

Ministry issues penalties for nuclear safety

The Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) issued two administrative penalties on Feb. 14 for compromises in nuclear security.



Members of the IAEA-led Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) and staff from the Chinese National Nuclear Safety Authority visit the Fuqing Nuclear Power Plant to review safety upgrades carried out as part of work to improve safety following the 2011 Fukushima accident in Japan. The September 2016 visit was part of an IRRS review of China's regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety. [Photo: NNSA/MEP]

Dalian Teikoku Canned Motor Pump Co., Ltd., a Japanese-funded company and the biggest canned motor pump manufacturer in China, was deemed by the MEP to have violated operating protocols in the welding of nuclear power units of Yangjiang Nuclear Power Station in Guangdong Province, and failed to register the design of the canned motor pump to be used in Hongyanhe Nuclear Power Station in Liaoning Province.

Dalian Teikoku also received another penalty for its welder Zhou Shundong for violating protocol in repair welding, which has led to severe quality risks.

The MEP demand Dalian Teikoku immediately halt unauthorized activities and pay a fine of 200,000 yuan (US\$29,093). The MEP also revoked Zhou's qualification licence.

The devices involved in the penalties were still in the manufacturing stage and did not compromise the actual safety or construction of the aforementioned nuclear facilities, according to MEP statements.

Nuclear safety has been given greater attention in the wake of Japan's Fukushima incident, which was triggered by a major earthquake and the

subsequent tsunami.

Minister of Environmental Protection, Chen Jining, has cautioned against nuclear risks now that China is rapidly developing its nuclear energy and nuclear technologies, posing increasing pressure on safety supervision. He urged that precautions must be in place right from the very source, in order to maintain security capabilities and reliability.

Chen said that there must be bottom lines in terms of the safety for nuclear power generation in order to implement all possible measures to lower the risk of accidents. He also called for the enhancing of emergency response responsibilities.

MEP's statement shows that the operational nuclear power-generating units and the nuclear reactors for civil researches have maintained a sound safety record. None of the nuclear power plants nationwide have had any incident or accident above the second degree category. The accident rate involving radioactive sources has dropped to under one case in 10,000 sources each year, from above 2.5 cases in the period 2006-2010.

Liu Hua, the vice minister of Environmental Protection and director of National Nuclear Safety Administration said that there was no "absolute safety" in the nuclear industry, only "relative safety." He said a country's nuclear safety could only be guaranteed as long as the industry keeps improving its technology and the national regulator keeps enhancing its supervision capabilities, in addition to drawing lessons from previous nuclear accidents and incidents.

Dead worker not allowed in elevator

A dead house painter, killed in a new residential building in Wuhan, Hubei Province, was forbidden from being carried down through the stairs or elevators, as property owners believed it could have ominous implications.



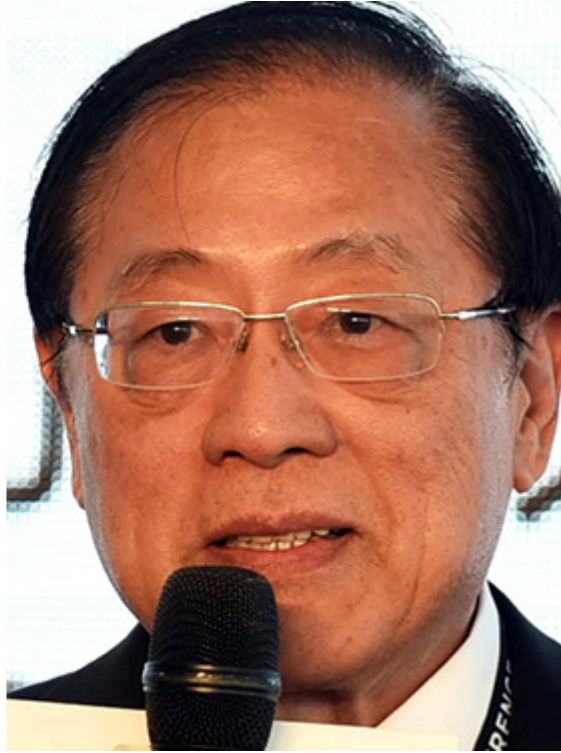
The building where the house painter fell down [Photo: Chutian Metropolis Daily]

The worker, around 50 years old, was killed after accidentally falling down from the 16th floor to a 3rd floor platform on Feb. 20.

