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PRESENTS

Li Yang's

BLIND SHAFT



Silver Bear – Li Yang

Artistic Contribution in Directing and Writing

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Best Narrative Feature Film

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PRESSBOOK

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT'

Awards

Berlin International Film Festival	Silver Bear Artistic Contribution in Directing and Writing
Deauville Asian Film Festival Best Film	Best Director, Best Actor (Wang Baoqiang) Audience Award, Critics Prize
Buenos Aires Film Festival	Best Cinematography Award Kodak Award for Best Image Treatment Cinecolor Award for Best Image Treatment
Hong Kong International Film Festival	Silver Firebird Award
Tribeca International Film Festival	Best Narrative Feature



BLIND SHAFT'

Technical Information:

Original Title: **BLIND SHAFT** – "MANG JING"

Country of Origin: Germany / Hong Kong, China

Language: Mandarin

Length: 9005 ft / 5 reels

Duration: 92 minutes

Ratio: 1:1.85**

Sound: Dolby SR

2003 – COLOR

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

Synopsis

BLIND SHAFT tells the story of two itinerant miners (Song Jinming and Tang Chaoyang) who risk their lives under dangerous working conditions and develop questionable morals in order to survive.

In the dark caves of one of the many illegal Chinese coal mines, Song and Tang murder a co-worker whom they have convinced to pose as Tang's brother. By forcing the mine's collapse upon their deceased colleague, and thereby making his death seem accidental, Tang and Song use their colleague's death to extort money from the mine's management. Pressured to cover up an accident which they believe to be the result of improper working conditions, the mine's owners give in to the two workers' blackmailing.

After leaving with their hush money, Tang and Song hit a nearby town and soon come upon another potential "relative," this time an innocent 16-year-old boy named Yuan Fengming who has been forced to quit school due to his father's disappearance. Tang agrees to help Yuan find a job at a coal mine, but only under one condition – he must agree to pretend to be Song's nephew.

As Tang and Song befriend their new victim, the boy's simplicity and naiveté gradually alter the partners' relationship. And at the last minute, the two men's scheme takes an unexpected turn.

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

CAST

Song Jinming – Li Yixiang
Tang Zhaoyang – Wang Shuangbao
Yuan Fengming – Wang Baoqiang
Xiao Hong – An Jing
Boss Huang – Bao Zhenjiang
Tang Zhaoxia – Sun Wei
Miss Ma – Zhao Junzhi
Mamasan – Wang Yining
Lao Li – Liu Zhenqi
Waitress – Zhang Lulu
Xiao Fang – Li Yan
Xiao Li – Zhao Hong
BossWang – Nie Weihua
Mu Jie – Cao Yang
Ticket Seller – Jian Chengwen
Karaoke Manager – Zhi Lei

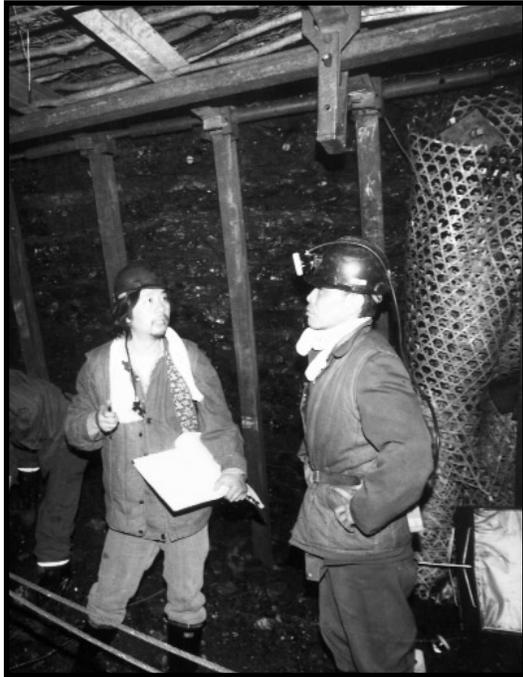
CREW

Screenplay/Director/Producer – Li Yang
(Adapted from the novel "Shenmu" by Liu Qingbang)
Associate Producer – Hu Xiaoye and Li Hua
Line Producer – Gao Hua
Production Consultants – Hua Qing and Lu Wei
Director of Photography – Liu Yonghong
Sound Recordist – Wang Yu
Art Director – Yang Jun
Editor – Li Yang and Karl Riedl
Costume Designer – Wang Xiaoyan
Set Designer – Zhang Jianjun
English Subtitles – Jonathan Noble

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BLIND SHAFT



Li Yang (left) on location.

