



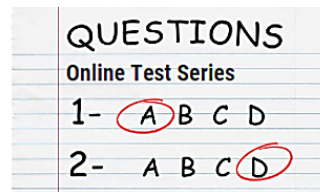
OnePlus 3^T
A day's power in half an hour
amazon exclusive



Toshiba India on The Economic Times
Know more about Toshiba JSW's shipment of its first



www.hbrascend.in
How To Be a Better Manager – An Interview



ePravesh
How to define online test series based on the



Muscle & Fitness
Massive Bodybuilder Dubbed 'Iranian Hulk'

Recommended by

hello hanyu

Why businessmen and students in India are learning to speak the official language of the Peoples Republic of China.

Like 0



Google +



Written by Sharon Fernandes | New Delhi | Published: December 19, 2010 2:37 pm

Why businessmen and students in India are learning to speak the official language of the Peoples Republic of China.

Ni chi fan le ma.

Have you eaten?

Hen gaoxing renshi ni!

I am glad to meet you.



Magnetic Fields 2016:
The Experience



Damage After Cyclone Vardah
Makes Landfall In Tamil Nadu



Delhi: 16 kg gold found in
diapers at Indira
Gandhi airport

The singsong of an unfamiliar language fills a large room in Jor Bagh, south Delhi, as students listen attentively to the back-and-forth of Mandarin and English. Twenty-four-year-old Abhishek Gupta, a student at the Chinese Language Institute, gingerly tries out the inflections of ni hao (hello) and xie xie (thank you), but he is most eager for next weekend and the introductory class to hao ma (numbers). Gupta is a west Delhi businessman, and is soon due to visit China, the wholesale market of the world, for shipments of dry fruits, spices and chemicals. If I can talk to traders in their language, I might get a good deal, he says. A good deal from the Peoples Republic of China is also why four other businessmen in the class of 10 have signed memos.

This century belongs to China: that's the drumbeat of confidence in Beijing. Its also being echoed in the cities of India, where businessmen are lining up for classes in Mandarin to wrangle the best bargain in Shanghai and Guangzhou, and, while they are at it, ask for tea. The Indian government seems to agree: from 2011-12 academic session, CBSE schools will begin to teach Mandarin to Class VI students. You cannot afford to ignore one of the largest economies of the world.

Learning Mandarin is like what it must have been to learn English in the 60s, says Gaurav Marwah, a 32-year-old employee of Bank of America in India, who often has to travel to China for work. How do you do business when the manufacturers of everything you want to sell, from Ganesha idols to footwear, are in China? You go to China and make a deal, says the banker.

The economy is what it is all about, agrees Ganesh Iyer of Iyer Language Classes in Thane. Trade relations between India and China are on the upswing. So a lot of

businessmen want to learn Mandarin to make their lives easier in China. Then, there are students who go there to study and want to be well-versed in the language, says Iyer. A basic language course at the institute costs approximately Rs 13,500.

Fiona Lee, a student of JD Birla College in Kolkata, is one such 20-year-old looking east. I'm learning how to read and write in Chinese because I want to improve my career prospects. With a burgeoning demand for Chinese-speaking people in the IT sector, a sound knowledge of Chinese will definitely help, she says. At the School of Chinese Languages where she studies, there are about 100 students. Most of them are Indians, says Madan Saraf, principal, from eager teenagers to 70-year-old scholars.

Kashish Jain, 29, has enrolled at Prime Education, a language solutions institute on Roshanara Road, north Delhi, for a crash course. He has been travelling to China for three years now and set up an office in Foshan a couple of months ago. I import light fixtures and bathroom fittings for apartment and hotel projects. But it's difficult to do business there; no one knows English except in offices. At a hotel I was staying, I had to draw a bowl when I wanted one, he says. More valuable things can get lost in translation. Jain ended up with 500 lamps of the wrong model the last time they can't say that, he says. The biggest benefit is that I don't get cheated. Even taxi drivers don't overcharge me.

The businessmen are smart. They want to go to the villages directly and get material. If they go to Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou, they have to pay more money. But if they go to the manufacturing units directly, they make bigger profits, says Cannie Min, a native Mandarin speaker from Taiwan, who has been teaching in Delhi for the last five years.

