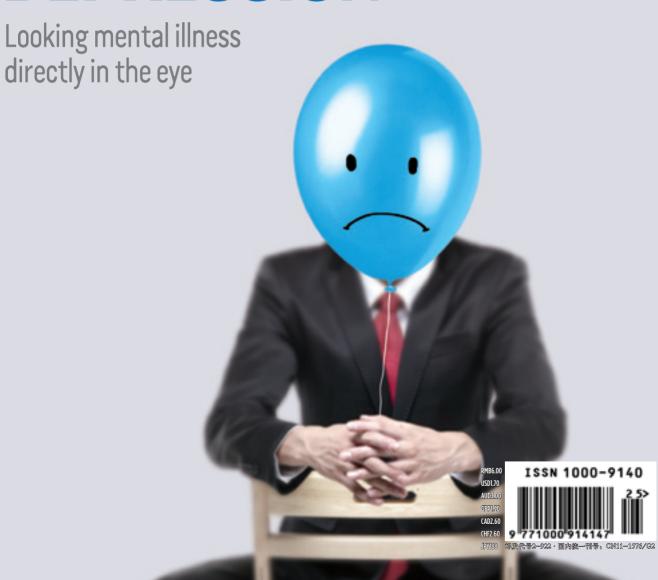
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THE FACE OF DEPRESSION





An Africa-oriented English monthly covering China and Africa published by BEIJING REVIEW, ChinAfrica is the leading publication in China featuring news, views and analysis for an African audience.

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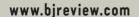
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China's PV industry









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EDITOR'S DESK

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Shining a Light on Depression

As recently as a few decades ago, few Chinese had so much as heard of the mental disorder, depression. Many who suffer from the condition, along with their families and their communities, are still not well informed about it: as a result, few of those afflicted visit hospitals to address their sadness or dour moods.

Today, recognition of this psychological disorder is spreading across China. Depression is now considered a major mental condition affecting public well-being. According to statistics from the Chinese Association for Mental Health, the incidence of this disease is about 3 to 5 percent in the country, and nearly 200,000 people commit suicide every year due to depressive syndromes. Treating the illness requires an annual combined expenditure of 60 billion yuan (\$9.6 billion).

While it is not clear what specifically causes depression, a widely accepted theory is that-in addition to an individual's neurobiological framework—mounting stress and a fast-paced lifestyle can exacerbate the deceleration of serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine receptors in the brain.

In recent years, the Chinese Government has paid more attention to the prevention and treatment of mental diseases, including depressive syndromes. On May 1, 2013, the Central Government issued its very first Mental Health Law in an effort to enhance treatment options and promote

research in this field. Hospitals and medical organizations, too, continue to wage public awareness campaigns and provide pharmaceutical and psychiatric treatment options.

There are still many obstacles to overcome, though. At present, there are only around 20,000 registered psychological doctors in China—far fewer than in many developed countries. The Chinese population, too, has yet to openly embrace the importance of mental health and treatment. It is reported that as many as 90 million people in China may suffer from depression, but few patients can or are willing to be seen at the sparse number of psychology clinics available.

To reduce depression's effects on public health, governments should adequately fund and invest in research on this condition as well as making related information widely available to the public.

To make greater strides in the destigmatization of depression, the public also needs to raise its understanding of the illness. Medical organizations should work with schools, communities and villages to educate citizens on effective methods of stress relief and the benefits of psychological or psychiatric therapy. Only when all walks of society are educated on the causes and treatments behind depressive disorders, can those affected live a better life.

WRITETOUS



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GIVING BLOOD, GIVING LIFE

A man volunteers to have his blood drawn at a mobile blood drive in Bozhou, east China's Anhui Province, on June 12. Many people across the nation stepped up to donate in celebration of World Blood Donor Day, which falls on June 14 each year, to save the lives of those who are in need.

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Drill at Sea

Sailors stand on China's missile destroyer *Haikou* at a naval port in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province, on June 9. Chinese naval vessels, including *Haikou*, the missile frigate *Yueyang*, the supplier ship *Qiandaohu* and the hospital ship *Ark Peace*, set sail from Sanya and Zhoushan in Zhejiang Province to the United States on June 9 to participate in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) multinational naval exercises.