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

–LI YANG–

Li Yang was born in China in 1959. He came from a family of actors and grew up in a theatre complex. After leaving high school, he went to work as an actor at the China Youth Arts Theatre in Beijing, from 1978 to 1985. Li then studied film directing at the Beijing Broadcasting Institute from 1985 to 1987. He left China to study German literature, from 1988 to 1990, at the Free University of Berlin, then focusing on Dramatic Theory, at Ludwig-Maximilian University of Munich from 1990 to 1992—he also worked as an actor during this time.

After graduating from the University of Munich, Yang went on to study Film Directing at the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne. While at the Academy he wrote and directed several documentaries – ‘Women’s Kingdom’ (1991), ‘Happy Swan Song’ (1994), and ‘The Wake’ (1996)—the latter was completed after his graduation.

In 2003, he wrote, directed and produced his first feature **BLIND SHAFT**, which was shot entirely in China. The film won the Silver Bear Award at the Berlin International Film Festival 2003 for Artistic Contribution (Screenwriting and Directing). **BLIND SHAFT** has won other international awards including the Best Feature Film at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York, five out of all six awards at the Deauville Asian Film Festival including Best Film, Best Director and Best Actor, and the Silver Firebird Award in Hong Kong.

FILMOGRAPHY

- 1991 ‘Women’s Kingdom’ (documentary)
- 1994 ‘Happy Swan Song’ (documentary)
- 1996 ‘The Wake’ (documentary)
- 2003 ‘Blind Shaft’

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT/PRODUCTION NOTES

In order to make 'Blind Shaft' my crew and I experienced a lot of difficulties, including having to risk our lives at times. Now the film is finally finished, but to me the dangers are still here. This film will be banned from being released in China, and I will face the unfortunate destiny of being banned from making a film in China. Many friends asked me, why must I risk my life to make a film like this?

'Blind Shaft' is a film that realistically portrays the lives of the coal miners at the bottom stratum of the Chinese society today. Employing a documentary-like cinematic style, it simply and directly pushes the lives of these ordinary people in front of the audience. There are no deliberate melodramas or dramatization. It just portrays a real story.

After the modernization and opening of China, thousands of private coal mines have appeared. This was originally a good thing, but has turned into many coal miners' nightmare. The safety precautions and facilities in these private coal mines do not meet the basic safety requirements set by the government. The mine owners do not spend money on buying the necessary safety equipment, but rather use huge sums of money to bribe the party cadres and government bureaucrats, in order to obtain the various permits needed to operate the mines. These bureaucrats totally disregard the lives of the miners in these transactions of money and power. The miners work in extremely dangerous conditions and they use very primitive mining methods. They use iron pickaxes and spades for digging, and horse carriages for transporting the coal. There is almost no modern equipment and there is no protection and guarantee for the lives of the miners at all.

In 2001, a major accident involving a collapsed mine in Nante in the Guangxi Province resulted in the death of more than forty miners. But the mine owner managed to secretly cremate and bury the remains of the miners under the help and support of the local government, party chiefs and police department. This incident was subsequently exposed by two brave and conscientious reporters. But this is only one of the countless stories in China today. According to statistics, an average of more than 7,000 coal miners die each year in accidents. But these are only official figures. Many more deaths go unreported and unnoticed.

In the last twenty years, China has undergone major changes. Its economy has been growing with rapid speed. But following the economic miracle the polarization of the Chinese society has also widened seriously. The livelihood of the people in the lower strata of society has become worse and worse. Driven by poverty, tens of thousands of peasants leave their homes to find work elsewhere. Seduced by money, moral standards rapidly deteriorate and corruption is rampant. In order to obtain money, those in power are corrupt, while those without power sell their bodies and soul, or kill and steal.



