

# Bus currency counters: Counting US\$2,900 daily

In Kunming, there is a group of female bus currency counters who wear blue uniforms and count tens of thousands of small bills and coins every day.

There are 4,000 buses receiving about US\$174,000 in cash daily, which means that each of the bus currency counters needs to count at least US\$2,180 in small bills and coins daily. Xiao Qiong, who has been working as a bus currency counter for 10 years, said the average daily counting amount is US\$2,900, and US\$3,633 at most.

The counting center of Kunming Bus Group is located in an ordinary building. All of the bus currency counters are female. They all wear blue uniforms and count the small bills and coins under the surveillance of more than 10 security cameras.

Xiao Qiong comes to the counting center at about 8 a.m. She needs to put on her blue uniform before entering the office. She has to stick her fingers with adhesive plaster because sometimes hard paper cuts her fingers.

It takes less than one minute for her to count more than 60 one-yuan banknotes. "The biggest trouble is folded banknotes, because it takes so much time to open the folded banknote," said by Xiao Qiong.

These bus coin counters only rest half an hour at noon and they can only leave work after finishing the counting of the cash received from the previous day. Many of them suffer from occupational diseases, such as shoulder peri-arthritis, tendovaginitis and lumbar protrusion. According to Xiao Qiong, it is easier to get cramps in hands after coming back from holidays.

For final review, the bills and coins are handled automatically by machines. The machines can distinguish the money that can still be used from the money that should be destroyed automatically. Coins will be sent to an automatic coin sorter. The small bills and coins will be handed to People's Bank of China after final review by the bus counting center.

Sometimes, passengers may put their identification cards or other belongings into bus fare box by mistake. According to the head of the counting center, passengers can demand the bus team of the line to issue a certification and bring it to the counting center. The counting center can return the personal belonging to the passengers.

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## Chinese power plant becomes world's largest fossil fuel power plant

Togtoh Power Plant in China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region officially became the world's largest operating fossil fuel power plant after two of its 660MW ultra-supercritical units were put into service, said China Datang Corporation, parent company of the power plant.

Currently, the plant has a total capacity of 6,720MW.

Located near a major coal field, the plant is able to convert about 17 million tons of coal into clean energy each year. The plant generated 339 billion kWh during 2016, or 30 percent of the total energy demand in Beijing.

Thanks to an increased focus on environmental protection, the company has successfully achieved ultra-low emissions. Ten of the plant's generating units had been denitrated by July 2014, cutting 40,200 tons of nitrogen dioxide emissions. In addition, the plant plans to perform denitration on 10 more units in the future.

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## China removes age deadline for primary school entrance

China's central education authorities have cancelled a deadline for determining children's ages when applying for primary school entrance. The move has now given provincial authorities the flexibility to decide the date to determine children's ages for primary school entrance.

September 1 was set as the first day of a school year in 1992. The Law on Compulsory Education stipulated that all children who are six years old before August 31 should go to primary school on September 1 of the year.

Many insiders believe the cancellation of the August 31 deadline will not matter a lot since the age to receive compulsory education has remained the same.

Xiong Bingqi, deputy dean at the 21st Century Education Research Institute, suggested the introduction of a flexible age for primary school entrance, as children in other countries can start school between the ages of five and seven based on their intelligence and family situations.

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## Officials in Lijiang suspended over Weibo posts

Two officials in the Old Town of Lijiang in Yunnan province have been suspended over comments made on Sina Weibo on Sunday, which appeared to attack users of China's Twitter-like social media platform.

The deputy head of the publicity department in Gucheng district, where the scenic spot is located, and the head of the district's international communication office have been suspended from their duties, while the publicity department has been urged to examine its actions, the district government said in a statement on Sina Weibo on Monday.

The Old Town of Lijiang is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a national 5-A scenic spot.

However, in recent years, there have been many reports of tourists being overcharged or being forced to shop in the city. In one incident, a tourist lost her purse and was disfigured after being beaten by a dozen people at a restaurant.

For its failure to maintain services and facilities akin to a top-rated scenic spot, the town was given a warning by the China National Tourism Administration on Saturday and told to rectify issues within six months.

Gucheng's publicity department posted a statement on Weibo on Sunday, saying it was willing to accept punishment and work to resolve issues with the services it provides.

However, when a user commented, "I will never go to Lijiang", the official account replied, saying: "You'd better not come to Lijiang! We don't need you!"

Another comment read, "Is there any risk of being beaten in Lijiang?", to which the official account replied, "It takes two to quarrel."

The replies were deleted soon after being posted, with the publicity department denying knowledge of them and promising an investigation into the case.

The replies triggered a flood of criticism among netizens, with many questioning whether the scenic spot has any desire to improve its services.

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# Court corrects dozens of wrongful convictions

Chinese courts have corrected 34 major miscarriages of justice in the past four years in order to build the public's confidence in the justice system, according to the Supreme People's Court.

Moreover, the courts have declared 3,718 defendants innocent from 2013 to 2016 to protect their human rights and other legitimate rights, the top court said in a white paper on judicial reform released on Monday.

Last year alone, 11 such cases involving 17 people were redressed by the courts.

"Correcting false charges has rebuilt the judicial protection of human rights, maintaining a fair and just image to boost people's confidence in the justice system," the court said in the white paper.

In recent years, miscarriages of justice due to the use of torture to force suspects to make confessions have aroused heated debate about the justice system.

The top court has worked with other authorities to reform the criminal justice system and determine a fundamental role for trials, as well as avoiding the use of torture and other illegal means to obtain evidence.

The guideline stipulated that defendants in cases where there is a lack of evidence should be found innocent.

In December, Nie Shubin, a villager in Hebei province who was executed in 1995, was exonerated by the top court due to a lack of evidence for his conviction of murder and rape.

In February 2016, Chen Man, a farmer in Hainan province who was wrongfully imprisoned for 23 years for homicide and arson, was declared innocent by the top court due to a lack of evidence.

Last year, the top court launched pilot projects in 18 cities to offer lenient punishment to defendants who confess to prevent long detentions over minor crimes.

According to the SPC, they will intensify efforts to exclude illegal evidence and prevent wrongful trials to protect defendants' human rights.

"It's necessary to have timely and proper judicial reform, which will focus on collecting high-quality and persuasive evidence to ensure justice," said Li Wei, a lawyer from the Beijing Lawyers Association.