

Chinese soldier returns home after 54 years in India

At around 6 p.m. Saturday, Wang Qi set his feet on his homeland again in Xi'an, capital of northwest China's Shaanxi Province, after spending 54 years in a life drift in India.

"I'm finally home!" a sobbing Wang hugged his tearful brothers and sisters at Xi'an Xianyang International Airport.

Wang, a Chinese soldier, got lost in a forest on the China-India border in 1963. He was rescued by India's Red Cross Society and later handed over to Indian military. The military sentenced him in jail for seven years after regarding him as an "espionage."

Wang settled and married in a rural area in India after serving his sentence, but he always wanted to go home. During the past years, Wang sent many letters to his family members in Xuezhainan Village in Shaanxi's Qianxian County, expressing his homesickness and the desire to go back.

To help Wang return home, the Chinese embassy in India made every effort to get him an exit permit. In 2013, he received a Chinese passport and financial support from the government, which made it possible for him to return.

In Wang's home village, groups of people lined outside the house of Wang's younger brother Wang Shun on Saturday, which happens to be China's Lantern Festival, a day that traditionally represents reunion.

"After all these years, he is finally coming back," Wang Shun said as he prepared a quilt for Wang Qi. "We bought the furniture in this room many years ago."

"He has not changed much, I can still recognize him," said local villager Wang Ming. "All of us in the village have been waiting for his return, and we are just happy that he made it."

Copycat terracotta warriors spur discussions

Copycat terracotta warriors in east China have fueled hot discussions after pictures of the army replica recently surfaced on the Internet.

The replica, located in a theme park in Taihu County, Anhui Province, boasts

up to 1,000 warriors. Pictures on the park's official website show the warriors standing in line, and on one side of the army stands a statue of China's first emperor Qinshihuang, waving his hand.

According to the website, the park was completed in 2008, and the warriors have been open to visitors ever since.

The original terracotta warriors are located in Xi'an City, capital of northwest China's Shaanxi Province. The relics were first discovered by farmers underneath a pomegranate orchard in Xi'an in 1974.

The images of the copycat army fueled a heated discussion on the Internet, with many questioning whether the display of the Anhui warriors is an act of infringement.

Authorities with the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum, which manages the Xi'an terracotta warriors, apparently caught wind of the replica and have issued a statement on its website.

The museum said that any act of using the museum's name and its registered trademarks without authorization is an act of infringement.

"The museum did not permit or give authorization to the displaying of the copycat terracotta warriors in Taihu County of Anhui Province," said the statement. "We reserve the right to take legal action against any violators in accordance with law."

"The replicated warriors pose unfair competition," said Yan Yuxin, a lawyer for the museum. "We have sent a lawyer's letter to them."

Yang Ming, a law professor with Peking University, said that the key is to find out whether the Anhui organizers have advertised their replica as the genuine one. "If they did promote it as a replica, then it is a debatable issue."

On the Anhui park's official website, an introduction to the warriors said that "the replica of the terracotta warriors is intended to let the public feel the culture of the Qin Dynasty."

Liu Simin, deputy head of the tourism branch of China Society for Futures Studies, said that such copycat behavior is not worth promoting.

"Making such replicas is disrespectful to the original ones," Liu said. "Related departments should come up with ways to handle infringing behavior, which are still rampant in China."

The hopes, concerns around Lantern Festival

Are you curious about the Chinese Lantern Festival? Do you have a vague idea and would like to know more? Archeologists and craftsmen could help shine some light on this yearly event.

A 1,400-year-old fragment of silk, about the size of a piece of A4 paper, depicts lanterns hanging on trees. Surrounding the trees are rams and chickens.

This scene is all about the Lantern Festival, confirmed Adliabulizi, a research fellow with Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Museum.

“Chicken and rams are homophones for the Chinese characters for auspiciousness,” he said. “This shows that people were celebrating Lantern Festival back then.”

The fabric was found in the Astana Ancient Tombs in Turpan, Xinjiang, in the 1970s. The tombs are 2km north of the ruins of an ancient city called Gaochang, which was active from the 1st Century B.C. to the 13th Century A.D. The tombs were the final resting place of officials and ordinary people of different ethnic groups in Gaochang.