BLIND SHAFT

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT/PRODUCTION NOTES (Continued)

Under the pressure of heavy duties and taxes, many peasants can hardly make a living by growing crops. Many children have to stop going to school and start working because they cannot pay the school fees. But the dark reality of these social conditions have been deliberately covered up. The lives of these people living in the bottom strata have been totally neglected and forgotten.

On television and newspapers, all people can see are just the big achievements of the developing Chinese economy. But who is there to care about people: human sentiments, the souls and mind of the people, and social morality? Who cares about this huge mass of people struggling at the lowest stratum of the Chinese society?

In order to make this film, I searched and visited many coal mines across almost half of China. One time, soon after I took a few pictures with my camera, I was immediately surrounded by the mine owner and the police. I was very nervous as they had guns in their hands, and they threatened to take me away. Luckily one of my friends was also a local cadre and he lied to say that I was only a tourist and not a reporter. Only then did I manage to escape danger. After I went back to Beijing I was told that the local government officials called for an emergency meeting to deal with my case. They considered me a reporter and were very worried that I would expose many of their shady dealings. My friend was thereafter also implicated.

Perhaps, particularly because of the fact that my life was threatened, I made the resolution to finish this film and to tell the truth to the audience. Even though I faced further dangers, my human conscience kept me working on the film.

Any country needs to promote its bright and glorious side. But is it not true that the exposition and critique of the dark and ugly sides of human nature and society can in fact promote progress and development?

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

**EXCERPT FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR LI YANG
BY SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST. HONG KONG, (1/18/2003).**

At least 10,000 people die each year in China's illegal mines. Now a film is shedding light on the labourers who risk everything to scrape a living in the dark

"China has a shortage of everything but people," the boss of an illegal coal mine quips in a new underground film exposing the grim lives of the mainland's migrant miners. Millions of uneducated labourers roam the country looking for work. For mine owners, the migrants are an expendable resource. Many risk death in illegal mines for a monthly wage of 1,000 yuan (HK\$940), several times the average monthly income of farm workers.

Those real conditions mean living in cramped dormitories, with workers often housed in crude huts or tents. In arid northern China, miners sometimes go for weeks without washing, Li says. Anyone fit enough for hard labour, including escaped criminals, can find work in illegal mines – if they can find them. Mine owners often hire local thugs to guard tracks leading to the mines and local police and officials accept money to turn a blind eye or even offer additional protection. Extortion and robbery are common. "This problem hasn't just appeared in the past few years," Li says. "It's been around for a long time."

Most of the filming took place 700 metres underground on the border between Hebei and Shaanxi provinces. Li is unwilling to be more precise about the location, to protect those who helped him gain access. He and his team were well aware of the dangers. One shaft collapsed two days after they left, without finishing filming. They simply moved on to the next mine, just like the casual labourers who make a living from hacking out the coal. Locals often refuse to work underground, preferring the safety of jobs as security guards or surface workers. Li went underground about 20 times last year, clocking up about 80 hours in dark shafts. He spent 50 hours filming underground, with one stint lasting 20 hours.

State media has also reported cases of murder, greed and corruption in the illegal mining industry, including one case in which miners were killed by locals who then faked an explosion in a bid to claim compensation. Relatives are often prevented from seeing the bodies of victims. Mine owners dispose of the corpses without informing local authorities, fearing closure of their illegal operations.

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

**EXCERPT FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR LI YANG
BY SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST. HONG KONG, (1/18/2003).
(Continued)**

The government has launched several crackdowns on illegal mining in recent years. It says safety inspectors close tens of thousands of small mines annually, but many re-open after the inspectors and police have left. Beijing Review magazine recently reported: "Mine safety supervisors at different levels are mainly from coal mines with a poor awareness of the law, which causes laxity in law enforcement, errors in procedures and unsatisfactory punishment."

Where the closure succeed, competition for jobs in the remaining mines grows fiercer, Li believes the publication of Liu's story (on which Li's film was based) two years ago, plus recent media exposure of the industry, makes the topic of illegal mining less controversial. The film is not opposing China, Chinese society or the government, he says. "I'm sure Western audiences won't think everyone in China is like that. But I couldn't make it according to their rules," he says, mainly because he wanted to save time and money.

