

TRANSPORTATION

Student commutes to clog traffic

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With most schools in Beijing starting a new semester and large numbers of parents driving their children to school on Monday, traffic will be extremely heavy, transportation authorities said.

The so-called congestion index — which runs from 0 to 10, indicating traffic from light to heavy — may reach 9.2 on Monday morning, the Beijing Commission of Transport said in a news release.

Monday is opening day for all universities, middle schools, primary schools and kindergartens.

"The official opening of school often raises traffic pressure in the city," Zhou Zhengyu, director of the commission, was quoted by Beijing News as saying.

He said the commission conducted a survey of primary and middle school students and found that 26 percent planned to go to school in cars driven by their parents, meaning at least 200,000 cars would be added to the morning peak.

"According to our estimate, about 400,000 automobiles will be on the road when schools start," Zhou told Beijing News. "School openings bring traffic congestion."

Liu Changwen, a 36-year-old resident of Beijing's Chaoyang district, needs about 30 minutes to drive his son to a primary school in Dongcheng district. He said he had foreseen the congestion and would adjust his departure time.

"My impression is that September is the most crowded month in recent years, especially on the first day of school," he said, adding that he and his son will leave home 20 minutes early to avoid possible congestion.



Vehicles clog East Second Ring Road in Beijing on Sunday. Transportation authorities expect traffic congestion to be even worse on Monday. ZOU HONG / CHINA DAILY

26 percent

of surveyed primary and middle school students plan to go to school in cars driven by their parents, according to the Beijing Commission of Transport.

Figures released by the transport commission supported Liu's impression. From 2010 to 2013, the congestion index in September has topped that of all other months. It was 20 percent higher than the average level of each year.

This month is expected to be no exception. Earlier, the commission said that eight days this month would have extremely heavy traffic: Sept 6, 7, 11, 14, 18, 21, 24 and 25. On each of those days, the congestion index was expected to be over 9.0.

Sunday's index was not that high, however. It was the first working day after the national three-day vacation.

The index ranged between 8.1 and 8.5 in the early morning and dropped after 8:30 am.

Zhou said the situation was

better than estimated because some people didn't return to work and some schools didn't start on that day.

However, it will be hard to repeat the performance on Monday, he said.

He also said rain, during this busy month, will make things worse. The commission, together with other departments, will pay close attention to the traffic situation and will take measures — for example, allowing students to leave school early if rain is forecast, Zhou said.

Briefly

BEIJING

Gift cakes out, watchdog warns

High-priced moon cakes are prohibited as gifts for officials during the Mid-Autumn Festival, which falls on Sept 27 this year, according to a notice issued by the Information Office of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the country's top anti-graft watchdog. The commission solicited help from the media nationwide to perform a watchdog role, detecting and publicizing breaches of austerity rules.

Guidelines issued to promote big data

The State Council has issued guidelines to boost the development and promotion of big data, it announced in a statement released on Saturday. The framework, ratified by Premier Li Keqiang, aims to forge a new model for social governance in the upcoming five to 10 years while highlighting accurate management and multidimensional cooperation.

Two suspected of taking bribes

Two officials in the Ningxia Hui autonomous region and another from Hainan province are under suspicion of accepting bribes, the Supreme People's Procuratorate announced on Sunday. Prosecutors believe that Yang Youming, former deputy head of transportation in Ningxia, took advantage of his post to seek profits for others and illegally accepted and extorted property. Li Jie, former deputy mayor of Hainan, capital of Hainan, and Ma Zhanlin, former deputy head of the Ningxia bureau of housing and urban-rural development, are also under investigation.

nese people, especially among elderly female retirees. The circular said square dancing is encouraged in China and local authorities should provide convenient outdoor venues and facilities for residents. The circular urged local governments to offer free lessons and promote the creation of more dance routines.

SHANDONG

Death toll rises to 13 in plant blast

Thirteen people were confirmed dead in an explosion at a chemical factory in Lijin county, the publicity bureau of Dongying, which administers Lijin, said on Sunday. The Dongying city government said on its website that 11 people injured in the incident were still hospitalized. It also said some of the victims' bodies had been cremated. Relatives of the victims were emotionally stable, the city government said.

XINHUA—CHINA DAILY

Square dancing gets lift from govt

Four ministerial-level departments including the Ministry of Culture and General Administration of Sport, issued a circular regulating dancing in public areas on Sunday. Square dancing in public areas is a popular community activity for Chi-



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