

Language, Carrier of Culture and Bridge of Communication

Dialogue

By BI Weizi & LONG Yun

Dr. Agshin Aliyev, director of the Department of Azerbaijani Language at Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), and founder and director of the China Research Center at Khazar University Azerbaijan, has been awarded the title of "My Favourite Foreign Teacher" in China in 2019 along with a "Certificate of Honour" of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences in 2022 in recognition of his contributions to China-Azerbaijan cultural exchange.

Founder of the Azerbaijani language major in China

Originally an English major at an Azerbaijani university, Aliyev decided to study Chinese at Shanghai University in 2001 because he was so fascinated by the language and the culture behind it, and went on to earn a PhD from East China Normal University in 2013. Meanwhile, he witnessed the rapid development of the Chinese economy, the improvement of people's living standards and the gradual "going out" of Chinese culture. He is now actively involved in promoting Chinese culture to the world, sharing his first-hand experience of the Chinese language, and initiating various projects between the two countries.

Aliyev is committed to providing Chinese students with the best learning experience, and helps them recognize the central role of language as a carrier



Dr. Agshin Aliyev. (COURTESY PHOTO)

of culture. "Not only basic language skills, but also culture, history, society and literature [of Azerbaijan] are included in the curriculum," he said in a recent interview with *Science and Technology Daily (SET Daily)*.

Since the Azerbaijani language was a newly established subject, at that time not only at BFSU but also in China as a whole, there were no other teaching resources available. Aliyev did a lot of research and came up with a well-structured plan to cultivate quality talent. He even created a series of dictionaries to help students begin their journey in learning this language more efficiently.

What's more, many different cultural and academic activities have been carried out to deepen students' understanding of the language and culture. "For ex-

ample, in 2019, with the support of BFSU, the Adelaide Foundation and the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Beijing, we organized an exhibition of Azerbaijani language and literature at BFSU, and we also invited political dignitaries and famous scholars from Azerbaijan to give lectures to the students and teachers," said Aliyev.

Promoter of the Chinese language in Azerbaijan

Aliyev is also actively promoting the Chinese language in Azerbaijan. The country now has two Confucius Institutes at Baku State University and Azerbaijan Language University. "We have established a Center for Chinese Studies, which focuses on Chinese culture, history, society, economy and international relations," he said, adding that various Chi-

nese language projects have also been launched, such as the compilation of Chinese-Azerbaijani dictionaries and Chinese textbooks. Since September 2019, Aliyev has been actively involved in the "Distance Chinese Teaching Initiative" for the Azerbaijan University of Economics, encouraging Azerbaijani language students to participate in Chinese language teaching in Azerbaijan after graduation, so that Azerbaijani and Chinese language teaching can be effectively combined and cultural integration can be further promoted.

Eternal friends

"China and Azerbaijan have established cultural and trade relations since the Silk Road in the Han Dynasty. Although more than 2,000 years have passed, cooperation between the two countries has expanded to many different fields," said Aliyev, adding that the establishment of the Azerbaijani Language Department at BFSU is aimed at strengthening ties and enhancing understanding, which reflects the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind.

Talking about his future plans to realize his dream of becoming a bridge between China and Azerbaijan, Aliyev said he will spare no effort to cultivate the linguistic and cultural students of the two countries, initiate more in-depth exchange activities, and work on the translation of Chinese works in the hope that a small spark will light the fire of learning in the hearts of the people of Azerbaijan and China. "The friendship between the two nations will flourish forever," he said.

Expats Activity

Expats Book House Promotes Exchanges

By FU Ying & LONG Yun

Weifang, known as the "Kite Capital" and a city with a long history and vibrant culture, has been flying high in embracing international cooperation and global talent.

On May 20, the opening ceremony of its first foreign expert book house stands as a testament to Weifang's dedication to creating a conducive ecosystem for innovation and collaboration.

In 2022, Weifang was granted the first batch of "Foreign Expert Book House" in Shandong province. Currently, the book house accommodates nearly 4,000 books in 21 languages, including Chinese, English, Russian and French. The collection covers various fields such as politics, economy, culture, society, history and diplomacy.

Damiano Mariuzzo, an Italian translator who has been promoting cultural exchanges in Shandong for over a decade, told *SET Daily* that, "The book house serves as a platform to bridge cultural gaps, and helps foreign experts deepen their understanding of China." He also applauded its role in helping to study the Chinese language, emphasizing the valuable resources it provides for gaining profound insights into this language.

Meanwhile French expert Mathieu Crepet has been living and working in Weifang for ten years. He told *SET Daily* that he is attracted to Chinese history and how people prospered through all the country's tremendous changes. Recently, he borrowed a biography about Yuan Longping from the book house. He

said his purpose was to "understand the way China has changed over the years" through the perspective of the Yuan, known in the country as the "Father of hybrid rice."

Also from France, entrepreneur Bernard Philippe, who started his business in Weifang 17 years ago, expressed a deep affection for China. To him, China feels like his second home. According to Philippe, his connection with China goes beyond the business realm. He has developed a profound appreciation for the country's rich culture, history and warm-hearted people. He is not only passionate about bridging the gap between China and the rest of the world, but also willing to share his experiences and impressions of China with his friends in France. Through his vivid descriptions and personal anecdotes, his friends have grown increasingly curious and eager to experience the wonders of China for themselves.

The book-house administrators are trying to offer a comfortable reading environment and convenient borrowing service for foreign experts. In the future, the book house will have an increased focus on its cultural exchange role, which includes providing a number of activities, such as book exchange sessions and traditional Chinese cultural experiences.

