

# YISHUN JUNIOR COLLEGE

## Preliminary Examination 2014

**H2 CHINA STUDIES IN ENGLISH**

**9733/01**

**19/08/2014**

**TUESDAY 1400h – 1530h**



**TIME** 1.5 hours

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Write your name and CTG on the writing papers provided.

Answer **ALL** questions.

At the end of the examination, please hand in your answers with the cover page stapled in front of the answer scripts.

### **INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question.

You are reminded of the need for clear presentation in your answers.

## Section A

### Case Study

#### Hukou System in China

1. Read the following sources and then answer **all the questions** which follow.

#### Source A

Across China, city children as young as 12 or 13 are banished to rural towns when they reach secondary school thanks to the household registration or hukou system, which restricts access to public services such as schools or hospitals outside a person's official residence. The hukou restrictions are the biggest barrier to integrating into China's cities more than 260m migrant workers. Lack of hukou restricts migrants from buying homes, seeing doctors and sending their children to school, meaning that a generation of young Chinese migrants risk coming of age without a full education.

Reform of the hukou system is one of the policies the Communist party is expected to debate at its Third Plenum meeting, which begins on Saturday – an occasion for the party's new leadership under President Xi Jinping to set priorities for their next decade in power.

Dismantling the hukou system would remove the biggest obstacle to China's official goal of accelerating urbanisation, but it is opposed by city governments that do not want to pay the bill for a sharp increase in demand for services such as hospitals and schools.

Providing basic public services to migrant workers and their families, to enable them to become city residents would cost 80,000 yuan (\$13,000) per person according to estimates by a State Council think-tank. Other estimates run as high as 200,000 yuan a person.

*From an online article on The Financial Times Limited website, 2013*

#### Source B



### Source C

LAST month, China's western city of Chongqing, population 32 million, offered to convert 10 million farmers in its rural counties into urban residents.

The farmers would receive social benefits and housing and the coveted city household registration book or hukou in exchange for giving up their land, in what is touted to be the largest household registration reform.

Some farmers readily give up their rural registration, but others are sceptical about the scheme.

Villager Zhao Hong told the Caixin economics magazine he believed the motive behind the move to get farmers urbanised was to move them away from their land so the state could take over.

'Currently the country needs land to develop the economy. I understand this. The key is how much compensation they will give us,' he said.

He also questioned if the government would be able keep its part of the bargain, including providing adequate pension, and asked: 'Who knows if (the pension) will be enough when we are old?'

Another villager, known as Ren, said: 'Now the countryside has a pension system; health care is supported by a new rural cooperative; and schools don't require extra placement fees. If you want to go to a good school, urban hukou still require you to pay extra sponsorship fees. I think it is pointless to become a city resident.'

In Beijing, students living in its rural counties are offered a city hukou if they manage to secure a place in one of the capital's universities. Last July, after the university entrance examinations, some students rejected this offer. One told the Chinese media: 'If I change my hukou, I'd not be able to enjoy the benefits of the village.' He pointed to the yearly share of profits from land rental as well as pension and financial help for education.

*Published in Straits Times, October 2010.*

### Source D

Young migrant workers in the southern boomtown of Shenzhen are sorely underpaid but in no position to ask for more money, state media reported yesterday, citing a survey held against a backdrop of strikes.

Factories in China's export powerhouse province of Guangdong, where Shenzhen is located, have been hit by stoppages over the past few months by workers demanding more money.

Though they work in the same city, the average monthly wage for young migrant workers in Shenzhen is less than half of that for those who hold full-time, long-term jobs, at 1,838.6 yuan (\$373.20), the survey said.

'Many companies pay in line with the city's lowest minimum standard, and migrant workers can raise their income only by doing excessive amounts of overtime,' said the All-China Federation of Trade Unions.

Such a salary 'can maintain only the very lowest standards of living in Shenzhen', it added.

*Published in Reuters, July 2010.*

## Source E



Shanghainese protesting against the relaxation of a curb that would allow some migrant workers' children to take their university entrance examinations in the city. The notes held up the protests read, "Oppose the off-site university entrance examinations, protect the rights of the Shanghai citizens".

*Published in Straits Times, February 2013*

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Answer **all** the following questions.

- a) How valuable are Sources B and D in helping you understand the economic woes of migrant workers? [6]
- b) With reference to the sources, and your own contextual knowledge, assess the view that the dismantling of the Hukou system would bring more benefits than harm to China's long-term socio-economic development. [9]
- c) You are an independent adviser engaged by the Chinese government to make recommendation for the successful implementation of Hukou reforms. Using information from the sources, and your knowledge, what recommendation would you make and why? [15]

END OF PAPER

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