Mandarin is a difficult language, each word a complex structure of dashes and dots that stacks up vertically. Each letter can be pronounced in two or three ways. The script is not like Devnagari. It's pictographic. There are around 50,000-70,000 characters in this language and pronunciation has to be perfect, otherwise words lose their meaning, says 52-year-old Poonam Joshi, who runs Bhashalaya, an institute in Jogeshwari, Mumbai, that has been teaching Mandarin for 15 years. Among its clients are companies like Tata International, IDBI, Hindustan

Unilever, Reliance and Siemens, which send their employees for short stints to China. A 30-hour course at the institute costs Rs 8,500-12,000.

The script remains undecipherable for Gupta and Jain. At many of the classes, students are taught Pinyin a system in which Mandarin characters are transcribed to a Roman script through a set of rules. It is learning Mandarin using the English alphabet. Most people want to learn how to speak the language, not write it. The script interests those who want to get into translation and interpretation, but for businessmen, conversational Mandarin is important, says Purnima Garg, director of the institute in Jor Bagh.

Mandarin has been taught in India for many years at universities and language schools but the demand for the language is growing. According to Madhavi Thampi, who teaches Chinese history in the Department of East Asian Studies, Delhi University, the tipping point came about five years ago. The number of applications went from 50 to 500. Since then, there has been an exponential increase in students, and also in the number of private coaching classes, she says. The demand is more than we can handle, she says.

Tapping into this demand are language professionals. Priya Ahluwalia, 20, learnt the

6,500 for a 40-hour course at the Ni Hao Language Institute she opened two months ago. There is a huge need among businessmen, from car spare-parts dealers to tube-light manufacturers, to pick up the language. I already have 18 students, says Sharma, who also teaches the language to her 11-year-old daughter and nine-year-old son.

The courses are also packed with cultural nuances, necessary, Garg says, if her students don't want to make faux pas. You can never gift a Chinese person anything in a set of four. The symbol for four called si (spoken as sa), is pronounced the same way as the word for death, she says. Do you know why the Beijing Olympics were held on August 8, 2008, and started at 8.08 pm? Because eight or ba pronounced as pa means riches, she says.

It is all about the tone, you can say one letter in different tones and it can mean something totally different, says Min. For example, if you say qing wen, where the accent is on the i and the e it means, May I ask you? But if you say qin wen, where

there is a different tone mark on q and on the first e, then it means, Can I kiss you? You can get slapped if you mix it up, she says.

There is no mixing it up when it comes to business and the bottom line. The Jor Bagh institute includes a class on how to bargain. Bargaining is very common in China, says Garg.

Duoshao qian?

How much money?

Tai gui le.

Very expensive.

And then finally: Pianya dinar.

Make it a little cheaper.

After all, you are buying it in China.

(With inputs from Samya Lakhani and Dhirenbur Dey)

FROM AROUND THE WEB



UNSW Australia launches India Scholarship. Register your interest here
UNSW International scholarship



Healthy oats recipes you should try!
Saffola Fit Foodie



Want to See How Celebrities Really Live? See Inside These Homes That Are
Mansion Global by Dow Jones



Buying a health insurance plan is not difficult anymore!
Religare Health Insurance



Invest Rs. 25 to win lakhs every month!
jungleerummy



Students at this uni are joining forces to create a culture of innovation
UNSW International



The 3 biggest lies you'll hear about Term Insurance!
Max Life Insurance



These 5 actual images will change your perception of luxury living in North India.
Sobha City - Overview



Here's the House Obama Will Live in After He Moves Out of the White House
Mansion Global

Recommended by

Give your rating:

Leave a comment

Latest

ME

Post your opinion...