Weifang is committed to nurturing an international-friendly environment and promoting cultural exchanges, and is ready to embrace foreign experts and students to immerse themselves in the rich literary treasures and cultural experiences provided by the book house.



Foreign experts read books in Weifang foreign expert book house. (PHOTO: the Weifang Municipal Science and Technology Bureau)

Traditional Eastern Wisdom

Cangzhou Iron Lion Roars For Millennia

By Staff Reporters

Nestled in the heart of the historical city of Cangzhou lies a remarkable artifact, the Cangzhou Iron Lion. It stands as a testament to the brilliance of ancient science and engineering.

Crafted in 953, the Cangzhou Iron Lion is 5.78 meters high, 5.34 meters long, and 3.17 meters wide, and regarded as one of the oldest and largest surviving iron-cast art treasures in China.

The iron lion's craftsmanship showcases the metallurgical skills of the ancient artisans. The statue was cast with

the traditional Chinese "Clay Mold Casting Method." With this technique, the iron lion was cast in sections. Its belly is smooth and flat. However, the external part was made with clay molds ranging from 30 to 40 centimeters in size, and these molds were stacked and cast in layers. More than 600 blocks were used for the whole casting process. The intricate process of crafting involved meticulously arranging numerous external molds and integrating them into a complete sculpture. The skill and precision required for this method highlight the remarkable proficiency of ancient Chinese metallurgists.



Cangzhou Iron Lion. (PHOTO: VCG)

To Know About Anti-inflammatory Diet

Science Outreach

By Staff Reporters

Some people may feel irritated and have a dry mouth, while others may have a bloated stomach and indigestion after enjoying all kinds of gourmet delicacies during the holidays. Today we look at the "anti-inflammatory diet" and how to reduce the inflammatory response and restore the body to a healthy state through diet.

What is chronic inflammation?

When your body recognizes something foreign — such as an invasive microbe, pollen or chemical — your immune system is activated. This usually triggers a process called acute inflammation, which causes redness, swelling, pain and heat. Intended to capture

and negate the bacteria, virus or toxic chemical, acute inflammation rarely lasts more than two weeks. It is your body's natural response to illness, injury or infection and can actually protect your health.

But sometimes inflammation persists for a long time even when you are not under threat of invaders. That's when inflammation becomes a problem called chronic inflammation. The body continues to send out inflammatory cells and substances even though no infection exists, therefore damaging your heart, brain, and other organs. The chronic inflammation is often associated with many major diseases, including cancer, heart disease, Alzheimer's disease and depression.

How do you know if you have inflammation?

You may not even be aware that your body is experiencing this type of hidden inflammation, although some physical signs can give you clues. Some-

times you may have redness, swelling, rashes, swollen hands and feet. Other signs include fatigue, weight gain, joint and muscle pain, headaches and gastrointestinal problems. You are more susceptible to colds and flu, and the illness usually lasts a few weeks.

If left untreated, chronic inflammation can affect your life expectancy. It has been found that chronic inflammation can affect the body's metabolism and even damage cells, leading to various chronic diseases.

What is an anti-inflammatory diet?

In 2009, scientists found that some foods contain ingredients that can trigger or worsen inflammation, such as sugary or processed foods, while fresh and whole foods do the opposite. As a result, a diet designed to reduce or minimize systemic chronic inflammation was proposed and has become popular.

Anti-inflammatory diets focus on

fresh fruits and vegetables because many plant foods are good sources of antioxidants, which help remove free radicals from the body. Free radicals are a natural byproduct of a number of bodily processes, including metabolism, and can cause cellular damage. This damage increases the risk of inflammation and can lead to a number of diseases.

According to Harvard Medical School's Harvard Health Publishing, anti-inflammatory diets should include tomatoes, olive oil, green leafy vegetables, nuts like almonds and walnuts, fatty fish like salmon and tuna, and fruits such as strawberries, blueberries, cherries and oranges.

The foods you eat can help alleviate and even prevent inflammation by suppressing your body's inflammatory responses. But because everyone's inflammatory triggers are different, there is no one-size-fits-all anti-inflammatory diet.

Photo News



China's 7th National Science and Technology Workers Day

China observed its seventh annual National Science and Technology Workers Day on May 30. It is a day to celebrate China's latest scientific and technological achievements, as well as the innovative, perceptive, and hardworking sci-tech workers who made them possible.

The picture shows the Day's ceremony in Xiongan New District, Hebei province. (PHOTO: VCG)

Hefei Optimizes Service for Expats

Service Info

By Staff Reporters

In recent years, Hefei, capital city of Anhui province, has been striving to build itself into an internationally influential innovation hub. The city has stepped up efforts in providing comprehensive support and services for foreign experts, reflecting its determination to promote sci-tech innovation through international cooperation.

In order to further improve the standardized management and service of foreign experts, Hefei Municipal Science and Technology Bureau, in cooperation with the Provincial Department of Science and Technology and other relevant departments, organized a training seminar on foreign affairs. Nearly 60 organi-

zations that employ foreign experts participated in the event.

The training seminar focused on topics such as visa processing and foreigner's work and residence permits. Furthermore, on-site consultations were conducted to address questions raised by concerned enterprises and institutions.

In recent years, Hefei has actively built a favorable environment for foreign experts to innovate and start businesses in line with the construction of an international innovation-oriented city. The training seminar is just one of the many initiatives implemented by Hefei to enhance its attractiveness to foreign professionals. Moreover, the city has established a joint conference system among departments related to foreign affairs and opened the first one-stop service for "Foreigners' Work and Residence Permit" in Anhui province.