

Classic library restored to its former glory



Restoration of the former Shanghai Library in Yangpu District has been completed. [Shanghai Daily]

Restoration of the former Shanghai Library in Yangpu District has been completed.

Officials said yesterday that expansion work would continue to realize the original vision of its architect Dong Dayou (1899-1973).

The exterior of the 80-year-old library on Heishan Road was damaged by decades of weathering and has now been cleaned and repainted.

The yellow glazed tiles on the roof were restored in Yixing in neighboring Jiangsu Province where they were originally manufactured, an official with the district culture bureau said.

Experts have also renovated the iron gate at the library's main hall, known as "the peacock gate" due to its elegant patterns.

The paintings on the ceiling of the 156-square-meter hall have also been restored, helped by finding details of the works in a hidden cabinet in the library.

The paintings on many 1-square-meter panels have traditional Chinese double happiness and lucky symbols as well as intricate corner designs, said Ma Lili, the lead restorer.

A further expansion work will extend the 3,900-square-meter library to 15,000 square meters, following the original design charts created by Dong, who studied at the University of Minnesota and Cornell University. Dong was also renowned for his works on an earlier Shanghai city hall in 1931 and many Spanish-style houses on Wukang Road.

Upon its completion, the restored and expanded building in the Jiangwan area will serve as the Yangpu District Library with about 650,000 book and seating for 650 people.

“If the expansion goes smoothly, the new library will open to public by the end of the year,” an official with the culture bureau told Shanghai Daily yesterday.

It will serve the 1.24 million residents of the district and include an exhibition hall on the history of the library.

The library was built by the then Kuomintang government in 1930s as part of the “Greater Shanghai Plan” to bring the city government and major facilities to the area. It was expected to form part of a new city center along with government buildings, a museum, a stadium, a hospital and TV and radio stations.

The Jiangwan Stadium is still in use today.

However, construction on the library was suspended in 1935 with the start of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. Although only partially built, it still opened, before closing a year later.

In its heyday, the library had more than 20,000 books, including 1,300 foreign titles. Most were lost during the war.

After the war, the library was used to detain Japanese prisoners of war. It was then converted into a military headquarters by the Kuomintang government in 1946. Traffic police were later based in the building.

It also served as the school library and dormitory of Tongji Middle School until 2000. Then it lay empty until renovation work started three years ago.

[Plans reinforce medicine, food safety](#)



Police officers in Linyi, Shandong province, help migrant workers get payment that had been withheld by their employers last month. [Zhu Wutao/for China Daily]

The State Council, China's Cabinet, approved two important five-year plans on Friday to enhance supervision of food and medicine safety amid the government's efforts to better protect public health.

The two plans, passed at an executive conference presided over by Premier Li Keqiang, outlined the government's blueprint for ensuring food and drug safety during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20).

According to the plans, the government will keep a close eye on key areas such as schools and roadside vendors to ensure that the food they sell is safe. The authorities will enhance supervision guarding against excessive pesticide use and misuse of food additives.

The government will speed up the establishment procedures to make sure that all phases of medicine production and sales are retraceable, and the production and sale of counterfeit medicine will be severely punished.

Sample testing will cover all kinds of food, blood products, vaccines and essential medicines to improve risk surveillance and assessment, according to the plans.

The government will also speed up the amendment to the national standard on food safety and raise the safety standard of food, medicine and cosmetics.

The executive conference announced strict measures to protect the legal interests of migrant workers who were not paid by their employers.

Provincial governments will be held accountable for ensuring the timely payment of migrant workers. Provinces that produce large numbers of migrant workers are urged to help workers get their pay on time.

Companies that fail to pay wages promptly will be put on a blacklist that will be published at regular intervals. Their market access will be limited in the future.

“China has made impressive progress largely thanks to the effort and contribution by our migrant workers,” the State Council said in a statement.

Huang Leping, director of Beijing Yilian Legal Aid and Research Center of Labor, said that Li has paid attention to the legal interests of migrant workers, showing the central government’s concern over the suffering of the grassroots.

Those who refuse to pay the migrant workers should face tougher punishment in keeping with the Criminal Law, which rules that employers can face up to seven years imprisonment if they maliciously delay or refuse to pay workers, said Huang, whose NGO has helped more than 140,000 employees, mostly migrant workers, to protect their rights.

Compared with employees in many other occupations, such as teachers, migrant workers are more vulnerable to the infringement of their rights because they have little knowledge and few channels to safeguard their rights, he added.

