

Bingbing, MWG mascot, becomes popular with international media

By Huang Zhe

Bingbing, the mascot of the 7th Military World Games (MWG), introduced on November 24, 2017, has quickly become popular. Not only domestic mainstream media but also foreign ones, including those of Japan, Russia, India, and Pakistan, have been reporting about Bingbing.

The design of Bingbing is based on the Chinese sturgeon, a migratory fish of the Yangtze River basin and a first-level key wildlife species under national protection. *The Times of India* in an article on November 26, 2017, introduced Bingbing to its readers, saying "it is a species as precious as the giant panda." Meanwhile, Bahrain News Agency, on its official website, introduced the mascot Bingbing and the emblem of the 7th MWG with large pictures and the headline "CISM Games 2019 logo launched." *Pakistan Daily* also hailed Bingbing for its origin as a rare species of fish. The Russian news agency RIA presented a full-length report on the 7th MWG as well as its emblem and mascot.

The emblem and mascot have received a lot of public recognition since their release in November. Bingbing has also been warmly received by fans at home and

abroad as seen by its posts on Weibo, WeChat, Twitter, Facebook and other social media platforms. Some commented: "This is an excellent mascot and the best emblem I've seen in years!" and "Bingbing has embodied the special characteristics of the Chinese army — enthusiastic and unyielding."

Muhammad Atique, a student from Pakistan majoring in Public Management at Huazhong University of Science and Technology, said "for those who do not know Chinese, the name Bingbing is easy to remember and pleasant to hear." He previously knew little about the Chinese sturgeon, but the launch of the mascot prompted him to do some research about the species on the Internet. He said: "The Chinese sturgeon has a close bond with Hubei. It's a mascot with rich local colors." Vasilissa Tarabrina, a Russian student studying Journalism and Communications at Wuhan University, said, "The 7th MWG is a window that attracts foreign visitors to know about Wuhan. The release of the mascot Bingbing can help the outside world to remember Wuhan and also to care about the protection of endangered wildlife."



Snapshot of report by Bahrain News Agency



Snapshot of report by *The Times of India*

Review board: image of Chinese sturgeon best matches theme of MWG

"When the image of the Chinese sturgeon was brought out for review, I thought, at last, here's a piece of work that can represent the regional features of Hubei, spread the Chinese culture, and epitomize the theme of the MWG," remarked Qian Zhe on December 23, still excited when he recalled the refining of the final draft of Bingbing. Qian, an associate professor at Tsinghua University

and former director of the Image and Landscape Design Section of the Cultural Activity Department under the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games, was one of the evaluation experts for the 7th MWG mascot.

"The Chinese sturgeon, when used in the mascot design, is typical yet unique," Qian stated. The Yichang section of the Yangtze River bears a close relationship to

Wuhan and is an important living environment in the life cycle of the Chinese sturgeon. This gives the Chinese sturgeon, as a mascot, full qualification to stand for both Hubei and Wuhan. For its close bond with the Yangtze River, a mascot design based on this species can directly remind the public of Yangtze River culture, including its history, civilization, and natural resources.

More importantly in the eyes

of Qian, Bingbing imparts the theme of peace. "The purpose of the MWG is to stop war and spread the idea of peace. The Chinese sturgeon is the best cultural carrier of this. Based on this vulnerable species on the brink of extinction, the mascot implicitly communicates something to the public through such perspectives as recognition, care, and protection. I think that is peace."