

Beat: Entertainment

World's tallest woman, Yao Defen, dies in eastern China

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USPA News - Chinese woman Yao Defen, who was certified by Guinness World Records as being the world's tallest woman alive, died at her home in eastern China last month, a local government official confirmed on Wednesday. She was 40 or 41 years old.

Yao was recorded as having an average height of 233.3 centimeters (7 feet and 7 inches) when she was measured by officials from Guinness World Records in January 2010. She may have slightly grown since because a portion of tumor remained on her pituitary gland, the organ that regulates the production of growth hormone, but she was too ill to be re-measured. The local Xin'an newspaper in eastern China said Yao died in her bed at her home in Anhui province at around 9 a.m. local time on November 13. Her death was reported by the newspaper two days later, but it went unnoticed until Wednesday when a county official confirmed the information. "At around 9 in the morning, just after breakfast, her mother shouted that the girl was ill," a neighbor told the Xin'an newspaper last month. "People immediately rushed to the home of Yao Defen. I saw her lying on the bed and she was not breathing. Later her sister arrived home and soon after a doctor announced the news of her death. The sad mother cried and fainted." Yao learned to play basketball when she was young and reached a height of 2 meters (6 feet and 6.7 inches) by the age of 15. But she was unaware of her medical condition until she fainted while playing basketball at school, prompting a medical examination which revealed she suffered from gigantism. According to Guinness World Records, the tallest woman ever for whom there is irrefutable evidence was Chinese woman Zeng Jinlian. She began to grow abnormally from the age of four months and stood 1.56 meter (5 feet and 1.5 inch) before her fourth birthday, reaching the height of 2.17 meters (7 feet and 1.5 inch) at the age of 13. When she died at the age of 17 she was measured to be 2.48 meters (8 feet and 1.7 inch) tall. But the record for tallest person ever is held by American man Robert Pershing Wadlow, who last measured 2.72 meters (8 feet and 11.1 inches) in height before he died in July 1940 at a hotel room in Michigan. The tallest man currently alive is Turkish man Sultan Kösen, who last measured 251 centimeters (8 feet and 3 inches) in height.

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