



Japan's organ black market booms

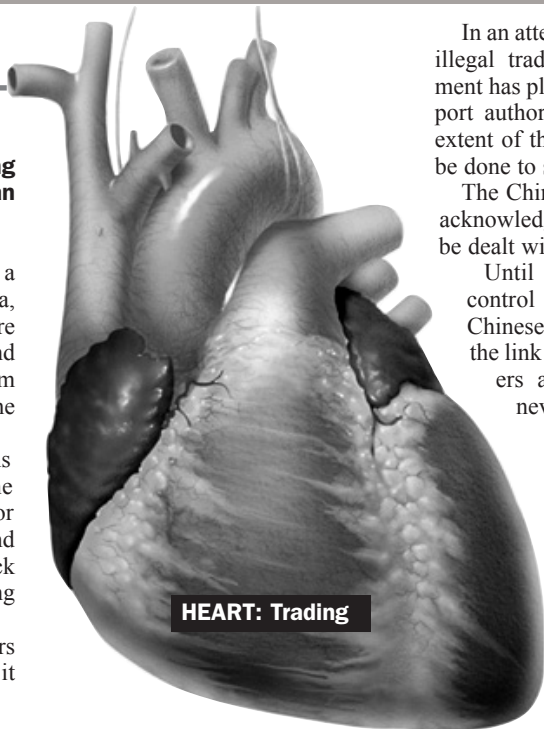
By Jess Best Reporter

THE CHINESE and Japanese governments have announced this week that they are clamping down on illegal trading of human organs between the two countries.

After years of rumours about a black market for organs in China, reports that rich Japanese citizens are buying organs such as kidneys and livers, many of which come from executed Chinese prisoners, over the internet have prompted action.

In a country where only 40 organs have been donated since 1997, the Japanese have become desperate for an alternative to the waiting lists, and China has come to be seen as a black market solution to the continuing problems.

With an estimated 8,000 prisoners executed in China each year, it appears that business is booming.



In an attempt to crack down on the illegal trade, the Japanese government has pledged to work with transport authorities to research the full extent of the problem, and what can be done to stop it.

The Chinese government has also acknowledged that the issue needs to be dealt with.

Until now, strict government control over information about Chinese prisoners has meant that the link between executed prisoners and the organ trade has never been confirmed.

The trade has flourished on the internet, with adverts for 'e-donors' targeting Japanese patients. But more low-tech methods have also been used to make money, with adverts having been made on the walls or in the toilets of

Chinese hospitals.

A transplant patient will then travel to China to undergo the relevant operations.

A donated kidney is believed to cost around £37,000, and a liver can cost as much as £88,000.

One Japanese kidney transplant patient said: "I would have died before getting a donor and it was cheap."

Under Chinese law all organ donations, including those from and to close relatives, must be preceded by proof of a relationship between the two people by marriage or blood, or evidence of a DNA test.

It is hoped that the new moves announced will stop problems with patients after care, as well as many reported cases of patients dying within a few years of their return to Japan.

World News in Brief

By Lindle Markwell Reporter

Strip Off-ice

A ROMANIAN mayor has been reprimanded for spending £10,000 of public money on a party with male strippers.

The bash was held as a treat for his female employees to mark Women's Day on March 8.

The mayor had previously told the local council that he would be holding: "a special dinner with... flowers for every woman and a show with professional artists."

The professional artists were in fact male strippers who were hired for the whole night.

Bin Laden TV

OSAMA BIN Laden's niece has signed a highly paid deal to appear in a reality TV show in the United States.

Wafah Dufour, who was brought up in the US, has already posed for some sexy shots in the American *GQ*, and the new show will chart her efforts to succeed as a pop star.

But, members of the September 11 Family Association condemn the fact that the family of the international terrorist might profit from his notoriety.

Free to chop it

A RUSSIAN woman who cut off her husband's penis in a jealous rage has been acquitted.

The green-eyed 31-year-old had been thrown out of her marital home after accusing her husband of having an affair, but she snuck back in while he was sleeping and chopped off his vital parts.

The man in question is now undergoing surgery to rebuild his genitals, while his wife has been given a three-year suspended sentence.

Bark-ring

A FAMILY in Holland have been hit with tax bills because of their barking doorbell.

Dutch law states that dog-owners must pay annual taxes of £55 for their animals, and the authorities keep confusing the barking bell with a real dog.

The family had previously owned a German Shepherd dog, so bought the doorbell that plays 15 different types of barking noises as a tribute to him.

New version of Monopoly lampoons Bush administration

By Adam Millward Reporter

THE CLASSIC boardgame Monopoly has received a post-9/11 facelift in America.

'Patriot Act: The Home Version' might imitate the well-known game but as opposed to dealing with property, the players must grapple with US security cards and civil liberties.

The game controversially features Guantanamo Bay in place of the traditional jail squares.

It has been created by Arab-American graphic artist, Michael Kabbash, who went on to retail it at his website, www.graphix4change.com.

Openly mocking American politics, at the centre of the board sits the image of John Ashcroft, the former Attorney General who in 2001 administrated the controversial US Patriot Act into law, despite considerable opposition which insisted civil rights were being encroached.

George W Bush himself doesn't escape lampooning, with the 'Go' square occupied by the words 'Bring it on!' - echoing the president's response to attacks in 2003.

Kabbash's 'symbols of America' are represented

in the metal playing pieces, including an oil well, a cowboy hat, a dollar sign and the constitution.

Each player must start the game by rolling dice to obtain a 'profile', which is made up of ethnicity, citizenship, religion, politics and profession. The player who retains their civil rights the longest is the winner.

It isn't the first time that Kabbash has altered iconic brands to mock Republican politicians. In 2005, the graphic artist created mock-ups of various breakfast cereals, including 'Republican's Neo-Con Krispies' in the style of Kellogg's Rice Krispies.

He has also made other political statements with brand names, including the misappropriation of the Gap brand to examine American society's view of Arab culture.

Kabbash's controversial version of Monopoly in America follows the game making the headlines here in the UK in March this year, after an attempted bank raid at Heathrow.

The would-be bank robbers made off with what they assumed to be £75 million in real currency, before discovering they had instead stolen Monopoly money intended for promotional use. So far, however, the robbers have not been caught.

