

da " www.independent.co.uk ", "Chinese children poisoned with lead", By Tini Tran in Beijing, Wednesday, 14 October 2009.

Nearly 1,000 children in a central Chinese province (Henan province) have tested positive for excessive lead in their blood.

The blood tests were conducted on 2,743 children under the age of 14 after recent reports of large-scale lead poisoning in neighbouring Shaanxi province. Signs of lead poisoning* were found in 968 children.

The tested positive children live near three major lead smelters.

Similar reports of lead poisoning have emerged in Yunnan, Fujian and Shaanxi provinces in recent months and more than 3,000 children have been affected.

In response to the results, officials suspended production at 32 of 35 electrolytic lead plants.

* Lead poisoning can damage the nervous and reproductive systems and cause high blood pressure and memory loss.