It is the first time that the Chinese navy has participated in joint maritime exercises organized by the U.S. navy.

Massacre Heritage

China is applying to the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to list 11 sets of documents related to the 1937 Nanjing Massacre in the Memory of the World Register, said Zhu Chengshan, curator of a memorial hall for victims of the mass murder, on June 11.

On December 13, 1937, the invading Japanese army occupied Nanjing, capital of China, and launched a sixweek massacre. Chinese records show more than 300,000 people, including disarmed soldiers and civilians, were murdered.

According to Zhu, who initiated the application, the documents, which include diaries, films, photographs and testimonies, depict the brutality of Japanese invaders in the massacre. On June 10, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying confirmed that China had applied to UNESCO to list documents relating to the Nanjing Massacre and Japan's wartime sex slaves, also known as "comfort women," on the Memory of the World Register.

Created in 1997 by UNESCO, the register protects heritage documents.

Historians estimate that 200,000 women were forced into sexual servitude by Japanese forces during World War II, most of them from countries invaded by Japan at that time.

Care for Seniors

More land has to be made available for the building of homes for the elderly in China, according to a recently unveiled regulation.

LITTLE LEAGUE

Children from 10 kindergartens in Yantai, Shandong Province, take part in the World Cup for Kids competition on June 11 to celebrate the approaching World Cup football tournament in Brazil



The new requirement was issued on June 9 by the ministries of civil affairs, land and resources, finance, and housing and urban-rural development, to address the lack of nursing institutions for elderly people across the country.

New residential districts are required to be equipped with home-based or community service institutions while built-up housing estates should introduce such facilities within a year, according to the regulation.

Land for such facilities cannot be used for other purposes, the regulation says, adding that inspections will be conducted to tighten supervision.

The population of those at or above 60 hit 202 million in China at the end of 2013, totaling 15 percent of the population. The figure is expected to exceed 300 million by 2025. Two thirds of them live with illnesses, and more than 36 million are unable to take care of themselves to some extent.

Carbon Trade

China is the world's second largest carbon trading market following the EU, according to data released on June 10.

Xie Zhenhua, Vice Minister of the National Development and Reform Commission, said that Chinese enterprises had traded over 3.85 million tons of carbon emission quotas as of May 23.

These quotas were sold for 125 million yuan (\$20.09 million).

China began pilot carbon trading in 2011 and has approved seven regional trading schemes.

Under the schemes, enterprises that produce more than their allotted allowance of emissions, are allowed to purchase unused allowances on the market from those that cause less pollution. Similarly, those who emit less than their allowance can profit by selling their unused allowance.

Carbon trading is designed to simultaneously discourage emissions and raise money to fund research on environmental protection.

In an action plan released last

month, China aims to cut carbon dioxide consumption per unit of economic output by 4 percent in 2014.

No Blood Diamonds

China will continue to combat blood diamond trading, an official said on June 10.

Wei Chuanzhong, Deputy Director of the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ), made the remarks at a meeting of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) in Shanghai.

Wei is incumbent chair of the Kimberley Process, a joint government, industry and social initiative to stem the flow of blood diamonds, also known as conflict diamonds, which are used to finance wars.

The scheme imposes extensive requirements on its members to enable them to certify shipments of rough diamonds as "conflict-free" and prevent blood diamonds from entering legitimate trade.

Wei said at the meeting that the AQSIQ has set up a team to safeguard the implementation of the scheme.

China is now the world's second largest diamond consumer and fourth largest rough diamond trader.

From 2003 when the Kimberley Process was established to 2013, China's ports inspected 53,400 batches of rough diamonds worth \$36.6 billion in accordance with the KPCS. "Raising fines on copyright infringement is consistent with globally recognized practices and China's commitments to relevant international conventions."

Chang Yachun, a Beijing-based copyright lawyer





Catch Me

Designer Paulo Grangeon poses with his paper pandas at Hong Kong International Airport on June 9. The 1,600 paper pandas will be displayed throughout Hong Kong from June 9 to 21.

Copyright Protection

China is considering raising penalties for copyright infringement, according to a draft amendment published on June 6.

