

中華巾幗

CHINESE WOMEN



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團結廣大婦女為
我國現代化建設作
出新的貢獻

江澤民

Unite with women as many as possible! Make new
contributions to the modernization of our country!
--The inscription by Chairman Jiang Zemin

以行動謀求平等發展與和
平
熱烈祝賀聯合國第四次世
界婦女大會在北平召開

喬石 一九五五年七月

Take action to seek Equality, Development and Peace
Warmly Congratulate the UN's 4th World Women's Con-
ference for its opening in Beijing!
The Qiao Shi, Chairman of National People's Congress

Take Action to Seek Development and

China, an ancient land full of mystery and wonder, has generated many fairy tales about heroines in history. It has both experienced a splendid age of Matrilineal Society and produced the culture of Han and Tang dynasties in which women played significant roles. The 5,000 years of long history of civilization bears out that it is the joint effort of man and woman that created the world.

Generation after generation, numerous Chinese women and men lived and worked on this piece of sacred land. On this land, they shed sweat and tears, displayed outstanding intelligence and entrusted never-ending hopes.

In ancient times the Chinese women always worked together with men to support their hard lives. China has experienced a few thousand years of feudal society and more than one hundred years of semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, in which the women lived in a miserable world of suppression, humiliation and devastation. Politically they were wholly excluded from social political lives; economically they have no property rights, no right of inheritance and no independent economic support. In the society they have no independent personality and status. They were asked to obey father in family, obey husband after marriage and obey son after death of husband. They were deprived of the right of cultural education and participation in social activities. Women had no say in their own marriages, which were wholly arranged by their parents and matchmakers, and widows were not allowed to have a second marriage. Women were physically and mentally persecuted by the polygynous system and prostitution system. Most of them were forced to foot-binding when they were still young, and for hundreds of years "bound-feet" has been used as the synonym of Chinese women.

After the Opium War in 1840, the western powers invaded China one after another, which further intensified the misery of Chinese women. In the war of Japanese invasion of China which started in 1937, over 30 million Chinese people were killed, of whom most are women and children. Alone in the month after the Japanese army captured Nanjing City, more than 20,000 Chinese women were raped by the Japanese armymen. Imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism colluded together to carry out brutal oppression and exploitation on the Chinese people, pushing China to the verge of national subjugation and genocide, and also pushed the Chinese women into unprecedented abyss of suffering.

To save the nation and seek self-liberation, the Chinese women, together with the whole people, engaged themselves in an unyielding struggle that lasted for over a hundred years, launching female liberation actions one after another. The Taiping Heavenly Kingdom drafted and issued a series of policies on male and female equality. The Reform Movement of 1898 initiated the activities of forbidding foot-binding and promoting female education. The Revolution of 1911 sponsored the female right action which mainly aimed to realize male and female equality and female participation in political lives. These movements helped promote the awakening of the Chinese women, and yet they failed to radically change the tragic fate of the Chinese women.

The Chinese history opened a brand new page in the first half of the 20th Century. The Communist Party of China led the Chinese people to carry out a great and profound national democratic revolution on this ancient land, and massive female liberation actions closely accompanied the revolution in large scale, resulting in the world-acknowledged historical revolution of the Chinese women. For the Chinese women, the history of feudal oppression and foreign persecution that has lasted thousands of years has come to an end henceforth. The Chinese women have finally stood up in a brand-new pose to become masters of the Republic together with men.

In 1949, the First Plenary Session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference was held in Beijing, 69 women, or 10.4% of the total representatives, attended the meeting. They discussed grand plans for national reconstruction together with male representatives. At the meeting Song Qingling was elected vice-president of the Central People's Government. Li Dequan, Shi Liang and a group of women took leading positions in the central government. The Common Program passed at the meeting, which was actually the country's provisional constitution, solemnly announced that the feudal system which yoked the female be abolished, women enjoy equal rights with men in politics, economy, cultural education and all aspects of social lives, creating a new age of liberation for Chinese women.

Equality, Peace

On April 3, 1949, the All-China Democratic Women's Federation officially announced its birth, which is the victorious fruit of the New Democratic Revolution and self-liberation struggle pursued by Chinese women and their fellow countrymen under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. It bears the task of uniting the Chinese women from all walks of life to carry out socialist construction. The basic aim of All-China Women's Federation is to represent and protect the interests of the mass of women. The Federation is all Chinese women's own organization. It seeks female and male equality and the promotion of female status. It has the characteristics of broad representation and mass participation. And it has now established complete operating network, with grass-root units distributed all over the urban and rural areas.