Bill Jones, South China Morning Post

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Related Press

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

New York Times

Filming the Dark Side Of Capitalism in China

Wednesday, May 7th, 2003.

By JOSEPH KAHN (New York Times)

BEIJING, May 6 -- Li Yang has spent most of the past decade and a half in self-imposed exile in Germany, and it must have been there, certainly not in the unadventurous filmmaking climate of today's China, that he decided to treat compromise as a dirty word.

His first feature film, "Blind Shaft," spares nobody in its devastating portrait of murderous grifters in the poor coal mining region of northwest China. It skewers mine owners, who returned the favor by hounding him with security agents and threatening him at gunpoint when he filmed on location.

It jabs at the hypocrisy of the Communist government with thinly veiled barbs, ensuring that the film will enrage Chinese censors.

"Blind Shaft," which is being shown at the TriBeCa Film Festival Wednesday and Thursday, will probably never make it beyond art houses in the West and will certainly not be released in China. But the film offers an unleavened look at the underside of Chinese-style capitalism that was previously available only in print.

"Many of the films made in China today are like government press conferences: they do not reveal anything about the real situation," Mr. Li said in an interview here on Monday. "People compromise a little to get a license, and compromise a little to get an audience, and before too long there isn't much left."

His film, adapted from the novel "Sacred Wood" by Liu Qingbang, is a psychological thriller that does not claim to be based on real incidents. But it is based on the misanthropic culture of China's coal mining industry, where death is so prosaic that it loses its power to shock. By official count more than 5,000 miners die every year in explosions, shaft collapses and floods. Many more deaths go unreported by private mine owners who operate without proper licenses or safety equipment.

Mr. Li, 43, said the setting struck him as an ideal metaphor for what he viewed as the loss of values in today's China. He left his country in 1987 to study in Germany and was trained in Cologne as a documentary filmmaker.

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

New York Times

Filming the Dark Side Of Capitalism in China

(Continued)

On his return trips, he said, he was impressed by the rapid pace of economic growth but dismayed by what he saw as China's increasing inhumanity. "Some people now have mafia values," he said. "They can't find a normal way to make money. Violence pays."

Mr. Li's shaggy hair and provocative speech are not out of place in Beijing, which has an irreverent side despite the heavy hand of the government. He studied here and considers it a second home. But he is also a misfit. He said he had grown uncomfortable with the spread of bourgeois values among the city's once thriving counterculture. For example, he said, city dwellers benefiting from the new economy tend to look down on the migrant workers from the countryside who clean their homes and serve their food.

"Blind Shaft" portrays the cutthroat culture of an anonymous mining town, where what limited wealth there is goes to those who treat death with the greatest detachment.

The film opens as two itinerant swindlers, Song Jinming (Li Yixiang) and Tang Zhaoyang (Wang Shuangbao) lure a hapless fellow migrant, whom they persuade to pretend that he is Tang's brother, to join them for a gig at an illegal mine. In a darkened shaft they beat him to death and then stage a roof collapse to make the killing look like a routine accident.

The dark brilliance of the murder is quickly apparent when the mine owner schemes to avoid an investigation. After Tang fakes an emotional reaction to the supposed loss of his brother, the owner comes up with a \$4,000 death payment and gives it to Tang and Song, no questions asked, provided the two leave town without demanding an official inquiry.

At a local labor market Tang and Song spot their next target, a 16-year-old, doe-eyed boy named Yuan Fengming (Wang Baoqiang). While seeking employment, they pretend that he is Song's nephew.

As they negotiate their next grift, a portly mine owner warns them caustically that safety is their own responsibility. "China lacks everything," the mine owner says.

KINO INTERNATIONAL BLIND SHAFT

New York Times

Filming the Dark Side Of Capitalism in China (Continued)

"The only thing it doesn't lack is people." He takes them on but demands that they work for a period without pay or death benefits until they prove themselves worthy.

