

Chinese leaders extend festival wishes to predecessors

President Xi Jinping and other Chinese leaders have visited their predecessors with seasons greetings ahead of the Spring Festival.

Former leaders including Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao got personal visits either from the current leaders or from their representatives, according to a statement from the General Office of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on Wednesday.

The visitors wished their hosts a happy Spring Festival, good health and long lives, the statement said.

The leaders of the older generation fully endorsed the outstanding achievements the country has made since the 18th CPC National Congress under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with comrade Xi Jinping as the core, and expressed hope that Chinese people would unite to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on Jan. 28 this year.

Shanghai railway police seize over 50 ivory products

Shanghai railway police arrested two men illegally carrying more than 50 ivory products, bought in Zimbabwe, as they were about to board a train.

A thin man, who appeared to have a disproportionally large stomach, raised the suspicions of security staff at Shanghai Railway station Tuesday night.

Inspectors found a long cloth bag, wrapped around his midriff, contained 10 ivory products and a further three strings of ivory products in his backpack.

Meanwhile, police captured the man's companion, who attempted to flee, finding more than 30 ivory products in his suitcase.

The pair, from Taihe County, eastern China's Anhui Province, flew to Shanghai from Zimbabwe where they worked for the last year, and planned to return to their hometown by train.

The thin man, surnamed Li, said he had made the cloth bag to hide the ivory products on his body, hoping to avoid police checks.

Zoologists with the local wildlife conservation association said that the products were made from African elephant ivory.

Premier Li stresses poverty relief

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang has urged faster progress in poverty relief, saying that innovative mechanisms are needed and more funds should be collected to fight poverty.

He made the remarks during an inspection tour of southwest China's Yunnan Province from Monday to Wednesday.

Green Party: Climate change risk increasingly severe



25 January 2017

The Green Party has responded to a report published today which reveals Europe is warming at a faster pace than the global average and faces multiple climate hazards [1].

The European Environment Agency report is the most comprehensive study of Europe's vulnerability to climate change available [2]. It predicts Atlantic-facing countries will face heavier rainfalls, increased flood risk and more severe storm damage.

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"Our environment is being destroyed all around us – our oceans and mountains, our wildlife and our homes are all under direct threat from climate extremes. As the planet races towards the 2C warming limit, we have two options as country. We can drag our feet and watch our environment suffer or we can move decisively away from the dirty, dangerous technology of the past by keeping fossil fuels in the ground and investing in renewables.

"Standing up to climate deniers has never been more important – even if they hold some of the most powerful positions in the world. The actions Donald Trump takes in the US will directly impact our lives in Europe.

"The EEA report makes for terrifying reading, but it's also an opportunity for Europe to develop effective strategies for tackling greenhouse gas emissions and for Britain to step up and lead the way on transitioning to a zero carbon economy."

Notes:

1.
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jan/25/europe-faces-droughts-floods-storms-climate-change-accelerates>

2.
<http://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/climate-change-poses-increasingly-severe>

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Improvements at the Riverside area



I am pleased to report a number of proposed improvements in the Riverside area to the road surface and parking situation as follows :

+ Parking improvement : On Monday evening, the council's [City Development Committee](#) agreed to a waiting restrictions at the parking area near the Bridgeview Station Restaurant. This will restrict parking to 2 hours meaning the car park will be used for people using the playing fields and

visiting the restaurant and stop all-day parking. I have long campaigned for this at the request of the football pitch users and residents who are patrons of the restaurant.

An additional disabled bay will be provided and the long unmade parking area to the west will remain without parking restriction.

It will not be possible to undertake the change until after the new flooding defence works take place in the summer.

+ Surface improvement 1 : A positive by-product of the flooding defence works in the summer is that my request to have the long unmade parking area to the west of the above area will be properly surfaced for the first time, greatly increasing the amount of parking with a quality surface.

+ Surface improvement 2 : The surface in front of the nearby Riverside Pavilion on the north side of Riverside Drive has become very uneven again, with numerous potholes, including a large one at the entrance. I raised this with the council's Neighbourhood Services and the Projects and Development Manager has responded positively as follows :

"I have ... arranged the entrance of the car park to addressed and we will look to fill in more of the larger pot holes. ... We are looking to do more works down at Riverside and are looking to put an item to Committee in the Spring."