Since China initiated the opening and reform policies in the late 1970s, women organizations mushroomed all over the country. To date, China has more than 5,800 mass women organizations, which constitute a powerful backing for protecting women's interests. A large number of workers of women affairs have won high social opinion and trust of the mass of women. They timely send the warmth of the motherland, the care of the people and the love of the whole society to the heart of women.

The yoke on the head of Chinese women has finally been broken, hundreds of thousands of Chinese women now live brand-new lives. They can be seen on farmland, in factories, hospitals, classrooms, theaters and sports grounds. Many women have also been engaged in high-tech positions, such as satellite launching and computer science.

According to statistics, from 1949 to 1988, 2.485 million women won the title of advanced worker; from 1978 to 1992, 572 outstanding women won honorary titles of National Model Worker, and 20,152 excellent women won the titles of National "March 8th" Red Flaggers. From 1988 to 1993, 936 women won the National "May 1" Labor Medals.

These outstanding women of the Chinese nation are the developers, workers and contributors of the Republic. They have set up brilliant models for the prosperity of the Chinese nation with their pure innocence and sincere intention.

In China, women participated in overall management of the country and social affairs, making great contributions to the country's democratic and legal construction. At present, women constitute 21% of the representatives of the National People's Congress, and among the members of the National Committee of the CPPCC, 14% are women. The State Council has one female state councilor, more than 20 women ministers and vice-ministers. Among the 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, 23 have had female senior leaders. The country now has nearly 20 women provincial governors and vice-governors, and more than 300 females have been elected mayor or vice-mayor in the country's 517 cities.

The Chinese women is a significant power in reinforcing legal construction and protecting the state's security. In judicial organs there are a large number of female judges, female procurators and female lawyers. In 1992 the country had 21,012 female judges and 4,512 female lawyers.

The Chinese women is also a great force in safeguarding world peace, for they have deeply felt the meaning of peace in their own liberation. Peace has significant bearing on the future of the world and the fate of people of different countries, especially women. Without peace, there would be no development, let alone equality between men and women. For many years, Chinese women have made unremitting efforts to defend the peace of the world and fight against imperialism, old and new colonialism, hegemonism, racism in different disguise, fascism and various types of terrorism. Since 1980 China has offered 101 batches of material support to women and children organizations in 50 countries, and provided a series of support to train unemployed female youths and develop women cause.

China undertook the convening of the Fourth World Women's Conference with great enthusiasm, and has actively reinforced relations and cooperation with UN organizations, foreign governments and related Non-Government Organizations. China spares no efforts to ensure the smooth opening of the conference, and tries to seek equality, development and peace with actions, so as to make contributions to promote the advancement of the whole world's women.

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1. Chairman Mao Zedong meets with Mayinuer and other women representatives from various ethnic groups.
2. Zhou Enlai, late premier of the State Council, is with women representatives.



