

Child seats on shared bikes at issue

Shared bike companies discourage the use of removable child seats on their bikes and warn that users must take full responsibility for any accidents involving a child seat.

The child seats – which can be attached to different brands of shared bikes – popped up in online marketplaces with advertisements claiming the products are safe, reliable and easily attached and removed from the bikes.

But several bike-sharing companies including Ofo, Mobike and Mingbikes released statements saying their user agreements forbid carrying extra passengers on the bikes because of safety risks, and warning that they assume no legal responsibility if a violation leads to an accident.

Ofo said its on-street personnel, who mostly shift bikes between locations depending on demand, will attempt to persuade bike users to remove child seats if they spot them. If persuasion fails, employees are instructed to contact the police, it said.

A Mobike employee in the public relations department who asked not to be named said the company has been contacting online shopping websites that sell the detachable child seats, including Taobao, and asking them to remove the product because of safety concerns.

“We have been negotiating with Taobao and other shopping websites to remove the child seats from the shelves because of potential safety risks, but the initiative is in the hands of the websites,” the employee said.

Taobao said negotiations with Mobike are ongoing.

According to the Road Safety Law in effect since 2011, local governments can decide if bike riders can carry passengers depending on the local situation. For example, Beijing’s road safety regulation allows adult riders to take passengers under age 12 on fixed seats, while riders under 18 are forbidden to carry passengers.

Wang Weiwei, a lawyer at Beijing Zhongwen Law Firm who has an interest in laws and regulations on road safety, said the child seats designed for the shared bikes are not “fixed”, so their sale and use should be banned in Beijing and other cities with similar regulations.

“The bike company is still liable if an accident arises due to a quality issue with the bike,” Wang said. “The shopping websites, along with the manufacturers, are also liable for compensation if they fail to monitor the goods they are selling on the platform,” he said.

Zhu Wei, deputy director of the Communication Law Center at China University of Political Science and Law, said parents who knowingly use the product in violation of the user agreement should take primary responsibility for an accident or injury.

“The product manufacturer, who should have expected the safety risks the product brings about, is also to blame. In places where the product is contrary to local road safety regulations, the supervisory body should ban its sale and use,” he said.

“Shared bikes have brought people back once again to the age of bicycles, but people are already unfamiliar with related regulations and laws. The public’s awareness of the law and safety still needs to be improved.”

The Beijing Commission of Transport did not respond to a request for comment.

In July, Ofo became the first shared bike company to face a lawsuit in China over an accident involving one of its bikes. The lawsuit came in March after an 11-year-old boy was killed in a collision with a bus in Shanghai.

[Official: No room for talk about ‘HK independence’](#)

Hong Kong’s second-highest-ranking official said on Saturday that there is “no room for discussion” about separatism in the special administrative region.

Chief Secretary for Administration Matthew Cheung Kin-chung made the remark after 10 local university presidents issued a joint statement against recent pro-independence posters on their campuses.

The “Hong Kong independence” notion violates the Basic Law, Hong Kong’s sole constitutional document, Cheung said.

“Advocating the notion challenges the country’s bottom line on sovereignty and territorial integrity, which is intolerable,” he said, adding that the university heads had delivered a clear message on the independence question, and advised students to focus on other issues rather than continuing any discussion of separatism.

“There is no room for discussion,” Cheung said.

He added that the people of Hong Kong value freedom of speech, but there are certain boundaries and bottom lines for that freedom. All freedom should be enjoyed within proper limits, Cheung said.

He was joined by Paul Chan Mo-po, financial secretary of the Hong Kong SAR. Chan expressed hope that the people of Hong Kong would stop the wrangling, which he said leads to polarization.

Their calls were echoed by the city’s education sector. Ho Hon-kuen, the chairman of a local alliance of education professionals—Education Convergence

□said that educational institutions must make it clear to students that the “Hong Kong independence” notion violates the Basic Law.

Another local education professional organization□the Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers, released a joint statement signed by eight local educational groups and 11 individual heavyweights in the sector. They expressed their sadness witnessing the recent strife at the universities and vowed to stand firm on what is right in teaching Hong Kong’s next generation.

The hubbub began when posters advocating “Hong Kong independence” appeared on university campuses at the beginning of the new semester. In one of the most widely reported incidents, a confrontation developed between student union members and mainland students at Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The presidents of 10 universities in Hong Kong issued a joint statement on Friday condemning both the notion of independence and the abuse of freedom of expression. They said they do not support “Hong Kong independence” and stressed that it would be a violation of the law.

