

Chinese consumers are losing confidence in their country's dairy industry after the latest tainted milk products scandal. Almost 6,500 babies and children have become ill and four have died. Several hundred infants now have extreme kidney failure. Many parents are furious and upset that their young children need operations to remove stones from their kidneys. The reason for this tragedy is milk powder makers adding a poisonous plastic compound to their products. The country's biggest dairy company, the Sanlu Group, admitted finding the deadly melamine chemical in its baby powder. Melamine increases the level of protein in milk. The same chemical has also been found in liquid milk. Supermarkets are clearing their shelves of domestic milk products. The Chinese government has ordered emergency checks on all dairy products. It found ten percent of the items it tested contained melamine. Officials have promised consumers that they will punish those responsible for the scandal. China's news agency Xinhua reported: "Local authorities should rectify the dairy industry so as to bring a fundamental change to the dairy market and products." The crisis has spread beyond China's borders, with Malaysia, Singapore and Japan banning Chinese milk imports. Starbucks coffee chain in China has reacted quickly. Hundreds of its coffee shops have stopped serving drinks with milk, which is affecting its business. A company spokesman said this was a precaution "due to the serious nature" of the situation. (Morning Passage 1)

Questions:

- 1. What is the passage about?**
- 2. Why are dairy companies putting poisonous compounds in milk products?**
- 3. How did the Chinese government deal with the problem?**
- 4. Why do you worry about the safety of the edible goods?**
- 5. What are consumers' roles for the safety of the edible goods?**
- 6. Have you avoided buying food from other countries?**

Recently, a famous actress, Choi Jin-sil killed herself. It has hit Korean society hard. Insults circulating on the internet are widely believed to have played a part in Choi's suicide. Such hostile comments represent a collective aggression directed ruthlessly toward one person. In cyberspace, people can write cruel posts while hiding behind a mask of anonymity. Thus, one person can be attacked by a massive mob all at once. But there are few ways to address the problem or to file a complaint, no matter how angry he or she may feel and how unfair the situation may be. In such cases, if anger is not expressed and released as it should be, and is instead directed towards oneself, depression occurs. People with depression harm themselves. Doing this instead of directing anger outwards is an abnormal self-defense mechanism that occurs under extreme stress. We need measures to help those who are under severe social stress of pressure and have few people to talk to, and therefore are more vulnerable to depression. We should make use of the mental health centers that we already have. These should offer more consultations to prevent patients from attempting suicide; particularly we should provide more diagnosis and treatment. At the same time the authorities should prepare measures to reduce the social problems that are caused by such group hostility in cyberspace. One of them is to set up some plan for mandating real identification online, however controversial it may be. There should be more control in cyberspace. (Morning Passage 2)

Questions:

- 1. Have you ever received a cruel comment from any other person on the internet? How did you feel when you've got it?**
- 2. When do you feel depressed, what do you usually do to overcome it?**
- 3. How can we help those people who are suffering from depression?**
- 4. Do you agree to the comment that "there should be more control in cyberspace"? If so, why? If not, why?**
- 5. Do you agree to government's plan for real identification online? If so, why? If not, why?**

United Nations chief Ban Ki-moon showed the world the future of green transport on September 12 when he used a solar-powered taxi to get to work. The Solartaxi is the invention of Swiss engineer Louis Palmer. Mr. Ban hoped his zero-emission commute would promote the use of alternative energy sources in our day-to-day life. He was very excited and positive about his carbon-neutral journey to work, saying: "I hope that this Solartaxi, one of the alternative sources of energy, can give some good messages to the people around the world that we need to be creative; we need to be practical; we need to really address these energy issues and also address the climate change issues." The Secretary General added: "This is a fantastic experience. I hope I can enjoy another ride." The Solartaxi is currently on a worldwide tour to highlight the need for more environmentally-friendly technologies. The tour's climax will be in December, when the energy-saving vehicle arrives in Poznan, Poland. The Polish city is hosting a conference on climate change. This gathering is part of preparations for a bigger meeting in Copenhagen in 2009, which will attempt to replace the Kyoto Protocol. Mr. Palmer was very enthusiastic about Mr. Ban's trip in his Solartaxi. He said his taxi showed that there are solutions to reversing the damage humankind is doing to the planet. He congratulated the UN for its efforts: "As climate change doesn't stop at borders, it's a global problem and the UN is playing a central role in the fight to stop global warming," he said. **(Afternoon Passage 1)**

Questions:

1. What does UN Chief Ban ki-moon think about the Solar-taxi?
2. Would you describe a solar-powered taxi?
3. What springs to mind when you hear the word 'Green transport'?
4. What damage to the earth needs to be reversed?
5. What other environmentally-friendly technologies do you know about?
6. What would you say if you gave a speech at a climate change conference?

For the past several years, Koreans have anxiously awaited the announcement of Nobel Prize winners in hopes of finding a Korean name among the list of prize winners, but to no avail, whereas four Japanese scientists are honored with the Nobel Prize. Many Korean scientists envy the Japanese for their remarkable achievements and deplore the less favorable situation of Korean scientists, who have received insufficient financial assistance from the government. But we should examine whether it is really a lack of money that is preventing Korean scientists from winning the Nobel Prize. If not a lack of money, it could be a lack of creativity that prevents Korean scientists from winning the Nobel Prize. The Korean education system does not encourage creativity, but instead heavily emphasizes studying for college entrance exams by having students memorize material. Our schools are like a factory that produces dull, identical merchandise on a conveyor belt production line. In addition to this, being practical, students are no longer interested in pure sciences; they want to go into medicine, pharmacy, or law. That is why we need to first **overhaul** our education system before dreaming of a Nobel Prize. The Nobel Prize is only a reward for a splendid lifetime achievement of a scientist and not something one would want to or expect to receive in advance. So, we don't need to be so impatient. If we do our best, we will be given the Nobel Prize when the time comes. **(Afternoon Passage 2)**

Questions:

- 1. What is the passage about?**
- 2. What does the author think are the reasons that Korean scientists have not won the Nobel Prize? Do you agree with the author?**
- 3. What does the word "overhaul" in line 14 of the passage mean?**
- 4. What do you know about any Nobel Prize winners?**
- 5. When do you think Korean scientists would win the Nobel Prize? And in what field?**