

Young, alone, no house and not much sex

While most watchers of Chinese society are focusing their attention on the aging population, some have turned their eyes in another direction, to an emerging group in big cities—younger men and women who live alone.

Reports say there are 50 million of them. If they were a province, it would be the 11th-most populated. Observers even created a term for this group in Chinese—kongchaoqingnian—literally “young empty-nester”.

Kongchao, or empty-nest, has been used mainly in reference to parents whose children are gone. But thanks to the media’s wordplay, young empty-nesters include those from 20 to 39 years old who work far from their hometown and eat and sleep on their own.

That’s the definition used by Taobao, a leading e-commerce platform, which issued a wide-ranging report on Wednesday based on its trade database about this group.

They are not necessarily otaku, a Japanese concept referring to those who tend to stay at home all day and drown themselves in computer animation, comics and games. Some actually have pretty good social lives and enjoy hanging out with friends.

They do not have to be “single dogs”, either—a Chinese word created to mock those who are single beyond a certain age. Some maintain long-term romances.

Neither can they be simply categorized as kenlaozu, or boomerang children, media jargon referring to those who are economically dependent on their parents. Some, though not all, earn salaries way above average.

But one thing is for sure: They feel empty. That’s where the indication of the adjective kongchao, or empty nest, grabs their hearts.

As many as 68 percent of them say they have felt lonely in the past week, according to a recent survey by NetEase, a Chinese online portal website. The results were released on Thursday. Only 14 percent say they never feel empty.

The survey interviewed 5,000 young empty-nesters and looked into big data from NetEase’s news service and two other online social service providers—Tantan and Blued, the latter focusing on the gay community.

Young men seem more likely to become empty-nesters than their female counterparts, at least based on the current available surveys, representing 64 percent of the respondents in the survey.

Sexual relations, too, have become a luxury. Nearly half of the young empty-nesters had only one sexual encounter in the past year. Another 31 percent made love once in the past six months. Only 5 percent said they have sex more

than 10 times per month. On the other hand, 64 percent of the gay empty-nesters said they have sex at least once every month.

That said, only 1 percent of all respondents placed a sexless or low-sex life as their biggest concern. Their top three concerns: no house, no partner and no hope.

Security risk management to be highlighted in China schools

Chinese authorities will list security risk management as a measure for assessing primary and middle schools and kindergartens, an official with the Ministry of Education said Thursday.

Schools and kindergartens will be told to install anti-collision facilities at school gates should conditions allow, Wang Daquan told a press conference, adding that heads of schools and kindergartens should be held accountable for school safety.

Educational departments should coordinate with relevant departments to map out guidebooks preventing and controlling bullying and violence, Wang said, citing a guideline recently issued by the State Council.

Wang said that schools should purchase liability insurance, while social organizations are encouraged to establish risk funds on school safety or student aid funds.

Beijing holds security cooperation dialogue on B&R Initiative



Meng Jianzhu, head of the Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, meets with officials attending a security cooperation dialogue on the Belt and Road Initiative, in Beijing, capital of China, May 4, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

A security cooperation dialogue on the Belt and Road Initiative, attended by officials from more than 20 countries, was held Thursday in Beijing.

Enhancing international cooperation to tackle risks and safeguard security for the Belt and Road Initiative is the common task for all countries, said Meng Jianzhu, head of the Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee.

Meng called on attendees to make full use of the dialogue to enhance exchanges of information and deepen security and law-enforcement cooperation.

More than 100 countries and international organizations have already joined the Belt and Road Initiative, a China-proposed trade and infrastructure plan connecting Asia with Europe and Africa.

“Cooperation in trade, investment, and infrastructure have been growing, thanks to the Belt and Road initiative,” Meng said, adding that the forthcoming Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation will push for further cooperation.

The high-profile forum, which will be held from May 14 to 15 in Beijing, will see at least 28 heads of state and government.

“We hope that all sides would foster the concept of common and cooperative security, and establish a sound security cooperation mechanism for the Belt and Road Initiative,” China’s Public Security Minister Guo Shengkun said at the opening ceremony of the dialogue.

Guo called for stepping up pragmatic cooperation in such areas as public

security, anti-terrorism, and protecting overseas interests.

Participants attending the dialogue pledged to strengthen security cooperation with China for the Belt and Road Initiative.

[Sandstorms sweep through northern China](#)



Tourists in mask visit Wanchun Pavilion in Jingshan Park in Beijing, capital of China, May 4, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

A sandstorm swept over much of north China including Beijing on Thursday, turning the sky yellow and reducing visibility.

The National Meteorological Center (NMC) continued its blue alert for sandstorms on Thursday evening, forecasting windy and dusty weather in north China for the next three days.

Since Wednesday, northern areas have witnessed the most severe sandstorms this year, affecting more than 10 provincial-level regions, including Beijing, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang, and covering an area of 1.63 million square kilometers, NMC data showed.

Weather forecasting authorities in Beijing issued a yellow alert for strong winds at 4:35 p.m., predicting wind speeds of up to 80 km per hour on Friday.

Most monitoring stations in the southwestern part of Beijing showed PM10 readings of more than 2,000 micrograms per cubic meter of air at 8 a.m. Thursday, according to data from Beijing Municipal Environmental Monitoring Center.

Visibility across the city was as low as two kilometers, and the air pollution has been dragged to Level VI, the highest.

According to the Beijing Times, more than 40 flights at Beijing Capital International Airport were delayed, with another 15 canceled.

Neighboring Tianjin Municipality was also hit by dust and sand, which darkened the sky and affected traffic flow.

"The sky turned gray and the smell of dust and sand crept into my room this morning. My child complained about feeling uncomfortable after playing outside," said a Tianjin resident surnamed Liu.

Traffic authorities have advised drivers to reduce their speed and to use their fog lights.

According to Lu Huanzhen with Tianjin meteorological station, the sandstorm in Tianjin should be over by Friday night.

Sandstorms were also reported in north China's Hebei Province and are expected to clear from Friday.

Zhu Jiang, head of the Institute of Atmospheric Physics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said the sand had traveled from Gansu, Inner Mongolia and Ningxia, as well as Mongolia.

Ejin Banner of Alxa League in Inner Mongolia saw the first sandstorm on Wednesday, with visibility reduced to less than 100 meters.

Strong winds reduced temperatures in the region by about four degrees Celsius. Local weather stations warned residents to keep their doors and windows closed, to buttress sheds and billboards, avoid riding bicycles and to remain alert for forest fires.

China has a four-tier color-coded system for severe weather, with red being the most serious, followed by orange, yellow and blue.

It is the first sandstorm across China this year, later and less frequent than previous years, considering at least two rounds of sandstorms had been recorded every May in past years.

Data showed the annual number of sandy days in Beijing decreased from 26 days at most in the 1950s to around three days after 2010.

Zhang Bihui, a senior engineer with the NMC environmental meteorological center, said the lower sandstorm frequency is attributed to climate change bringing weaker and less-frequent cold fronts and China's forestation efforts.

Zhang also said forests could only stop part of sand moving near the ground level, and the sand this time were actually blown to Beijing at a height of around 5,000 meters.

Sandy weather in Beijing is expected to end on Friday evening, but similar weather may be seen on Saturday and Sunday in China's southern regions.

2 dead, 16 injured in central China road accident

Two people were killed and another 16 injured and taken to hospital when a bus collided with a truck in central China's Hunan Province on Thursday afternoon.

The accident happened around 2 p.m. in Liuyang city, according to local police.

The cause of the accident is under investigation.