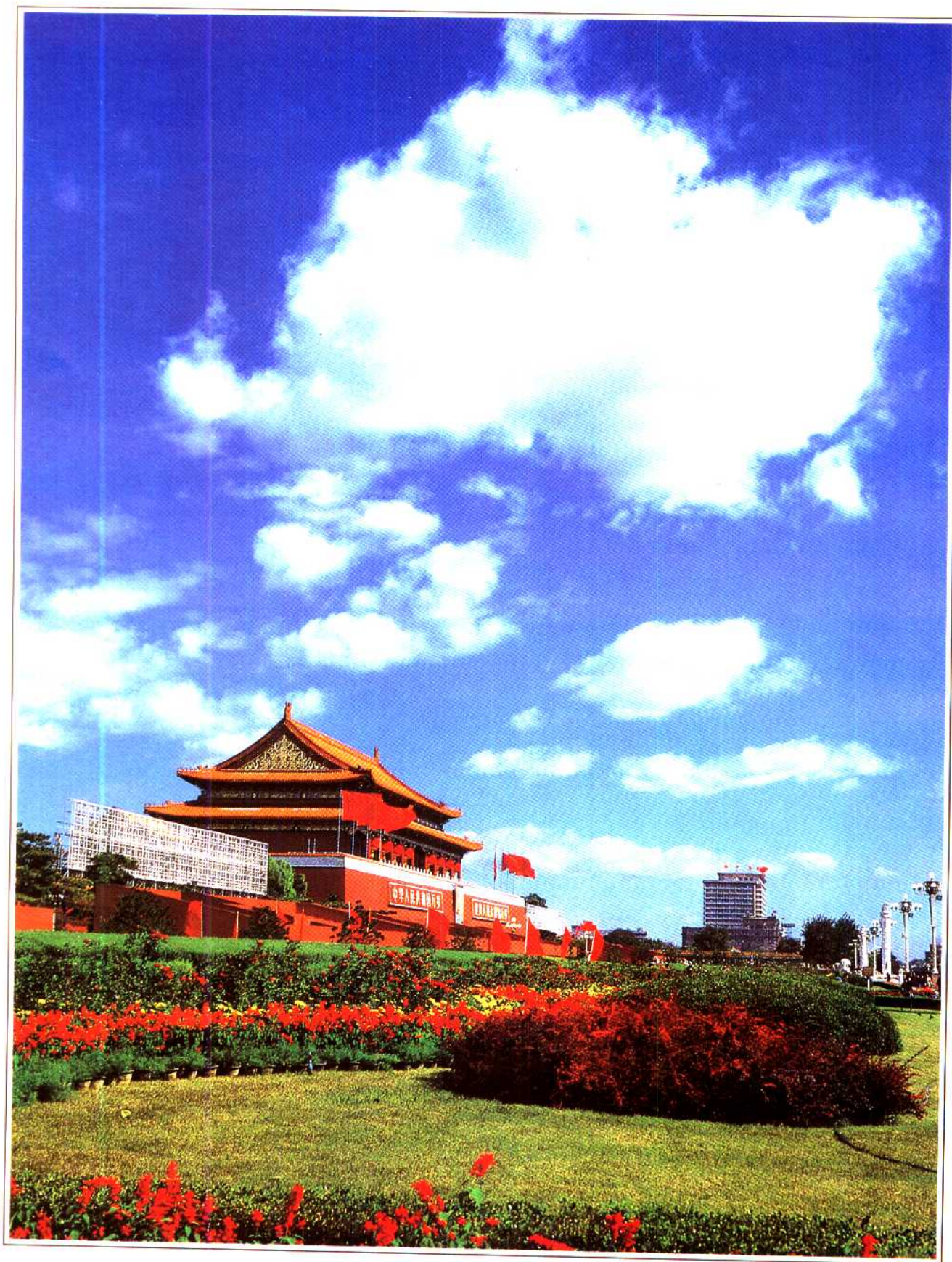
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1. The photo shows Comrade Deng Xiaoping together with woman entrepreneur Zhang Qianling and others.



2. Jiang Zemin, Li Peng and other party and the state leaders met with the representatives attending the Fourth National Conference on Women on Sept. 3, 1993.





Women's Glory Shines on Ancient and Modern History

China located in world's East has enjoyed more than 5,000 years of civilized history, and Chinese women have made indelible contribution to China's ancient civilization. There have emerged a large number of outstanding women including stateswomen, strategists, historians and women of letters. Their names and merits will be crowned with eternal glory.

Chinese women in ancient feudal society experienced long discrimination and suppression rarely seen in the world. Therefore, their resistance was most vehement and heroic. Their courageous struggle left an extraordinary chapter in Chinese history.

Since the Old Democratic Revolution, the pioneers of women's movement began to explore ways for women's liberation. The "May 4 Movement" in 1919 ushered in a new era in women's liberation movement. Led by Xiang Jingyu, Cai Chang and Deng Yingchao, Chinese women bravely resisted the merciless suppression of the ruling class and shook off the shackles of feudal society. Fighting shoulder by shoulder with men, they made marked contribution to the victory of China's New Democratic Revolution, as well as considerable merits for the founding of a new China.

One and one sculptures and monuments of martyrs have been erected on the land of the Chinese nation. The martyrs, including Qiu Jin, Xiang Jingyu, Guo Longzhen, Zhao Yiman and Jiang Zhuyun, promoted women's liberation movement with their blood and wrote a heroic and moving chapter in China's revolutionary history. They are the pride of the Chinese nation.

On October 1st, 1949, the People's Republic of China was founded. Ever since Chinese women have been enjoying equal rights with men in political, social and family affairs. Women are engaged in politics to take part in State governing, and there have emerged a large number of outstanding female ministers, governors, mayors, county magistrates, judges, lawyers and procurators. Many of them have won deep respect of the people for their extraordinary talents and work merits. Exceptional representatives are former senior officials like Song Qing Ling, He Xiangning, Cai Chang and Deng Yingchao. They have made special contribution to drawing up laws including the "Constitution of the People's Republic of China" and the "Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China", which contain abundant articles to protect women's rights and interests and to achieve equal rights between women and men.