“We treasure freedom of expression but we condemn its recent abuses. All freedoms come with responsibilities,” the brief statement said.

The 10 universities were CUHK, the University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, Shue Yan University, Lingnan University, Hong Kong Education University, Polytechnic University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the Open University of Hong Kong.

In a separate statement, CUHK Vice-Chancellor Joseph Sung Jao-yiu asked the university’s student union to immediately remove pro-independence posters on campus. Otherwise the school will take action, he said.

Sung also apologized to those offended by “malicious personal attacks” and “abusive language” from CUHK students.

He stressed that the Basic Law stipulates that Hong Kong is an inseparable part of the People’s Republic of China and that CUHK opposes the concept of “Hong Kong independence”.

[Politicians await Party Congress](#)

With the 19th Communist Party of China National Congress approaching, politicians worldwide said they are observing “with great interest and high expectation” the political and policy outcome of the event, which begins Oct 18.

Politicians, scholars and opinion leaders from Europe, the United State and

Asia have expressed their predictions in interviews with China Daily a month before the once-in-five-year congress begins.

A new CPC Central Committee and a new Central Commission for Discipline Inspection are expected to be elected by 2,300 delegates nationwide elected before June to represent China's 88 million CPC members.

In reviewing China's progress, achieved by the CPC Central Committee under the leadership of Party General Secretary Xi Jinping since 2012, they concluded that China has started to take center stage globally and they look forward to seeing how China will deliver more positive solutions to global issues.

"My view is that President Xi has given a positive surprise to the world in the past five years and surely China has started to take central stage," said former Italian prime minister Enrico Letta.

Letta, now dean of the Paris School of International Affairs, part of the Paris Institute of Political Studies, said the global political landscape has changed rapidly during the past five years due to economic growth, social media expansion, technological breakthroughs and Donald Trump's US presidency.

During the global shift, Letta said, China has grasped chances to transform its economy, eliminate corruption and further lift people at home from poverty. Internationally, it has rolled out the Belt and Road Initiative and played an active role in global affairs.

Letta said his school has groups of scholars and students who have shown interest in observing the upcoming 19th Party Congress.

Former Pakistani prime minister Shaukat Aziz also has praised the outcome of Xi's work during the past five years, calling him "a peace-loving man and a world-class leader".

Aziz said the Belt and Road Initiative is an excellent example of his leadership. "President Xi, in my view, has changed the dimensions and policy framework of China," he said.

Jo Leinen, a German politician who is chairman of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with China also said Europe looks with great interests and expectations on the 19th Congress because "it is a great moment for the country, but also for the world".

In addition to the new leadership election and reshaping of the CPC institutions, Leinen said he also is watching what policy guidelines and directions China will take in the coming five years.

Leinen said he looks forward to seeing how Xi's coming policy addresses, ideas, thoughts and strategies regarding governance by the CPC Central Committee will be further developed.

Former US ambassador to China Gary Locke remains committed to facilitating US

business and trade, saying the growing prosperity in China and the country's growing middle class are impressive achievements.

He said Xi has done an excellent job as president and the Belt and Road Initiative is receiving positive reviews worldwide.

Beijing bans construction during heating season

Construction will be suspended in Beijing during its winter heating season in an effort to improve the city's air quality, the municipal commission of housing and urban-rural development said.

According to the commission, any construction work for road and water projects, as well as house demolitions will be banned from Nov. 15, 2017 to March 15, 2018 in the city's six downtown districts and surrounding suburbs.

Major livelihood projects and certain key projects involving construction must be authorized by the commission if work cannot be halted during the period.

The commission said supervision will be strengthened and violations will be strictly punished.

Beijing closes largest small commodities market

Beijing on Saturday closed its largest small commodities market.

The Tianyi wholesale and retail market had been in operation for nearly 25 years and under pressure from e-commerce in recent years.

It had two outlets, with one near Di'anmen being closed in late 2015. The Fuchengmen market with a floor area of more than 40,000 square meters has now also been closed.

The two once had more than 3,000 vendors, offering 130,000 products.

Li Yunwei, an official with Xicheng district, home to the market, said authorities will attract high-end businesses, including tech and financial

firms, to fill the building.

Over the past few years, authorities in Beijing have closed wholesale markets and small polluting firms in a bid to upgrade economy, control the population and reduce pollution.

In the first eight months of the year, Beijing dismantled 25 markets, closed another 41, and shut down or relocated more than 3,100 low-end businesses.