Name

Email

Post

☒ I agree on T&C

Talk of the town

- 1

Consumer forum asks Pan Card Club to pay for death; absolves New India Insurance Co - Indian Express
- 1

Mizoram government mulling new drug policy to counter abuse
- 1

Jaya expels close aide Sasikala, ...
- 1

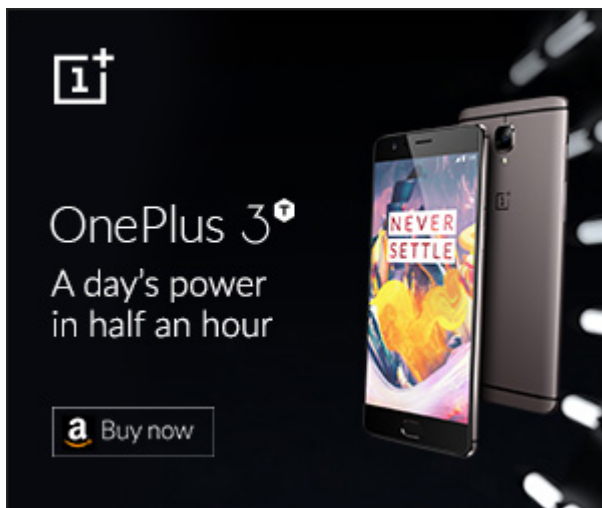
Guard of Honour

More News

Aura Mumtaz Mahal

Jaminan Harga Terb...
INR 2,041

EXPAND



black money very high
on my agenda: PM
Modi



Entertainment
Baahubali 2: Rana
Daggubati's first look as
Bhallaladeva is out and
he looks vicious, see pic



Entertainment
Befikre BO collection
Day 5: Ranveer Singh,
Vaani Kapoor film
passes the weekday

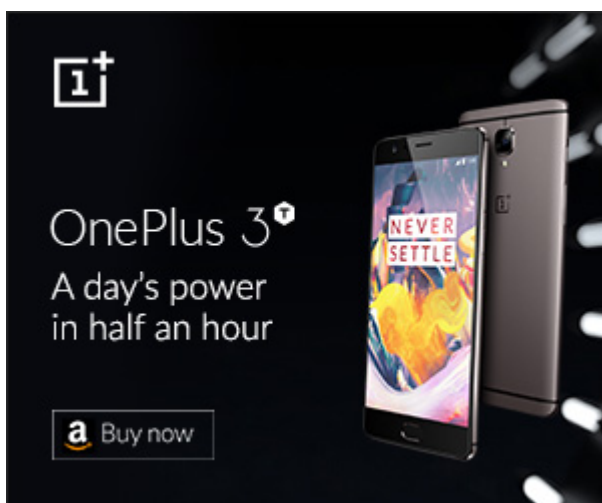


Crime Factor actor
Kamlesh Pandey
commits suicide



Entertainment
Kaabil's Saara
Zamaana: Urvashi
Rautela is oomph in the
revamped version,

watch video



MUST READ



Sports

Kohli is an out-and-out superstar: McCullum



Sports

Kohli vs Anderson: Who is saying what



Sports

Can Ashwin succeed abroad? Kartik feels time will tell



Technology

Nubia Z11 review: A worthy challenger for the OnePlus 3



Technology

Now Aircel announces unlimited voice calling to take on rivals



Android Wear 2.0

Developer Preview is now out: A look at the top features



Lifestyle

'To Sir, With Love' author ER Braithwaite dies at 104

DEC 14: LATEST NEWS



Delhi Dynamos vs Kerala Blasters, live football score, ISL 2016 semi-finals: Can Delhi overturn the deficit or

will Kerala prevail?



Court notice to real estate major Indiabulls on cheating plea



Decorate your home for wedding the quick way



This 72-yr-old woman has an unusual, well-paying job — to guard John Lennon's glasses!



Mozart may boost men's concentration



Hotel Aura-Mumtaz Mahal



₹ 2,041

Book now

Booking.com





know more

Elections




Nirmala Sitharaman



4 m





New: Big Data Analysis Trends

Get the 2017 Free Whitepaper

Top 10 Trends about Big Data Analytics, Hadoop & More. Get the Free Whitepaper.

tableau.com

[The Express Group](#) [The Indian Express](#) [The Financial Express](#) [Loksatta](#) [Jansatta](#) [inUth](#) [Ramnath Goenka Awards](#)
[Privacy Policy](#) [Advertise with Us](#) [Contact Us](#) [Subscribe](#)

Copyright © 2016 The Indian Express [P] Ltd. All Rights Reserved

 Powered by **WordPress.com VIP**