The draft amendment to the Copyright Law will see miscreants face fines worth five times their illegal gains, or up to 250,000 yuan (\$40,175) when the exact sum cannot be established. Previously fines were three times the profit or 100,000 yuan (\$16,070).

The draft document was published by the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council, the nation's cabinet, to solicit public feedback, which should be submitted before July 5.

Education for All

Primary students attend class at a village school in Jiangxi Province on May 8.

On June 9, the Chinese Government said that it will allocate 175 billion yuan (\$28.12 billion) over the next five years to improve education in poverty-stricken areas.

The appropriations are part of the authorities' efforts to balance allocation of education resources between urban and rural areas in a bid to realize equal access to education.



THIS WEEK ECONOMY

Mobile Internet Buy

Alibaba Group, China's largest e-commerce company, on June 11 announced it will purchase UCWeb, a provider of mobile Internet software and services. Although the two sides did not reveal the value of the deal, the merger is expected to be the largest in China's Internet business history.

Alibaba currently holds 66 percent of UCWeb's stake with a total investment worth \$686 million.

UCWeb board chairman Yu Yongfu, who will act as president of Alibaba's future UC mobile platform, said the valuation of the Alibaba-UCWeb merger far exceeds the one set by Baidu, China's most popular search engine, which purchased 91 Wireless for \$1.9 billion last July.

Alibaba founder and Chairman Jack Ma said that the merger deal was agreed on because both Alibaba and UCWeb believe that the information technology era is being replaced by an age of "data technology."

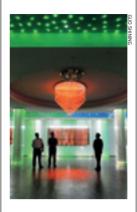
The merger is expected to present a challenge to Baidu, as UCWeb's UC Browser is the world's most popular mobile browser, boasting 5 million users. Founded in 2004, the company was one of China's earliest Internet firms to specialize in mobile services.

Export Recovery

China's exports continued to recover in May amid improving demand in developed countries, which analysts believe will ease concerns over a slowdown and help stabilize growth.

Exports increased by 7 percent in May from a year earlier period, outpacing the 0.9-percent increase in April and 6.6-percent drop in March.

However, imports in May declined by 1.6 percent year on year, compared with the 0.8-percent growth in April and 11.3-percent slump in March, according to the General Administration of Customs.



A REVOLUTION IN LIGHTING

Visitors observe lighting made from plastic optical fiber in a company in Anhui Province, on June 11. Plastic optical fiber is gradually replacing copper core optical fiber in China "The May export performance implies a consolidation compared with the underlying momentum in April," Louis Kuijs, chief economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland in China, said in a note.

Experts, however, warn of a very challenging outlook for China's foreign trade in 2014.

Inflation Up

The consumer price index (CPI), a main gauge of inflation, increased 2.5 percent year on year in May, up from 1.8 percent in the previous month, according to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

Kuang Xianming, Director of the Research Center for the Economy at the China Institute for Reform and Development (CIRD), highlighted a positive change in the CPI data.

"A notable change is that the CPI reversed the month-on-month decline recorded for the previous two months, signaling that the endogenous power of the economic growth is increasing," Kuang said.

China's producer price index (PPI) contracted 1.4 percent year on year in May, following a 2-percent decline in April, said the NBS.

Both the year-on-year and monthon-month decreases narrowed from those in the previous month, signaling rebounding market demand in industrial products, said Yu Qiumei, a senior statistician with the NBS.

The index, which measures inflation at the wholesale level, has been in deflationary territory for 27 consecutive months, the longest drop since the 1990s.

IPO Resumes

The China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) approved 10 initial public offering (IPO) applications on June 9, marking the first official restart of IPOs since mid-February.

Five applicants will be listed on the Shanghai Stock Exchange and the rest on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange, the CSRC said in a Weibo posting. But it did not reveal their names.

The applicants and their brokers will set the share-issuing dates after talking with the two bourses and release



In the Bank

Men Aijun, a farmer from Chendizi Village of Shandong Province, shows his deposit certificate at the local grain bank on June 10.

To help local farmers better store their grains, the village established a grain bank in 2012. To date, over 2,000 households have used the bank.



