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In September 2015, 42 people were punished for organizing gaokao cheating in Jiangxi Province, including 22 government officials. Of the 22 officials, three were transferred to judicial departments for malfeasance, while the other 19 received administrative punishments.

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Gaokao cheating has evolved from an individual practice to an organized criminal enterprise in recent years, which involves both teachers and test organizers. This severely affects the chance for students to have an equal shot at education resources, Lao Kaisheng, an education expert at Beijing Normal University told the Global Times.

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"Safeguarding fairness in the gaokao and education in general is the baseline for China to maintain social justice," Xiong Bingqi, vice president of the 21st Century Education Research Institute in Beijing, told the Global Times on Sunday.

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The whole nation experiences anxiety at gaokao time, and it has become a highly charged issue for every Chinese family, Xiong said, adding that many students and parents, especially those from underprivileged families, see it as a chance to move up a social class and gain higher status.

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"The gaokao is a route from rural to urban areas, and it's hard to imagine how I could have gotten where I am without the gaokao," He Jiang, a Harvard biology student who became the first Chinese mainland postgraduate student to deliver a commencement speech at the prestigious university, told ifeng.com in May.

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Apart from anti-cheating efforts, several other measures, including traffic control and noise abatement around examination venues to create peaceful environments for students, have been implemented at local levels.

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Beijing has for the first time deployed SWAT teams to escort the gaokao test papers, and at least eight police officers will be stationed at each test venue, the Beijing public security bureau told the Global Times.

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Meanwhile, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region and Shandong and Hubei provinces urged universities to strictly manage students' attendance during the gaokao to prevent surrogate gaokao-takers.

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