As staff from the local funeral parlor came to carry down the body, several property owners in nearby apartments demanded that it shouldn't go through the stairs, elevators or the main part of the building, citing superstitious beliefs.

The body was lowered on the outside of the building on a stretcher with the help of a firefighting team.

[Nobel laureate, Turing Award winner enlisted by top academy](#)



Nobel laureate C.N. Yang (left) and Turing Award winner Yao Qizhi. [Photo: China Daily]

Nobel laureate Chen Ning Yang and Turing Award winner Yao Qizhi have become Chinese citizens and officially joined the Chinese Academy of Sciences as academicians—the highest academic title in China, the academy’s faculty office said on Tuesday.

They are the first overseas scientists to relinquish their US citizenship to join the official faculty of China’s highest scientific research organization. Yang, 94, will join the mathematical physics department, while Yao, 70, will enter the information technology and science department.

“They are both world renowned scholars,” the office said in a statement. “Their entry into the academy’s faculty will increase the influence of China’s scientific circles worldwide.”

Yang and Tsung-dao Lee received the 1957 Nobel Prize in physics for their work on parity nonconservation of weak interaction, becoming the first people of Chinese origin to win a Nobel Prize.

Yao became in 2000 the first person of Chinese origin to receive the Turing Award, the most prestigious award in computer science. He won for his fundamental contributions to the theory of computation such as cryptography and communication complexity.

In late 2016, both scientists had relinquished their foreign nationality and submitted their request to join the academy. The faculty office said it had to adopt new procedures to accept the two scientists, who were both foreign academicians at the time.

In order to become a foreign academician, one has to be an accomplished scientist who contributed greatly to China’s science and technology. After

being recommended by more than five Chinese members, the foreign scientist enters a biennial election and must win a two-thirds majority of academicians' votes to join their ranks, according to the academy's charter.

A foreign academician, though lacking voting rights, can advise on Chinese scientific developments and the workings of the faculty office, as well as receive academic publications and invitations to seminars held by the office. Foreign academicians can join the ranks of Chinese members once they receive Chinese citizenship.

A Chinese member can make suggestions on major Chinese scientific projects and vote on prospective new members of the academy.

There are now 754 Chinese and 78 foreign scientists in the academy. In recent years, the faculty office has worked to build a "big academician family", connecting renowned scholars from around the world to give advice and contribute to China's scientific development.

"As China's science, economy and society develop, the influence of the faculties will increase domestically and abroad," the office said.

Speech: "This Council has a responsibility to sustain the peace won in Europe seven decades ago."

Thank you Mr President, Mr Minister, and thank you to our three Secretary-Generals for their briefings today.

The three organisations – the United Nations, the OSCE, and the European Union – are all playing a crucial role to preserve peace and security in Europe, and we are grateful for all of the work that you do.

Everything that we do in this Council has come about as a direct result of conflict in Europe. Over seven decades on from the Second World War, we should be proud that Europeans now enjoy a level of stability and prosperity that would have been unthinkable to our grandparents' generation.

And as we heard so clearly in the session on Ukraine earlier this month, instability and insecurity persists in Europe. The borders of Europe are threatened today in a way not seen since the Cold War. The territorial integrity of your country, Mr President, has been flagrantly violated leaving up to 10,000 dead, with millions displaced.

At the heart of this disregard for sovereignty lies the Russian Federation and its world view that thinks Moscow's interests can and should prevail over

the sovereign and democratic choices of independent countries. It's a world view illustrated by Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and continued support for separatists in Eastern Ukraine.

Only a few days ago Russia recognised passports from the so-called "People's Republics" in Donbas under the guise of humanitarian assistance for a conflict which Russia itself instigated. A more appropriate response would be for Russia to honour its commitments under the Minsk agreements, including by withdrawing its troops and equipment from Ukraine; and using its influence over the separatists to implement the ceasefire and heavy weapons withdrawal agreement. Until all such commitments are met in full, Russia will remain under sanctions from the EU and G7 states.