Come and Play

Visitors experience a 4G-based smart vehicle operation system at the Mobile Asia Expo 2014 in Shanghai on June 11. The three-day event attracted over 24,000 visitors to appreciate the latest invention in mobile information technology.

their prospectuses in the coming days.

The commission plans to approve some 100 IPO applicants from June to the year-end. About 600 companies are now awaiting listing on the mainland's two stock exchanges.

Logistics Plan

The State Council, China's cabinet, on June 11 approved a plan for the development of the logistics industry.

The plan specifies 12 key projects in the sector, including farm produce logistics, manufacturing logistics and supply chain management, as well as logistics for the recycling of renewable resources, said a statement released after a cabinet executive meeting.

The country should have a modem logistics service system in place by 2020 to make the sector more standardized, information-based and intelligent, as well as raise its overall efficiency and profitability, the statement said.

The meeting also decided to implement a single tax rate of 3 percent for

AWAITING THE FLOOD

A ship passes through a gate in the Three Gorges Reservoir in Yichang, Hubei Province, on June 9. The reservoir is fully prepared for the coming flood season



companies engaging in running water supply, small-scale hydropower generation and some other areas from July 1. Their tax rates currently range from 3 percent to 6 percent. The cut will reduce the burden of those companies by 24 billion yuan (\$3.9 billion) each year, the statement said.

Targeted Easing

China's central bank announced on June 9 that it will cut the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) by 0.5 percentage points for banks engaged in proportionate lending to agricultural and small firms. The cut will take effect from June 16.

The central bank provided the details following a cabinet decision late last month to launch targeted RRR cuts for banks engaged in lending to agriculture-related businesses and small and micro-sized companies, in efforts to enhance financial support for the real economy.

"According to the standard, the targeted RRR cut will cover around two thirds of city commercial banks, 80 percent of rural commercial banks above county level as well as 90 percent of rural cooperative banks above county level," said the central bank.

Meanwhile, the central bank will cut the RRR for finance companies, financial leasing firms, and automobile finance enterprises by 0.5 percentage points. The cut aims to improve the capital use efficiency of these companies and boost consumption, the central bank said.

The new RRR cut is expected to guide credit support to the agricultural sector and small companies, areas that are often deemed to have limited access to financing.

This is the second time within two months that the central bank unveiled a targeted RRR cut to support sections of the economy. On April 22, a RRR reduction was introduced for county-level rural commercial banks and rural credit cooperative unions.

The central bank said this did not mean a change to the country's fundamental monetary policy, however.

Expanding Capacity

China will build a multi-tier transport system along the Yangtze River to help boost construction of an economic belt along the waterway, the State Council said on June 11.

Better use of the so-called "golden waterway" can boost economic integration between developed and impoverished regions and inject fresh energy into China's economic growth, read a statement released after a State Council executive meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang.

The country will dredge the Yangtze River and increase the navigation capacity of the Three Gorges Dam, according to the statement.

The State Council said the country is also working on standardized ships adapted for the Yangtze and will encourage the development of energy-saving vessels.

The river runs east to west over 6,300 km and is the world's third largest in terms of length and water volume. The waterway joins less developed inland provinces to prosperous Shanghai.

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THIS WEEK WORLD





FRANCE

People wearing World War II British uniforms stand in front of 22,000 British national flags on June 6 in Asnelles, Normandy, during a ceremony marking the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings that helped defeat Nazi forces



Mogadishu residents huddle around a television to watch the opening game of the 2014 FIFA World Cup on June 12. The international men's soccer tournament takes place in Brazil from June 12 to July 13







PAKISTAN

Security personnel conduct a body search near Jinnah International Airport in the southern Pakistani port city of Karachi on June 10. Dozens were killed when a group of militants attacked the airport two days earlier



ARGENTINA

Rice is poured onto a giant pot to prepare the world's largest rice-with-chicken dish in La Plata on June 8 as part of a fund-raising program for a local children's hospital









NEPAL

Children hug trees in a bid to set a new world record for the largest coordinated mass tree-hugging as they celebrate World Environment Day on the outskirts of Kathmandu on June 5. A total of 2,001 Nepalese students joined in the activity



RUSSIA

Young people splash water at each other during a flash mob at a fountain in St. Petersburg on June 8

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THIS WEEK PEOPLE & POINTS

CROWNED PAIR

Chinese tennis players Peng Shuai (right), from the mainland, and Hsieh Su-wei, from Taiwan, won their second Grand Slam title together by defeating Sara Errani and Roberta Vinci of Italy 6-4, 6-1 in the women's doubles final at the French Open on June 8.