Under the socialist system of China, women are able to display their intelligence and talent to the greatest extent. Like men, they are taking an active part in the socialist construction, some of them even devoted their lives to the republic's undertakings.

In history, Chinese women devoted their perspiration and blood for their motherland.

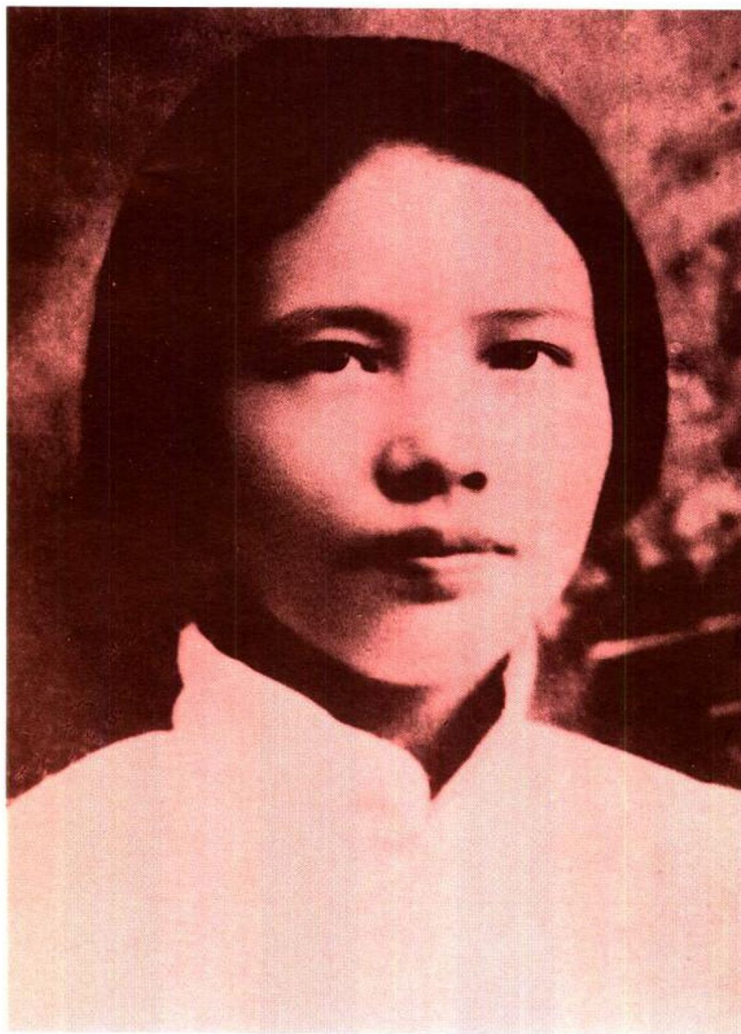
Today, Chinese women once again are contributing more to the prosperity of the people's republic with their hard work.



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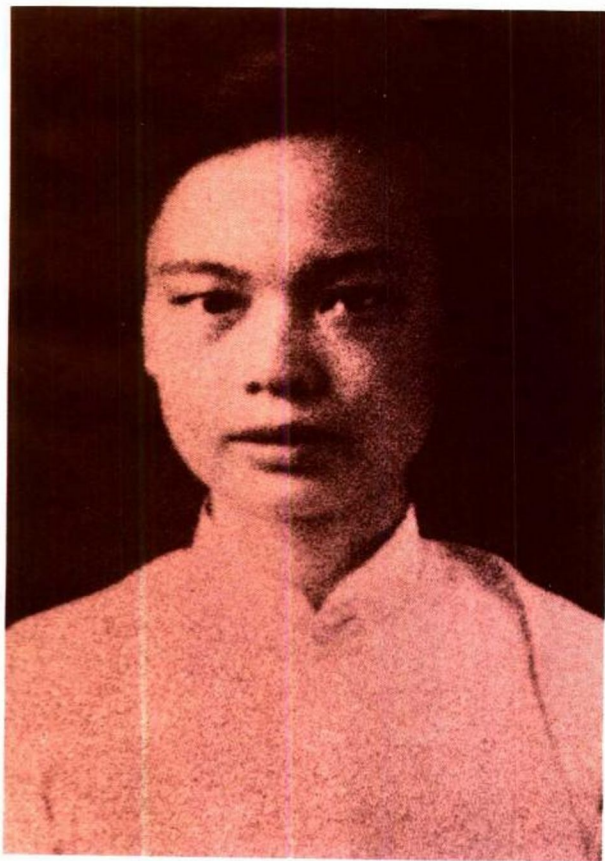
1. Qiu Jing, the forerunner of China's modern democratic revolution, went to study in Japan in 1904. She took an active part in the revolutionary activities along with the Chinese students studying in Japan and joined Guangfu Association and Tongmeng Society, both revolutionary associations in modern China. Qiu was elected leader of Zhejiang folks in the societies. Upon returning to her home country, she helped launch magazines, and supported military trainings, fund-raising and munition production and secretly trained leading officials for the revolution. However, she was arrested at the age of 28 when she was preparing an uprising with Xu Xiling, another revolutionary leader.
2. Xiang Jingyu, the forerunner of China's women movement, joined the Communist Party of China (CPC) in 1922. She was the first woman member of the CPC central committee and the first head of women's department under the CPC. Being chief editor of "Women Weekly" launched in 1923, she had published over 30 essays on China's women movement. She was killed by anti-revolutionaries in Wuhan in 1928.