Traditionally, Chinese make lanterns and rice balls, which represent reunion, on Lantern Festival, the first full moon of a new lunar year, which falls on Feb.11 this year.

Cao Zhenrong, 73, has been making festive lanterns since he was four. This year is the Year of the Rooster, and Cao has made almost 2,000 chicken-shaped lanterns.

It used to take three days to complete all of the 30 plus steps needed to finish just one lantern, as split bamboo and paper were the usual materials. Today wire is used.

“Not many of the younger generation are interested in lantern making,” said Cao. “There were more than 200 lantern workshops in Nanjing in the 1960s. Only 20 remain today.”

Cao is hoping to innovate the craft so that it does not die out.

“I cannot just make lotus lanterns all the time, so I have experimented with silk and electricity,” he said.

Lantern Festival marks the end of the Spring Festival celebrations. Duan Xujian insists on staying at home until Lantern Festival even though his company reopened on Feb. 3.

“This is how the Spring Festival holiday should end,” said Duan, 28, from

Nanyu Village, Qinyuan County in north China's Shanxi Province.

He was one of 400 villager who featured in a group photograph, taken Saturday morning. It was the first time the village has ever come together to have their photograph taken, according to 69-year-old villager Liu Guangming.

Aside from lion dances , rural folk performances, and lantern shows, villagers in Nanyu have prepared a zigzag pathway with wood sticks. All the villagers have to navigate it, in the hope that the road ahead is smooth in the new year.

Duan will return to work after this weekend. But for Chu Fengshan, the textile company that he works for in Jiangsu in east China is still struggling to fill its vacancies.

"We had 100 employment opportunities that we advertised at three separate job fairs in Henan province, but only recruited five people," said Chu.

More and more rural residents are looking for jobs closer to home, said Liu Peifeng, section chief in charge of rural workers at Henan provincial bureau of human resources and social security.

More than 28.7 million rural workers in Henan were employed within the province in 2016, more than the number of outbound migrant workers for six consecutive years, according to the bureau.

In east China's Fujian Province where the weather is much warmer, people are preparing to plough the fields. In Julin Village, Changting County, young men parade the fields holding a statue of the Guan bodhisattva on their shoulders to pray for a harvest.

On the other side of the Taiwan Strait, "Tong Liang Huo Long," a dragon dance under a shower of melted iron, debuted in Taiwan.

Named a national intangible heritage originating from Chongqing, nearly 10,000 people went to watch the performance staged in Nantou County, according to Lin Ming-chen, the county head.

"We were all thrilled by the fantastic performance," said Lin. "It was a delightful cross-Strait exchange. We look forward to more like it!"

[Beijing reports one H7N9 case](#)

Beijing on Saturday reported a human H7N9 avian flu case, the first human infection in the capital city in 2017, authorities said.

The patient, surnamed Zhang, is a 68-year-old man from Langfang City of neighboring Hebei Province. He is in a critical condition and is receiving

treatment.

Zhang developed syndromes on Jan. 29 and received treatment in a local hospital in Langfang. He was transferred to Beijing on Feb. 6 as his condition deteriorated. Zhang was confirmed to have been infected by the H7N9 strain of avian flu on Saturday. He is suspected to have had contact with live poultry.

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

[Press release: Blockbuster year for the Brits](#)

Spend on UK film and TV production in the UK soared in 2016, reaching £1.6 billion, a 13 per cent increase on 2015, according to figures released by the BFI. Of that, £1.35 billion was invested by 48 major inward investment films basing themselves in the UK.

Showing that we're more than capable of competing on the world stage, this year's top three grossing films at the UK box office were all made on British soil: Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them and Bridget Jones's Baby. Overall there was a good turnout at the UK box office too, with cinema ticket sales at a second time high, raking in £1.227 billion.

But film wasn't the only sector to thrive in 2016. TV too had its moment, with overseas companies flocking to the UK to spend £478 million on making high-end TV shows such as The Crown and Game of Thrones.

