-standard internet security institutes over the next decade.

But a gap remains in the education of cybersecurity professionals. As of last year, China had only 143 internet security majors across 126 universities – only 10 percent of the country’s technology universities.

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## [Students steer clear of physics in gaokao](#)

Over the past few days, Fang Zhong, head of the Chinese Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Physics, has become something of an online celebrity.

“I hope you choose physics, and fall in love with it,” Fang told freshmen at a Beijing high school in August.

The remark was a response to a worrying decline in the love for physics among senior high school students. Among the 290,000 students from Zhejiang province who took this year’s gaokao – the annual college entrance exam – only 80,000, or 27.5 percent, picked physics as a prime area of interest. In Shanghai, it was 30 percent. The test is geared toward the subjects a student selects.

Criticized for forcing students to choose between science and liberal arts – requiring them to choose one path or the other – Shanghai and Zhejiang province have been running a revised system. Students can choose any three of six subjects listed, along with compulsory Chinese, math and English. But

students consider physics to be difficult and don't want to risk their gaokao score, so they tend not to pick it.

"Students who are good at science but weak in physics tended to replace it with a humanities subject," said a physics teacher surnamed Hou in Zhejiang. "Those subjects are seen as safer."

The situation has raised concerns, especially among educators.

"Physics is the basis for many other natural sciences," said Li Yuwei, a physics teacher at the high school affiliated with Beijing Normal University. "Those with a physics background who transfer to other majors are more likely to succeed."

Xiong Bingqi, vice-president of the 21st Century Education Research Institute, said that students and their parents need to think about quality and personality, not just blindly pursue higher marks.

"As long as that doesn't change, the new gaokao will be no different from the old gaokao," he said.

The Ministry of Education has set new standards on science in primary schools that took effect this semester. The standards stress inspiring children's curiosity and desire for knowledge, while regulating teaching methods.

"Younger kids are very curious about a lot of things, making it easier to get them interested," said Liu Ying, a doctoral supervisor at Peking University.

Still, Xiong Bingqi wants more to be done. He thinks colleges should separate exam results from enrollment.

"Only then can we make science education an inspiration," he said.

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## Global media map out common ground

More than 300 media representatives from around the world got together in Dunhuang, Gansu province on Tuesday to discuss how outlets can cooperate under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative.

The event – the Media Cooperation Forum on the Belt and Road – was co-hosted by People's Daily and the Gansu provincial government.

Zhang Ping, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, said during the opening ceremony, that the forum provides a platform for news agencies from around the world to communicate and enhance cooperation.

He hoped media outlets would give full play to policy interpretations and

communication exploring common interests at intersections and actively promote the initiative, which comprises the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.

Pavel Negoitsa, publisher of Rossiyskaya Gazeta, said the initiative proposed a vision for all countries on how to establish large-scale international relations. He said he considers the forum to be a platform on which to conduct dialogue and seek new opportunities for cooperation.

Jose Vera, the president of Agencia EFE, a major multimedia news agency based in Spain, said the ancient Silk Road was not only representative of the prosperity of business but also a means for cultural exchange in history. Today, the news media should assume the role of exchanging knowledge and ideas, he said.

“I see this as an unparalleled opportunity for the media industry to exchange ideas and solutions in an increasingly disrupted media environment,” said Stephen Rae, editor-in-chief of Independent News & Media in Ireland. “I believe this kind of collaboration mirrors the spirit of the ambitious Belt and Road Initiative. The visionary initiative promotes cooperative diplomacy and collaboration in making new economic models thrive.”

Olusegun Adeniyi, chair of the editorial board of Nigerian national newspaper This Day, said all the industries in Africa should be aware that the Belt and Road Initiative has created a larger space of development for everyone.

He said African countries have benefited a lot from the initiative, making it a priority to seek a path of openness and cooperation to ensure the inclusiveness. He emphasized that while implementing the initiative, people need to focus on transparency and openness, and the media have a role to play.

The forum, organized in 2014, aims to build an information highway, expand cooperation and promote communication through media collaboration. It will move to Boao, Hainan province, next year, according to Li Jun, deputy Party chief of Hainan.

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## [Woman's stolen college dream is now restored](#)

A victim of identity theft has received a college acceptance letter in Luoyang, Henan province, and now has a chance to realize her dream.

Wang Nana, 34, said she registered as a freshman majoring in marketing at the Luoyang Institute of Science and Technology, using the acceptance letter on Sept 18, something that she has dreamed about for 14 years.

"I am joining in military training with my classmates on the playground now," she told China Daily.

She said she was emotionally moved when she received the acceptance letter.

In 2003, she took the national college entrance exam, or gaokao. However, another woman – Zhang Yingying – stole Wang's ID and entered Zhoukou Vocational and Technical College in Zhoukou, Henan.

She never learned that she had been admitted to college until she applied for a bank loan in 2015. She discovered that her hopes for a better future had been upstaged by Zhang.

Zhang later graduated with a certificate that carried her own photograph but Wang's name and ID number, landing a job as a teacher at a vocational school.

The truth came out in March 2016. After a police investigation, nine officials were punished and Zhang's student status was revoked.

A bribe paid by Zhang's father, combined with lax record keeping in Zhoukou allowed Zhang to assume Wang's spot and graduate with a degree. Zhang and her father were both convicted of bribery and fraud in 2016.