

# Fujian orders paid leave to care for elders

Adults in Fujian province who are the product of single-child families will be guaranteed paid leave of up to 10 days annually if they need to care for older parents who are hospitalized, according to legislation passed by the province's top legislature.

The measure was passed on Jan 22 and is set to go into effect on March 1. It is intended to protect residents at age 60 or above, but some experts and members of the public say they are doubtful it will work in the private sector.

It says that wages and benefits for those without siblings who take time off for the specified purpose should continue to be paid.

Employers who refuse to continue paying wages and benefits will be punished, said Xu Hua, vice-chairwoman of the Legislative Affairs Commission of the Fujian Provincial People's Congress Standing Committee.

If employers still refuse to pay past a deadline, the Department of Human Resources and Social Security will levy fines ranging from 2,000 to 20,000 yuan (\$290 to \$2,900) in accordance with Regulations on Supervision of Labor Security, Xu said. They also will be listed as "promise breakers" and will be restricted in bidding, market access and obtaining financing, she said.

There were 5.15 million seniors aged 60 and above in Fujian by the end of 2015, representing 13.4 percent of the province's population. For the whole country, the number was 222 million, or more than 16 percent of the population.

Fujian's new measure follows a national law passed in 1996 by the country's top legislative body on the "protection of the rights and interests of the elderly". The law was amended twice in 2012 and 2015. According to the latest amendment, seniors have the right to obtain material assistance from the State. It also says families are required to care for them.

The Fujian regulation builds upon the national law by adding more detailed provisions, said Gan Mantang, a sociology professor at Fuzhou University.

But while calling paid leave "innovative", he said it will be difficult to put into practice.

"Workers are not even paid now for some normal vacations. It remains doubtful that this paid leave will be carried out."

He said it probably can be put into practice in State-owned institutions, but it may not be so easy in private companies, he added.

Han Yongjing, an assistant to a real estate company's chief financial officer

in Fuzhou, Fujian's provincial capital, said public servants may benefit from the policy but doubts the same will apply in the private sector.

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## Netizens debate fatal zoo mauling

A tiger that was shot to death after fatally injuring a man who had sneaked into its enclosure on Sunday in Ningbo has drawn sympathy from Chinese netizens, many of whom also expressed condolences for the family of the dead man.

There also were disagreements on who should be blamed – and often it wasn't the tiger.

The man who died, surnamed Zhang, was reported to have climbed the walls at Youngor Zoo to avoid paying the 130 yuan (\$18.90) entrance fee, but landed in the tiger enclosure, according to the Ningbo Dongqian Lake Tourist Resort Administrative Committee.

Zhang was cornered by three tigers. One clenched its jaws around his neck and head, refusing to retreat even when zookeepers lit firecrackers.

The mauling happened in front of the middle-aged man's wife and two children.

"The tiger was killed trying to catch the guy who avoided paying the zoo ticket. I feel bad for the zoo, the tiger and the guy's family," Chen Ou, CEO of Jumei, an online beauty products retailer, said on his Weibo account.

"Save it, people. This is Spring Festival. Death is death, no matter how hard you curse," said one user on Weibo. "The tiger can never be revived." While it appeared he was referring to the dead man, his last comment made clear that wasn't necessarily the case.

The comment received thousands of "likes".

Still, one of Zhang's relatives, surnamed Yang, said, "Even if he (Zhang) climbed over the walls to get in, it was the zoo's mismanagement."

In July, tigers in a drive-through wildlife park in Beijing mauled a woman and killed her elderly mother, who tried to save her. The woman, who broke the rules by leaving the car, sued the park.

In May, a 3-year-old boy fell into the gorilla enclosure at the Cincinnati Zoo in the US. A 200-kilogram male gorilla named Harambe was shot to death while dragging the child away. There was a debate over whether Harambe was trying to harm the boy or protect him.

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## New ship to serve in Sansha



A new ship is seen at a dock in Sansha of south China's Hainan province, Jan. 30, 2017. The ship completed its maiden voyage on Monday from east China's Shanghai to Sansha where it will serve. The 32-meter vessel weighs 498 tonnes. It has endurance of 45 days and is able to resist gales with speed of more than 60 kilometers per hour, according to its captain Yin Minzeng. It was designed to help extinguish fires on the sea, tow vessels that lose power and assist law-enforcement vessels. In addition, it will provide supplies for islands of Sansha. (Xinhua/Dai Chao)

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Sansha City was established in 2012 to administer islets and reefs in the Xisha, Zhongsha and Nansha islet groups as well as waters in this area.

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## **NE China province reports two H7N9 cases**

Northeast China's Liaoning Province on Monday reported two human H7N9 avian flu cases.

The two patients, from cities of Shenyang and Chaoyang, respectively, are being treated and in stable conditions, the provincial health authorities said in a statement.

In response to the disease, authorities in the two cities have taken disease control measures.

In addition to Liaoning, human infections have also been reported in the provinces of Guangdong, Guizhou, Hubei, Henan, Hunan, Jiangxi and Shandong, as well as in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Macao.

The public are advised to avoid direct contact with poultry and see doctors timely when developing symptoms including headache, fever and coughing.

At least ten people have died from the virus since the start of the year, according to disease control centers in Henan, Guangdong and Hunan provinces.

H7N9 is a bird flu strain first reported to have infected humans in March 2013 in China. It is most likely to strike in winter and spring.

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## **Top auditor: US\$2.6 bln environment funds not effectively used**

China's top auditor has found that 17.6 billion yuan (about 2.56 billion U.S. dollars) of fiscal funds earmarked in 2016 for pollution control and resource management was not used effectively.

The finding was part of the results released after the National Audit Office (NAO) sent inspection teams to 18 provincial regions to review the use of fiscal funds for water pollution prevention and control.

The NAO inspectors also found that a total of 397 water pollution protection projects had failed to achieve desired effect, and some environment funds were not distributed in accordance with special protection plans.

The NAO noted increasing pressure from regional water environment protection, adding that in some regions, environment protection laws were not enforced strictly.

In response to the audit, local authorities in the 18 provincial regions have improved the distribution and use of more than 3 billion yuan of environment funds, and pushed forward the progress of 77 water pollution control projects.

Meanwhile, the NAO urged local auditors in 31 provincial regions to audit the funds meant for water pollution prevention.

Chinese authorities have punished 3,229 government officials for fiscal violations found when auditing the central government's 2015 budget.