Peng and Hsieh also won the women's doubles title at Wimbledon and the WTA Championships in 2013. In February, Peng clinched the top spot in the global doubles rankings, making her the first Chinese player to become No.1 in either the singles or doubles in rankings history.

Peng and Hsieh, who were born just four days apart in January 1986, played tournaments together as juniors and teamed up in 2008 after turning professional.

Entrepreneurs Face New Tasks South Review June 4

Modern Chinese enterprises started to develop in 1984, when the focus of China's reform shifted from the countryside to cities. That year, former leader Deng Xiaoping's inspection tour of the south spurred the birth of such modern institutions as Lenovo, Haier, and Shanghai Vanke.

Over the past 30 years, these industrial enterprises have played an integral role in pushing forward China's market economy, and the entrepreneurs who have grown alongside them have accumulated wealth and enjoyed the high social status that comes with it.

What also comes with prosperity is not just prestige and honor but responsibilities. At this

transformative juncture—when China is facing multiple modernization, economic, and territorial issues—Chinese entrepreneurs should set positive examples, serving as astute role models for the betterment of their country and its people.



Free Trade Zones Outlook Weekly June 2

For the last eight months, the Shanghai Free Trade Zone has successfully been in operation, spurring several local governments in China to submit materials establishing their cities as "free trade zones" as well. Yet these applications only show that many still don't understand the true purpose behind these local-economy-boosting hubs.

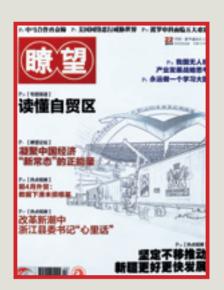
A free trade zone acts as an important platform for implementing new commercial reforms, namely aimed at increasing an area's degree of marketization, or the diversification of ownership of its businesses. Successfully carrying out such reforms on a city-by-city basis will decide whether or not the country's overall revitalization can lead to new economic breakthroughs.

Some local governments, however, are requesting preferential treatment and scrambling to invest in the creation of new infrastructure—methods that have been widely used over the last 20 years to win bids for economic development zones and industrial parks. As a result, the utility of the Chinese free trade zone in carrying out reforms is overlooked, if not entirely forgotten.

"We welcome Mandarin Chinese teachers and Chinese engineers to teach in Belarus. We hope to cooperate with Chinese universities in both planning the curriculum and teacher training."

Natallia Baranava, President of Minsk State Linguistic University in Minsk, Belarus, at a two-day International Conference on Language in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province "The increase of Chinese college graduates choosing to start their own businesses has resulted from government support in recent years, such as reduced intervention, the offer of micro-loans and cuts in taxes and fees.

Chen Yu, Vice President of the China Association for Employment Promotion



Should such a trend continue, the latest attempts at market modernization may be postponed indefinitely.

An industrial experiment like the Shanghai Free Trade Zone is not simply a combination of manufacturing and exporting. It is a critical step in the rise to greater internationalization and the expansion of economic opportunities. Historically, its task is to enable reforms. Local governments applying for the free trade zone title, then, would do well to keep this in mind and focus more on exploring ways to diversify market ownership than waiting for special favors.

Tobacco Ads The Beijing Times May 6

The State Council's newly passed draft amendment on the Tobacco Advertisement Law is seen a big step forward compared to its former iteration, but there is still a wide gap between the stipulations in this amendment and those suggested by the WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. The latter explicitly promotes a "comprehensive ban" on all tobacco ads, while the new draft legislation provides some exceptions.

Some might contend that a total ban is too strict. Advertising has always been an effective way to persuade public opinion and wield influence, especially over youths. In theory, though, the most effective way to curb tobacco use in all age groups is to impose an outright embargo on its advertisement. A legally enforceable, comprehensive

ban could empower watchdogs and even aid law enforcement agencies to curb tobacco's effects on public health.

