

Do not turn sacred medicine into an ulterior political tool

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An article full of lies and malice entitled “*Mode for Asia-Taiwan’s Experience in Curbing Transplant Tourism*” caused our attention (<https://www.organcare.org.tw/EN/article/236>). It’s impolite not to make a return for what one received. Also, it is the obligation for us to set the record straight.

China has made significant progress in reforming organ donation and transplantation during last decade. The new China model of organ transplantation and anti-organ-trafficking have been recognized by international organization and professional societies. (<https://www.tts.org/newstts-world/newsletter/current-newsletter/2500-china-delegation>) (<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1065115.shtml>).

However, along the more than 10-year arduous journey of reform, the attempts of taking the political profit of the topic via various groups based on fabricated and distorted facts have never been stopped.

The article quoted a recent presentation at the 15th Congress of the Asian Society of Transplantation (CAST) in November 2017, which intentionally misclassified the Taiwanese that travel to mainland China for transplant as “Transplant Tourism” using organs from executed prisoners.

Recognized by the whole world, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau are all parts of China. Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau residents are granted with citizenship treatment in Mainland China in many economic and non-economic areas. This is signified by the most recent policy of unprecedented’ 31 benefits to Taiwanese announced by China government. (<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/>

front/archives/2018/03/01/2003688463).

As for transplant tourism, the then Ministry of Health of people’s republic of China issued policy that prohibit the transplant tourism in 2007 (http://www.gov.cn/gzdt/2007-07/03/content_670962.htm), based on Regulation on Human Organ Transplant promulgated by State Council at same year (http://en.nhfpc.gov.cn/2014-06/05/c_46236.htm). Meanwhile, the policy clearly stated that Chinese citizens entitled for receiving legitimate organ transplant in mainland China includes permanent residents of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

Starting from January 1st, 2015, China fully stopped the use of organs from death penalty prisoners and the civilian voluntary organ donation has become the only legitimate source of transplantable organ in China. The virtues of Chinese traditional culture have been shown in the organ donation. In 2017, 5,146 Chinese citizens have donated organs after death and benefited 15,047 patients. Thanks to the new China Model, China is now second place in the world in term of number of deceased organ donors.

Based on the data from national organ allocation computer system (China Organ Transplant Response system), during last 7 years, since China started pilot program of new voluntary deceased organ donation program, there were a total of 385 Taiwan residents, 609 Hong Kong residents and 57 Macau residents received organ transplant in China. Currently, there are 188 Taiwan residents, 251 Hong Kong residents and 20 Macau residents actively waiting for organ transplant in national waiting-list of China.

While hundreds of Taiwan residents’ lives were saved

by the organs legally donated by their compatriots of mainland China, the legitimate and noble acts are classified as “Transplant Tourism” using harvested organs from executed prisoners of consciences by the article. It’s disrespect and insult to the donor families, and delivered the misinformation to Chinese society which just embraced the concept and the nobility of organ donation in recent years.

The article also claimed the organ transplantation for foreign patients in Tianjin. As far as the allegation is concerned, we welcome the criticism with good intention. As we quoted our Chinese ancient sage Confucius in the PAS global submit on organ trafficking and transplant tourism in Vatican in February, 2017: “*The saint’s errors are like the eclipse of the sun and the moon, the whole world will see it when he errs, and he will be respected by all when he mends his way*”. As we reiterated many times before, our national organ donation and transplant system is still not perfect. It’s a long way for us to improve our system. To be a blacksmith, you need to be tough yourself. We

already reported the case to Chinese authorities for further legal investigation. If those allegations could be verified, any personnel or any institution involved in the violation will be punished according to the Chinese law on organ transplantation. We will do our best to bring justice to execution.

The new Chinese organ donation and transplantation system is just like the famous ancient Chinese poem said: “*a thousand sails pass by the wrecked ship, and ten thousand saplings shoot up beyond the withered tree*”.

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Footnote

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