Much of the film details the three men's interactions as they work together during this trial period, with Tang, Song and Yuan acting like a family of a sort. The older men even take Yuan to the local whorehouse out of a warped filial sense that they should make him a man before they kill him. All this plays on Tang's and Song's emotions, however hardened, and sets up a twist at the end.

The film was shot in dusty mining towns in Hebei and Shanxi provinces. The cast and crew were frequently forced to move when mine owners threatened them to avoid exposure, Mr. Li said. Most of the actors are first-time performers, recruited locally.

Mr. Li has succeeded in making a movie that provides an uncompromising look at China's social problems, though he has paid a price. Unless the film is widely pirated, very few mainland Chinese will see it. "It's a huge regret," he said. "But the fact is that you can't make a real movie about China if you worry too much about whether it will be seen."

By JOSEPH KAHN (New York Times)
Originally published on Wednesday, May 7th, 2003.



BLIND SHAFT'

New York Times

Workplace Deaths Rise in China Despite New Safety Legislation

By JOSEPH KAHN

Published: October 24, 2003

BEIJING, Oct. 23 — New work safety rules and beefed-up enforcement have failed to reduce the death toll in China's mines and factories so far this year, and a government official acknowledged that the problem "has not been completely addressed."

Accidents took the lives of 11,449 workers through September, an increase of 9 percent over the corresponding period a year earlier, according to national data released Thursday. The official tally shows the number of deaths dropping slightly in notorious coal mines, but rising in other mines and jumping by 19 percent at factories and construction sites.

The undiminished carnage reflects the relatively low priority that China's government puts on safety. There is heavy emphasis on raising production, and workers are forbidden to form independent unions.

Although China's new leaders have promised to overhaul the way they manage the economy to better reflect the needs of workers and peasants, top leaders rarely speak about the enormous numbers of casualties in a wide variety of industries. They have continued to repress workers who voice concerns about poor labor conditions as potential threats to the Communist Party's hold on power.

Since a new work safety law was enacted last year, the State Administration on Work Safety has begun regularly releasing statistics about accident rates. The authorities have also increased penalties for mine or factory owners who allow hazardous conditions to persist.

Huang Yi, the chief legal officer of the work safety administration, told a news conference on Thursday that the State Council, China's cabinet, had ordered the agency to improve its procedures and given it fresh powers of enforcement, but did not provide details.

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BLIND SHAFT

New York Times

Workplace Deaths Rise in China Despite New Safety Legislation (Continued)

"We have to make sure that the work of the new administration is not just a resumption of our earlier work," Mr. Huang said. Overall, though, the agency's power appears to be limited.

Coal mines continued to be the most dangerous place to work. Officials said 4,620 miners lost their lives in accidents so far this year, a reduction of just under 1 percent from the corresponding period in 2002. The modest improvement came despite an intense effort to shut illegal mines and crack down on managers who run substandard operations.

Liang Jiakun, deputy director of the work safety administration, said the death toll was down from earlier in the decade, when as many as 10,000 miners were killed annually, but acknowledged that the numbers remained too high. Mr. Liang said his agency had set a seemingly modest goal of capping annual coal mining fatalities at 5,000 by 2007.

Foreign labor activists say the official statistics reflect only part of the problem because many smaller mining accidents are covered up by local officials who do not want to disrupt production.

Han Dongfang, a labor activist based in Hong Kong, says his research indicates that more than 10,000 people die in mines each year, almost double the official count.

Other industries that contributed to the spike in workplace deaths this year are fireworks and construction, both of which rely heavily on migrant workers who receive little or no training.

By JOSEPH KAHN (New York Times)
Originally published on October 24th, 2003.

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

New York Times

October 22, 2003

China's Boom Adds to Global Warming Problem

By KEITH BRADSHER

HANJIANG, China — China's rapid economic growth is producing a surge in emissions of greenhouse gases that threatens international efforts to curb global warming, as Chinese power plants burn ever more coal while car sales soar.

Until the last few months, many energy experts and environmentalists said, they had hoped that China's contribution to global warming would be limited. Its state-owned enterprises have become more efficient in their energy use as they compete in an increasingly capitalist economy, and until recently official Chinese statistics had been showing a steep drop in coal production and consumption.

