

## TALKING POINTS

**“It makes me very happy to win because this tournament means a lot to me. I feel it is an unbelievable honor to win this event. Placing my hands on the trophy for the first time is a good feeling I must say. My biggest concern was to be healthy this year. That’s something I’m just so pleased about, to see that the hard work I put in last year is paying off. Not only is it paying off, but I’m feeling good, I’m waking up as normal. I’m not half broken like I was last year. I’m enjoying myself on the tennis court. I’m playing the way I was hoping I could play again. Everything fell into place. I’m playing a very consistent, solid season.”**

**ROGER FEDERER**, professional tennis player from Switzerland who just won his first Shanghai Rolex Masters title.

“It’s essential for media workers to have both professional skills and moral principles. You shouldn’t expect to make a fortune from writing news reports. You can go study finance if you want to earn more money. As a media worker, you have to be brave enough to be responsible for all tasks in extremely tough circumstances and then present the real truth for your audience. You have to guide the public to a sense of value and create a truthful environment for public opinion in society.”

**QIU ZHENHAI**, a commentator in Phoenix Satellite TV

“A total of 7.6 percent of interviewed students are running their own businesses while 6.2 percent of them are Taobao shop owners and 4.8 percent run online shops on WeChat. The trend among university students has changed from being online shoppers to online shop owners especially among more educated students. More postgraduate or PhD students operate online shops as their part-time jobs than undergraduate students.”

**A recent lifestyle survey on university students’**

**life styles from Horizon-Key, an international independent research organization which focuses on public polls in China, as reported by Shanghai Oriental Morning Post**

“Intelligent terminals, digital facilities and information networks have benefited people with convenience in daily life. People no longer have to write characters by hand, they don’t even need to type in a complete phrase or sentence because the typewriting software will pop out related options for them to choose. However, the modern trend has resulted in highly educated professionals like government officers, enterprise employees, doctors, scientific researchers and professors failing to be able to write common words with a pen, instead only being able to use a computer. Handwriting, a process of thinking is also a practice of what we’ve accumulated from learned knowledge, and a way to enhance our thinking.”

**WANG JIANMIN**, a professor from business school, Beijing Normal University, quoted by Beijing Morning Post



**DRIVING ON:** Maren Striker has been struck by China’s rapid urban development. PROVIDED TO SHANGHAI STAR

## Building a better urban future

**Editor’s Note:** After spending more than five years in China, two Dutch nationals left their daily lives in Shanghai to pursue a dream — to discover China around the world.

Impressed by the fascinating stories of motivated Chinese people, Maren Striker and Rogier Bikker left Shanghai on July 26 to spend three months driving to Holland along the old Silk Road, a 20,000-kilometer journey that will span 11 countries.

To show what Chinese people are capable of, they decided to use only local products — a Chinese car, laptops, phones, and even sunglasses.

This is their second story written by Maren Striker, about their first month on the road. We will keep you updated on Bikker and Striker’s journey throughout the coming months.



**MAREN STRIKER**

During the past 30 days my travel companion Rogier Bikker and I, drove from Shanghai to the border of Kazakhstan, nearly 8,000 kilometers, as part of a continuing journey to the Netherlands. We passed through some of the biggest cities and remotest deserts in China.

It made me realize again the vastness of this country. That’s easily considered when flying over the vast expanses by airplane, but when the kilometers are made little by little in our BYD car I started seeing the scale and texture of development.

China is urbanizing rapidly to reach its goal of about 60 percent of the population living in urban areas by 2020, closing the gap with Europe and the USA. This push for urbanization can be seen throughout China — where construction sites, widening of streets and new flyovers are becoming the standard in order to keep the GDP growing and build a better life for people.

The pressure on cities in China is huge, with population numbers increasing every year. This growing number provides opportunities to build high-density, mix-use, transit-oriented, compact neighborhoods while preserving history and culture. Ironically, many Chinese fly overseas to experience exactly that; from the small streets in the Latin Quarter in Paris, to the maze of colors and smells at the bazaars of Istanbul to the cultural highlights opposite Central Park at the Museum Mile in New York. Chinese cities have expanded over the past decade in quantitative terms, growing larger and larger to accommodate an ever-increasing urban population. It is time to invest in quality development, building upon the identity of cities, rather than demolishing those characteristics that represent the roots and history of each city.

Enlightening examples are scarce

but present, such as the Hankou Waterfront Park in Wuhan, Hubei province, a well-designed park with an extraordinary array of activities that also functions as flood protection system. “It’s just wonderful to walk with my family in the evening over this grand boulevard, like the Chicago waterfront,” said Mr Wang, a teacher in Wuhan who approached me while I sat at the waterfront. Ms Jia, a restaurant owner in Dunhuang, Gansu province, told me at the central pedestrian street that the revitalization of this street has really helped her to increase business.

Continuing building cities in the current mould will inevitably cause a crisis as we are running out of land that is so heavily needed for our increasing footprint. A qualitative push is necessary in many Chinese cities to keep and attract highly educated and talented people. A combination needs to be found between making sure people make money, breathe clean air and live in socially safe and vibrant communities.

During the past month I have seen a brand new China in the making, with great examples of this push toward a higher quality of life for everyone. The challenge lays in not only leaving this to the first tier cities such as Shanghai, Chongqing and Chengdu but also make this happen in lesser known places like Badong (Hubei), Tagong (Sichuan) and Turpan (Xinjiang). These places really impressed me with their vitality and left me with a never fading memory and a great desire to return.

**WE’D LIKE TO HEAR OF YOUR EXPERIENCES**

We’re delighted to welcome readers who live or have spent time in Shanghai, or anywhere else in China, to share their stories with Shanghai Star readers. **Rules:** Stories must be set in Shanghai or China and be 500 words or less. Please attach a 50-word description of yourself and a personal photo. Send it to shanghai@chinadaily.com.cn. **The opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily reflect those of the Shanghai Star.**