Put simply, we can't stand idly by in the face of such aggression. This Council has a responsibility to sustain the peace won in Europe seven decades ago, to ensure that the rules based international order, most notably the UN Charter, is respected and upheld by all countries. We have a responsibility to ensure that wars waged across battlefields are ended through dialogue pursued across tables.

The three organisations we've heard from today are playing a vital role in those efforts.

In the face of great odds and escalating violence, the OSCE is bravely monitoring the line of contact in Ukraine. The UN is bringing vital aid and much needed relief to those suffering. And through sanctions, the EU is bringing pressure to bear on Russia to meet its commitments under the Minsk agreement.

But these organisations can't do it alone. All sides must step up and make a ceasefire a reality, implementing their Minsk agreements in full.

Sadly, the need for a peaceful, political settlement extends far beyond the borders of Ukraine. In the interests of time I won't mention every single conflict in Europe – the flashing light, after all, is meant to be a sign to stop, not an encouragement to keep going. So let me just mention a few of the other conflicts. In Georgia, the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia remain unresolved, with Russian pressure showing no signs of dissipating. In Moldova, it is long past time for a comprehensive, peaceful settlement of the Transnistria conflict; based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova with a special status for the Transnistria Region.

In Nagorno-Karabakh, a peaceful settlement also remains elusive owing to a high level of mistrust and a lack of any political will to compromise. And we support the efforts of the Co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group.

Across the continent, the United Kingdom will continue to be a force for peace in Europe, through our membership of NATO, the OSCE and, of course, this Council. Our own security has long depended on the strong partnerships of the Euro-Atlantic area, and so we are committed to strengthening those partnerships further, including by maintaining the NATO target of spending 2% of our economy on defence, and I strongly encourage all NATO allies to meet

that target.

NATO has responded in a coherent, comprehensive and measured fashion to Russia's destabilisation and provocation. It has modernised its deterrence and defence posture, as a balanced response to the instability and insecurity Russia has attempted to sow, while also being open to dialogue with Russia.

Mr President,

Three years on from the Maidan protests, we speak clearly in this Chamber today to reaffirm our total support for the principles of territorial integrity and sovereignty as outlined in the UN Charter and the Helsinki Final Act. We speak clearly to say that we do not, we will not recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea. I am proud to do so again today on behalf of the United Kingdom.

Thank you.

[News story: Celebrating Women in Whitehall: Her Majesty The Queen meets Female Permanent Secretaries](#)

The event held at The Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace acknowledged that women are being appointed to the top of the Civil Service at the fastest rate in history.

One in three permanent secretary positions in the past two and a half years went to women.

Three years after Her Majesty became Queen, the Civil Service appointed its first ever female Permanent Secretary, Baroness Evelyn Sharp.

Baroness Sharp entered the Fast Stream in 1926 just one year after women were allowed to apply. Now there are ten female permanent secretaries, making up just over a quarter of all permanent secretaries.

The event marked this great achievement but also brought together role models for future generations and future permanent secretaries.

Sue Owen, Permanent Secretary at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and diversity champion for the Civil Service said:

I was delighted to welcome so many women who have broken the glass ceiling past and present to get to the very top of the Civil Service.

Women make up more than half the Civil Service and we benefit from their skills. It is absolutely right that women should be properly represented at the highest levels. Whilst the first female Permanent Secretary was appointed in 1955, it is only in the last decade or so that real progress has been made.

We want this trend to intensify. We will support women at every level to achieve their full potential and to know they can reach the very top.

Sir Jeremy Heywood, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Civil Service said:

The Civil Service is committed to being a place where everyone can thrive regardless of background, with the aim of becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK.

Currently, over 40% of the Senior Civil Service are women. But there is still more to do, which is why we are determined to build on our progress to date by removing any remaining barriers for women and other underrepresented groups in the Civil Service.

Further information

In total, there have been 35 female permanent secretaries, including those currently in post.

The figure of ten female permanent secretaries includes Antonia Romeo, Permanent Secretary at the Department of International Trade who takes up her role in March 2017.