

# Debt defaulter fined for flying first-class

A court in south China's Shenzhen City said Saturday it had fined a debt defaulter 100,000 yuan (15,000 U.S. dollars) for taking a first-class flight.

Zhang Li, which is not her real name, is on a national blacklist for failing to repay her debts.

People on the blacklist are, among other proscriptions, forbidden from taking first-class flights and are not able to book tickets with their identity cards.

However, Zhang was found to have bought a first-class ticket from Lijiang, Yunnan Province, to Shenzhen, on Oct. 13 using her passport.

On arrival, she was detained by police at Shenzhen airport.

According to the Futian District People's Court, in November 2015 and April 2017 she was found liable and ordered to pay the debts of her private company of over 7 million yuan. She refused to make the payment and was added to the social credit blacklist.

Following her detention, she paid the fine together with the debts in question.

As authorities work to establish a reliable nationwide credit rating system, courts are exploring new ways of punishing those who do not pay their debts. Among them are the ban from first-class flights and lowering their score at Sesame Credit, a credit-scoring system by Alibaba subsidiary Ant Financial, so that they face upfront charges when renting a car or booking a hotel room.