But new figures from Chinese government agencies confirm what energy industry executives had suspected: that coal use has actually been climbing faster in China than practically anywhere else in the world.

To the extent that global warming is caused by humanity, as many scientists believe, this is a serious problem because burning coal at a power plant releases more greenhouse gases than using oil or natural gas to generate the same amount of electricity.

China's rising energy consumption complicates diplomatic efforts to limit emissions of global warming gases. The International Energy Agency in Paris predicts that the increase in greenhouse gas emissions from 2000 to 2030 in China alone will nearly equal the increase from the entire industrialized world.

China is the world's second largest emitter of such gases, after the United States. But China's per-person energy use and greenhouse gas emissions remain far below levels found in richer countries. The emissions are, for example, roughly one-eighth of those per capita in the United States.

As a developing country, China is exempt from the Kyoto Protocol, the pending international agreement to limit emissions of greenhouse gases. When President Bush rejected the Kyoto Protocol two years ago, he portrayed China's exemption as a serious flaw.

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BLIND SHAFT

New York Times

China's Boom Adds to Global Warming Problem (Continued)

The protocol has been embraced by most other big nations, however, and only requires ratification by Russia to take effect.

Another developing country exempt from the protocol, India, is also showing strong growth in emissions as its economy prospers. General Motors predicts that China will account for 18 percent of the world's growth in new car sales from 2002 through 2012; the United States will be responsible for 11 percent, and India 9 percent.

Official Chinese statistics had shown a decline in coal production and consumption in the late 1990's, even as the economy was growing 8 percent a year. But many Western and Chinese researchers have become suspicious of that drop over the last several years.

They point out that the decline assumed that local governments had followed Beijing's instructions to close 47,000 small, unsafe mines producing low-grade coal and many heavily polluting small power plants. Yet researchers who visited mines and power plants found that they often remained open, with the output not being reported to Beijing because local administrators feared an outcry if they shut down important employers.

China's National Bureau of Statistics has not revised its coal figures for the late 1990's, but its latest data show that coal consumption jumped 7.6 percent last year. A Chinese official said the bureau was likely to report a similar increase for this year. Even those figures may be low: Chinese coal industry officials have estimated that coal consumption may be rising more than 10 percent a year.

China is now the world's largest coal consumer, and its power plants are burning coal faster than its aging railroads can deliver it from domestic mines, most of which are in the north. So the country is importing coal from Australia. This steamy city of 640,000, with its deep-water port, is the main receiving point in southern China.

As fishermen in wooden boats brought conical wicker baskets full of silvery, sardine-size fish ashore at dawn on a recent morning, the sun began illuminating an enormous, coal-fired power plant with a big freighter from Australia tied up next to it.

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BLIND SHAFT

New York Times

China's Boom Adds to Global Warming Problem (Continued)

The plant is only nine years old. Zhanjiang drew its electricity over high-tension lines from other cities to the north before then. But the power plant is already inadequate for the area's needs, even though it is twice the size of a standard coal-fired plant. With blackouts frequent here for lack of power, construction has just begun on another, adjacent power plant, that one oil-fired.

Other figures from the Bureau of Statistics have also shown very large increases in energy consumption lately. China's electrical power generation, the main use of coal in China, jumped 16 percent in the first eight months of this year, nearly four times as much as Western experts expected. Power generation is poised to grow swiftly in the years to come, with China's output of equipment for new power plants rising by two-thirds in a single year.

China has also become the world's fastest-growing importer of oil, with foreign purchases surging nearly a third this year, although some of those imports went into stockpiles in January and February as a precaution in case the war in Iraq disrupted shipments from the Middle East.

The Chinese are using more energy in their homes, too, as China has turned into the world's largest market for television sets and one of the largest for many other electrical appliances.

A 53-year-old retired saleswoman here said that for more than half her life, her only electrical appliance at home was a light bulb.

She and her husband bought a black-and-white television set in 1984, then a refrigerator in 1988. Now she has an air-conditioner, which she acquired in 1998, along with two color televisions, an electric rice cooker, a radio, the refrigerator and many lights.