Beijing to invest US\$4.85B in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei development

Beijing will invest 33.31 billion yuan (US\$4.85 billion) this year in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei coordinated development, according to the municipal finance bureau.

2017 will see the city rein in administrative operation funds while focusing on major missions planned to promote Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei integrated development.

The main expenditure policies incorporate efforts to guarantee the package policies made for “Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei Joint Development Plan”, speed up sub-center construction, increase support for Hebei Province, and give partner assistance to Xinjiang and Tibet, according to Han Jie, spokesman and deputy director of the bureau.

Details of the investment tell that 11.09 billion yuan will fund the new airport construction in an effort to boost the transport network in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.

A total of 11.81 billion yuan will be allocated to ensure trial operation of the new Tiantan Hospital and advance project II in Yizhuang branch of Tongren Hospital as well as new campus construction of Beijing Film Academy, Beijing Technology and Business University, etc.

Moreover, 4.25 billion yuan will be used for facilities establishment in administrative areas in the city's sub-center, and for upgrading of the green landscape along inner ring roads.

Beijing will use 5.7 billion yuan to assist oriented areas including Xinjiang, Tibet, Qinghai, Inner Mongolia and Badong, support Hebei and advance collaboration work of the South-to-North Water Diversion project.

Another 470 million yuan will be put into ecological forests construction.

408 mln trips during Lunar New Year holiday

The week-long Spring Festival holiday witnessed 408 million passenger trips in China, up 2.1 percent year on year, data from the Ministry of Transport (MOT) showed Friday.

Between Jan. 27 and Feb. 2, the number of road trips totaled 336 million, a 0.8 percent increase from last year, while train trips reached 52 million with an annual increase of 8.8 percent.

More breakdown figures showed that air travel exceeded 9.82 million trips, surging 14.9 percent from last year, while boat trips topped 10.35 million, a rise of 3.5 percent.

About 2.98 billion trips are expected to be made during this year's Spring Festival travel rush, known as Earth's biggest human migration, between Jan. 13 and Feb. 21.

The average distance traveled was 262 km as most trips were intraprovince and 87.8 percent of the trips were within a range of 500 km, MOT data showed.

Nearly 80 percent of the travels were for visits to relatives and friends, as the festival is the most important occasion for family reunions.

The Guangzhou South Railway Station was the most used transportation hub during the migration, followed by Shanghai Hongqiao Railway Station and Beijing West Railway Station, all of which are seated in major cities with significant populations of migrant workers.

State Council safeguards migrant workers' rights

China's State Council on Friday pledged to press ahead with addressing wage arrears for migrant workers to safeguard their legitimate rights and interests.

The pledge was made at a meeting presided over by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang.

Attendees of the meeting said that addressing the issue of wage arrears for migrant workers was an important step to increase their income and strengthen social justice, embodying the people-centered development concept.

The State Council will carry out special campaigns and inspection tours to crack down on such offenses, while making some cases public.

Provincial, municipal and county-level officials will be held accountable for wage arrears for migrant workers within their jurisdictions, according to the meeting.

Human resources and social security departments must maintain clear and open channels for people to report crimes, and a blacklist system should be created to punish enterprises which are in arrears with migrant workers' salaries.

Attendees also agreed to handle lawmakers' suggestions and political advisors' proposals to promote scientific decision making. They said handling lawmakers' suggestions and political advisors' proposals are important for addressing people's concerns and advancing administration according to law.

In 2016, departments of the State Council handled 7,873 national lawmakers' suggestions and 3,862 proposals by national political advisors, and more than 3,000 opinions and suggestions were taken into consideration when drafting relevant policies and regulations.

Attendees vowed to further address suggestions and proposals this year, strengthening communication with lawmakers and political advisors, and making public all responses to suggestions and proposals.

The 13th Five-Year Plans on food and drug safety were both approved at the meeting. According to the plans, local governments, particularly county-level governments, must be responsible for ensuring food safety. Firm crackdowns will be launched against illegal additives to prevent risks.

The authenticity of clinical test data on drugs will be put under closer watch, and production and sales of counterfeit drugs will be severely punished.

Sample tests and early warning will be boosted, and such tests must cover food, blood products, vaccines and essential medicines.

Moreover, technology such as big data must be harnessed to ensure food and drug safety, and national standards for medicines, medical equipments as well as cosmetics must be heightened.