However, in real life, regardless of the number of places and occasions marked off-limits by the amendment, these promotional campaigns and the companies behind them will always find a way to sell their products. Thus, a non-comprehensive ban may actually leave the door open for such advertisements to thrive and grow into new territories. Only when the proverbial door is sealed tight and tobacco companies lose their stranglehold on the market can we expect to decrease use of this harmful product.

Unglue some officials' eyes from the industry's huge profits, and they will be able to see the significant improvements in air quality, sanitation, and public health that a reduction in tobacco consumption might provide. Any legislation passed should fully block the undue influence of tobacco ads for the greater benefit of society.

♦ YOUNG HEROES

High school graduates Liu Yanbing (right) and Yi Zhengyong from Yichun, Jiangxi Province, were unable to sit the national college entrance exam on June 7-8 due to injuries sustained on May 31 while trying to stop a man attacking passengers with a knife on a bus.

Liu suffered serious injuries to his back and head while trying to take the knife from the attacker. Yi suffered a wound on one hand.

Yichun Government has given "Good Samaritan" awards to both, and the provincial education department decided to organize a separate college entrance exam for them after they have recovered from their injuries.

More than 10 universities including the top Tsinghua University said that they would be interested in enrolling the two students.



"Modern Danish design, environmental protection and green development concepts are also very popular in China. Good bilateral relations, cultural exchanges and complementarities made Copenhagen a natural choice to host the first Chinese Culture Center in a Nordic country."

Li Jinsheng, Cultural Counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Denmark "Improving the retirement system for members of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Chinese Academy of Engineering and breaking the current thinking on life tenure could be mutually reinforcing."

Deng Ziqing, commentator of newspaper *Changjiang Times*



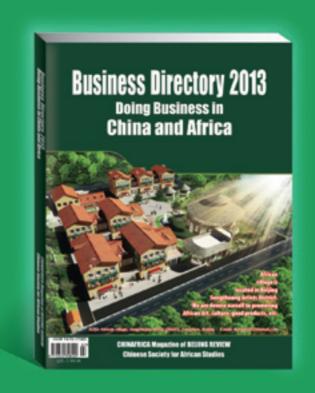
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COVER STORY

LONELY STRUGGLE

Modern life brings a new perspective on dealing with depression By Yuan Yuan

series of suicides by employees of media outlets in China over the past few months have shocked the public. Most of the deceased have been confirmed to have been suffering from depression.

Song Bin, Editor in Chief of Xinhua News Agency's Anhui Bureau, was found dead on April 28, with a suicide note by his side.

Xu Xing, the 35-year-old Deputy Editor in Chief of *Dushi Kuaibao* daily in Hangzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province, had been suffering from depression for years according to Xu's family and friends and eventually committed suicide on May 4.

Zhang Jingwu, head of the Shenzhen Press Group Circulation Co., was found dead on May 8 in what appeared to be a suicide. Zhang had served at the newspaper for 20 years. One of his former coworkers said that he suspected Zhang had been suffering from depression.

People's Daily, a leading newspaper in China, reported on May 10 that the number of people with depression had exceeded 90 million in the country. Figures from the Beijing Suicide Research and Prevention Center also revealed that 287,000 people in China commit suicide every year and 40 percent of them are suspected of suffering from depression.

Familiarity

In 2005, Cui Yongyuan, a famous talk show host with state broadcaster CCTV, admitted to have been suffering from depression, bringing the illness into the limelight and helping many in

China to better understand it.

In 2006, while Cui was on stage as part of a comedy sketch for the CCTV Spring Festival Gala, an entertainment show broadcast on the Chinese Lunar New Year's Eve that has billions of viewers, his partner for the performance Song Dandan jokingly remarked to Cui "I heard you've got depression," making the word even more familiar to the public by approaching it light-heartedly.

"Till now, people's knowledge of depression has been very limited," Cui said in an interview with *Art Life*, a CCTV program.

Cui said that his depression might result from the high-pressure work environment being a TV host puts him under. The long, extended periods under stress make it difficult for him to get sleep, he commented. "I spent those



nights awake, from darkness to sunrise," Cui said.

"Many people think of it as a psychological disease, but this is not accurate," Cui noted. "It results from the lack of a certain chemicals in the brain, which are responsible for people's emotions."