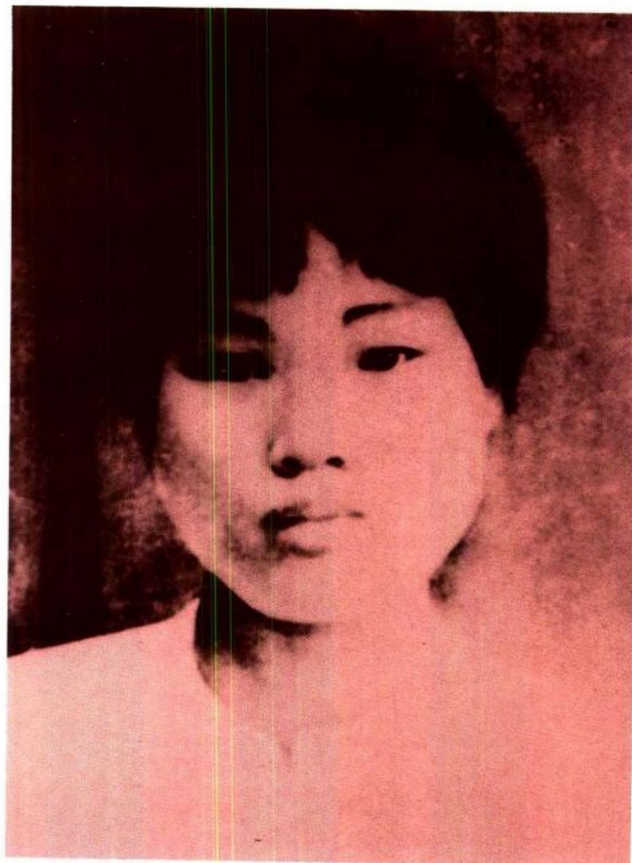


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1. Chen Tiejun, another forerunner of women's movement in China, joined the CPC in 1926. She had been engaged in underground work in Guangzhou with great enthusiasm and earnest style of work. In 1927, she took part in the world famous Guangzhou Uprising and the next year, she was arrested along with Zhou Wenyong, her revolutionary partner. She was brave in prison and court and held a special and sorrowful wedding ceremony at the execution ground.
2. Zhang Yilan, another forerunner of women's movement in China, joined the CPC in 1925. She was appointed head of women's department of the Special Party Committee of the Kuomintang, the nationalist in 1927. But she firmly accepted the leadership by the CPC and had actively publicized and implemented the principles, policies, instructions and resolutions by the CPC on women's liberation movement. Arrested in 1927, she died for the revolution with 19 revolutionaries such as Li Dazhao.
3. Yang Kaihui, a forerunner in women's movement in China, married Mao Zedong in 1920 and had helped Mao with his revolutionary work. In her short but bright lifetime, Yang has actively supported armed struggle and peasant guerrillas under the leadership of the CPC. Arrested in 1930, she was only 29 years old when she was killed.



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1. Guo Longzhen, the forerunner of the women's movement in China, joined the CPC in 1923. She worked in the work of women and workers' movement in the Northeast and Shandong province and had been head of the Propaganda Department of the CPC committee in Qingdao city. She died for the revolution at the foot of Qianfoshan in Jinan, Shandong Province, in 1931.
2. He Baozhen, the forerunner of women's movement in China, joined the CPC in 1923. She had been engaged in revolutionary work in Guangzhou, Wuhan and Shanghai and was arrested and killed in Shanghai in 1933.
3. Xu Quanzhi, the forerunner of the women's movement in China, joined the CPC in 1923 and married Chen Tanqiu, another revolutionary two years later. Having long been working on secret work of the party, she was arrested in Shanghai in 1933 and died in Nanjing, Jiangsu province.