"Only the old people do not have air-conditioning now," said the woman, Ms. Long, who, like others interviewed in this militarily important city, insisted on giving only her family name.

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

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New York Times

China's Boom Adds to Global Warming Problem (Continued)

Environmental groups that once promoted China as a good example are now increasingly worried. "If they're seeing 6 and 7 percent growth, that is obviously a concern," said Dan Lashof, a climate change expert at the Natural Resources Defense Council, which has done several studies of Chinese energy use.

But environmentalists are also loath to criticize China too strongly, partly because Chinese emissions per person are still so much lower than those in the developed world, and partly because China has been trying with some success to improve the energy efficiency of its industries. Programs like requiring electrical appliances and building designs to waste less energy show considerable promise, said Barbara Finamore, the director of the Clean China Program at the council.

The central government in Beijing has had repeated difficulties in forcing provincial governments to pursue recent efficiency programs. China no longer has the central planning mandates to order improvements, but has not yet developed market-based incentives, like higher prices, to encourage people to curb their consumption of fossil fuels, Ms. Finamore said.

China's central bank is nervous that some sectors of the economy, especially luxury housing construction, are growing too fast, and it is trying to restrain them. If it succeeds, that could temper somewhat the increase in energy use.

China is not alone in consuming a lot more energy, although its enormous population of roughly one and a quarter billion, and rapid economic growth mean that its increases dwarf those of any other country in the developing world. India, for example, is also showing rapid growth in energy use. In populous countries from Indonesia to Brazil, power plants are burning more and more coal and oil to meet ever growing demand for electricity from industry and households.

Even some climate experts in developing countries are conceding that their emissions need to be addressed when international talks begin in 2005 on what will follow the Kyoto agreement, which calls for industrialized nations to reduce their emissions by 2012. Considerable reluctance persists among developing countries, however, to accept the kind of specific limits prescribed for wealthy countries by the Kyoto Protocol.

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New York Times

China's Boom Adds to Global Warming Problem (Continued)

"There's going to be a fairly heated debate about what developing countries should do in the next round," said Rajendra K. Pachauri, an Indian engineer who is the chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a United Nations group that assesses the causes and consequences of rising temperatures.

The Chinese government is drafting a series of new economic policies, some of which will concern energy, and is expected to release them soon. Senior Chinese officials did not respond to requests for interviews over the last two months.

Two fairly senior Chinese officials said in earlier, separate interviews, after President Hu Jintao succeeded Jiang Zemin in March, that an active debate was under way over the extent to which conservation should be balanced against economic growth.

Growth in Chinese coal consumption should slow somewhat in the next four years. Completion of the Three Gorges dam and five nuclear power plants will provide considerable additional electricity for China's national grid by 2007, although posing different environmental risks from coal. But Larry Metzroth, a coal and electricity specialist at the International Energy Agency, warned that with no further large hydroelectric or nuclear power projects planned in China, coal consumption "is going to pick up again after 2007."

Beijing's official New China News Agency recently predicted that China's capacity to generate electricity from coal would be almost three times as high in 2020 as it was in 2000.

If China can continue to sustain 8 percent annual economic growth, then the next big growth area in greenhouse gas emissions is likely to be cars. China is already the world's fastest-growing car market, with sales up 73 percent this year.

China has just one-twentieth as many cars now as the United States, because car sales were tiny until the last three years. But a swift expansion of auto factories in China, together with rising household incomes and the growing availability of auto loans, has led to the surge. Here in Zhanjiang, downtown streets are already clogged with cars.

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L

BLIND SHAFT

New York Times

China's Boom Adds to Global Warming Problem (Continued)

One of the best businesses in town seems to be a corner store in the city's old quarter, an area of tightly packed three-story homes with traditional tile roofs. The corner store sells every possible kind of fuse, tubing and wiring for electricians, and it was so busy that the store's owners barely had time to speak.

"People are rewiring a lot," said Mr. Pong, the patriarch of the family that runs the store. "Or they just demolish the old and build new."

By KEITH BRADSHER (New York Times)
Originally published on October 22nd, 2003.