The chemicals that Cui mentioned are the neurotransmitters dopamine, seratonin and norepinephrine. Deficiencies in any one of these can cause a neurotransmitter imbalance that causes adverse effects on a person's mood as a result.

Neurotransmitters are a group of chemicals used by the brain so that different regions can communicate with each other. When certain neurotransmitters are in short supply or otherwise behaving abnormally, this may lead to

a number of mood disorders, including clinical depression.

"There is still no consensus about the cause of depression," said Ye Bin, a psychologist from East China Normal University in Shanghai. "Although physical changes might be the causes for some patients, this is not the case for everyone."

According to Ye, abuse, stress, grief caused by the loss of something or someone, a bad diet and diseases can all cause depression.

Suffering

Wang Yami worked in Shanghai in 2006 where she made and delivered presentations to potential investors. "I felt like I'd been bragging all day, and it really affected my mood," Wang said. "I asked myself why would I do this?"

Wang eventually left her job and stayed at home. "Every day I lay on my sofa and thought about the past. I regretted everything and cried all day long," Wang recalled. The bad mood caused her to lose a lot of weight and affected her appetite.

When Wang told her friends that she might have depression, nobody took it seriously. "They thought it was because I had too much spare time and I just wanted to wallow in self-pity and call it depression," Wang said.

Unfortunately for Wang, things continued to get worse and she saw her temper deteriorate. She used to be a rational and patient person, but after coming down with depression, she fought with everybody around her over tiny issues. She even got involved in accidents when driving due to inability to focus, something that had never happened to her before the breakdown.

When Wang found herself unable to even take a shower or take care of herself properly, she was sure it was a disease and not just a bad mood.

"I sat up in bed, and put my feet on the floor and then I felt too afraid to move and wanted to lie back in bed, but I saw my feet were still on the floor and I started crying when I realized I couldn't even get out of bed," Wang said.

Wang went online to check the symptoms of depression—not being able to sleep, a loss of appetite, an inability to be interested in or enjoy anything, a perpetual bad mood—but none of these can fully express the reality of suffering from depression.

"You have to experience it yourself to real-

ize how horrible the feeling is," Wang said. "Even winning the lottery wouldn't have made me feel better."

In early 2013, Wang began to plan for her suicide and collected all the drugs that she could get. "Thinking about death made me feel peaceful and I thought it was the best decision," said Wang, who shared her thoughts with her friend Li Minxi. Li told Wang that the desire to commit suicide was not really her idea, it was the depression making the decision for her.

Li, a writer, also suffers from depression. His affliction began in 2009. When he was writing a novel in a remote place in southwest China's Sichuan Province in May 2008, an 8.0-magnitude earthquake hit Sichuan and Li was buried alive until he was rescued 76 hours later.

Several months after he was saved, Li found himself possessed by strange thoughts and idea. His apartment at the time was on the 35th floor and he could not help thinking about jumping out of the window over and over, according to Li.

"It is like my body was controlled by a devil," Li said. "Whenever I was awake, the devil was there."

Li's family and friends couldn't understand him and thought he was just seeking attention from others.

"I knew I should cherish life more after I was saved, but I didn't and nobody understood me," I i said

Wang, despite all her sufferings, considers herself as relatively active and positive in seeking treatment. She read all the books that she could find on depression and went to see doctors.

In her imagination, the psychological clinic for depression was decorated in warm colors, but to her disappointment, it was no different from regular hospitals.

"Before I stepped into the clinic, I waited for three hours, thinking about the questions the doctor would ask," Wang said. "Like my childhood experience and my family."

But the whole treatment process only lasted three minutes. The doctor simply asked about her sleeping and her mood and gave her a form with 100 questions to fill in.

"After he reviewed the form I handed in, he told me I was suffering for a mid-level depression and gave me a prescription immediately," Wang said. "It is no different from treating a cold. How could I trust a doctor like this?"





The same happened to Li. "I had been waiting for three hours and could only talk with the doctor for five minutes. During our conversation, the doctor even looked out the door to check how many patients were still waiting," Li said. He complained that, for patients suffering from depression who are already fragile, the attitude of medical professionals can only add to their anxiety and distrust toward them.