Foreign markets were also clamouring for our creative content, with figures from PACT's UK Television Exports Report showing that UK's sales of television exports to international markets have risen by 10 per cent, from £1.2 billion in 2014/15 to £1.3 billion in 2015/16. There's also been a large increase in sales in the Chinese market, which is up 40 per cent on 2014/15, with the UK and China TV co-production treaty signed at the end of last year sure to further boost those numbers.

Culture Secretary Karen Bradley said:

It's no surprise that our creative industries go from strength to strength when we can boast such superb talent and expertise. The UK is an international powerhouse of film, TV and music and this Government will keep backing our creative brilliance. As we prepare to leave the European Union this success story is a great advert

for Global Britain – an outward-looking, globally-minded country that is open for business.

Proving that music is the UK's forte, figures released by UK record labels' association the BPI, showed that the continuing surge in audio streaming and accelerating demand for vinyl LPs helped achieve another successful year for British music in 2016. We were listening to even more music last year thanks to an explosive rise in audio streaming, which has increased 500 per cent since 2013.

Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive of BPI and the BRIT Awards said:

Propelled by the remarkable talent of its artists, and the investment and digital engagement of its record labels, British music has conquered the world. This success has not just fuelled our music exports – in 2015 accounting for 1 in 6 albums sold around the world – it has enhanced the global appeal of British culture and in the process also made music the UK's international calling card.

Our acts dominated the UK charts, with 7 out of the year's top 10 best-selling artists coming from the UK. The popularity of Tottenham's Adele showed no sign of diminishing, with the songstress again winning 2016's best-selling artist album – the 12th year in a row the best-seller has come from UK. Other British acts that fared well include Michael Ball and Alfie Boe, whose duets album Together was the 2016's best-selling new release artist album, while The 1975 topped both the UK and US charts. With the BAFTAs and Grammys set to take centre stage this evening, and the BRIT awards and Oscars just around the corner, it looks like there will be even more to celebrate in 2017.

Adele and the late David Bowie lead the charge at this year's Grammys, and there's a visual feast of TV and film up for nomination at this year's BAFTAs including Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them.

The Brit awards will be the ultimate British celebration of some of our best talent, and with a slew of British talent vying for Oscars, we will be able to reaffirm to the world that our creative industries are a force to be reckoned with, even though we contain less than one per cent of the world's population.

According to the British Film Commission, there are a whole host of UK-made films set to wow us this year as they hit the big screen including Warner Bros.'s Ready Player One, Disney's Beauty and the Beast, Lucasfilm's Star Wars: The Last Jedi and Twentieth Century Fox's Murder on the Orient Express.

And proving that Britain is still open for business and has the global reputation to attract talent from overseas, expect to see the likes of Mary Poppins Returns and detectives Holmes and Watson being filmed in the UK this year.

Amanda Nevill, CEO of the BFI said:

British stories and British talent are firing the global imagination. Films and television series such as I, Daniel Blake, Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them, Notes on Blindness and The Crown are generating investment, creating jobs and thrilling audiences – and fingers crossed winning yet more awards – at home and internationally. UK Film and TV employ tens of thousands in the UK, help bring international investment to our shores and take British culture to nations around the world. We can all be justifiably proud of the UK's success in these most dynamic and exciting art-forms.

As for TV produced in the UK, we can expect to see more of HBO's Game of Thrones on our sets, along with Netflix/Left Bank's The Crown, Starz'/Company Pictures The White Princess, Crackle's Snatch, TNT's Will and Sony's Outlander.

It looks to be a stellar line-up for music too, with the likes of Stormzy, Gorillaz, Paul McCartney, Ed Sheeran, Tinie Tempah, Liam Gallagher and Deep Purple all set to put out new music.

Notes to Editors

- The UK-China TV Co-Production Treaty was signed in December 2016. Building upon the Film Co-Production Treaty, this is the second country to have this in place.
- Inward investment for Film is: £1.35 billion and for TV is 250 million.
- In 2014, the UK film industry had a turnover of £7.7 billion. The industry's direct contribution to Gross Domestic Product in 2014 was £4.3 billion. The industry exported £1.2 billion worth of services in 2014, made up of £519 million in royalties and £655 million in film production services. Exports in 2014 were 21 per cent higher than in 2005. The UK film trade surplus in 2014 was £715 million. (BFI).
- Exports for Music in 2014 stood at £644 million.