Li went through a number of doctors and each doctor of them had a different method for diagnosing and treating depression.

"One said that he only trusts emotions and another does not trust emotions at all. One said that mind can control everything and another said that mind is weak," Li said. "It was very confusing and I had no idea which treatment would be suitable for me."

There are an estimated 350 million people suffering from depression all over the world, but less than 50 percent get effective treatment. However, although the exact cause is not always the same, there are a number of medications on the market that

can be used almost universally. Compared to long-term psychological therapy, taking anti-depressants or other medication is becoming increasingly more acceptable, or even preferable, to patients.

Li Cheng was 23 years old when she was diagnosed with depression in 2007. She refused to take medicine at first. "It is definitely a mental problem, so how can the medicine change anything?" she thought. As her symptoms worsened, however, she finally gave in and decided to give medication a chance.

To Li Cheng's surprise, the medicine took effect quickly. On the 10th day after she began taking it, she was already feeling considerably better. "The feeling of mental recovery is totally different from that of physical recovery, it is like your soul has been revived." she said.

Li Cheng is one of the lucky ones, as she got the right medicine quickly. Normally, a patient needs to go through a trial period for their medication—a doctor gives the patient some medicine to try, if it doesn't work, they can

change to an alternative. Less than 50 percent of patients find the medicine that works best for them the first time round.

Zhang Jin, a deputy editor of *Caixin*, a business magazine, suffered from depression for years and he shared the treatment process he went through by writing about it online.

Zhang Jin described how the first doctor gave three different medicines to try, but he didn't feel any improvement, even after two months. Eventually he went to another doctor and finally saw results.

Debate

"People can accept long-term treatment for diabetes or high blood pressure but refuse to do the same for mental illnesses, it is just a matter of acknowledgement," said Jiang Tao, a psychiatrist with Beijing Anding Hospital, a mental health facility.

Wu Zhihong, a psychiatrist from Guangzhou, who suffered from depression while he was studying psychology at Peking University in the late 2000s, disagrees. "Most



patients got depression from something that happened to them, doctors should help find the root of the problem instead of simply giving them drugs."

Wu cured his depression by himself. "As a psychology postgraduate, I looked deeply into my memories and mind and analyzed them to find the possible causes for my depression," Wu said. "I eventually recovered and I now use the same method on my patients."

Wang Gang, Director of the Depression Study Center at Beijing Anding Hospital, thinks that treatment should be the combination of both methods. "Taking medicine works sometimes but it is just a basic step. To find the right treatment, you need to find the right psychiatrist."

Unfortunately, finding the right doctor is no easy task. The number of certified psychiatrists is only 20,000 in China and most of them practice in big cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou in Guangdong Province.

According to Wang Gang, more than half of the patients with depression in Beijing Anding Hospital are from other places in China. In 2006, the hospital set up its Depression Study Center.

Many people think educated or middleclass people are more susceptible to depression, but this is not true. "The majority of patients are from rural areas and live in poverty, who are under pressure as they struggle for their livelihood. But their knowledge of depression is limited so only a small number go to see doctors," said Wang Gang.

Some scholars have tried to explain depression from a more positive angle. Emotions, like the other physical functions of human beings, are just adjustments to changes in environment, according to Chen Rongxia, a philosophy professor at Shanghai Normal University. Chen believes that a light depression can help individuals to relax and be more adaptable to changes.

"Just like pain, it is not a pleasant feeling, but it helps people to protect themselves," Chen said.

Wang Yami said that she is grateful for her depression: Without it, she might have stuck to a mundane and routine life which she hated; she might not have got a divorce, but continued

on with her unhappy marriage. Fighting against her depression also gave her a new lease of life.

"I've got along with my depression and found some positive aspects to it. I've struggled roughly but as long as we get out of it, we are more positive than other people," said Wang Yami.

Li Cheng echoed Wang Yami by saying that now she feels more satisfied with her life after depression made her more appreciative of happiness.

"Modern medical theory requires doctors to treat the person, not only the disease, and this requires they analyze more about the patient," said Wang Gang, "When a person jumps to their death, we can't simply say it is because they had depression. This is irresponsible and brushes the issue under the rug."

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