

16 detained over south China drug manufacturing case

Sixteen suspects have been detained in a recent crackdown on drugs in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and neighboring Guangdong Province, local police said Tuesday.

Police from the public security bureau of Laibin City received a report on April 27 that a gang of drug manufacturers from Huizhou City of Guangdong Province gathered in the city to produce ketamine and planned to transport raw materials for drug production from east China's Shandong Province to Xiangzhou County in Laibin.

After investigation, police detained eight suspects at the drug manufacturing site in a tree farm in Xiangzhou County at 4 p.m. on Friday. They also seized about 250 kilograms of ketamine, 1,078 kilograms of semi-finished drugs, equipment for drug manufacturing and four vehicles at the site.

Police seized two other suspects and drug-related money totaling 1.4 million yuan (202,700 U.S. dollars) in a residential community in Laibin City on the same day.

After the drug manufacturing site in Guangxi was busted, the Huizhou police then detained another six suspects from the gang in Guangdong.

Further investigation is under way.

Operation to separate 3-month twins



Surgeons operate on the conjoined twin girls yesterday at the Children's Hospital of Fudan University. The 3-month old twins were connected by liver and stomach at birth. [Photo/Shanghai Daily]

Conjoined twin girls were successfully separated after an hour-long surgery at Children's Hospital of Fudan University yesterday.

The twins were delivered by cesarean section in Shanghai on February 9 when their 26-year-old mother, from neighboring Jiangsu Province, was at 34 weeks of pregnancy.

They were then sent to the hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for treatment.

CT scans showed that they were connected by the liver and stomach.

Doctors said the best time for surgery would be when the twins were 3 months old and had a combined weight of 10 kilograms.

By early May, the twins weighed a combined 11kg and were reported to have had a normal growth index.

With the help of three-dimensional imaging technology, the baby girls were separated at 11:16a.m. yesterday. Doctors took another hour to close the skin incision and umbilicus.

Conjoined twins are rare – with a global incidence of 1 in 200,000. Most of them are connected by the chest and belly.

Doctors said about half of conjoined babies die before birth. Some could not live for more than a day after birth, and only about 30 percent of conjoined infants had the chance to survive.

In this case, the deformity was detected in a Jiangsu hospital when the

mother was 22 weeks of pregnancy.

Local doctors suggested an abortion, but the mother insisted on visiting a hospital in Shanghai.

After tests, doctors at the Children's Hospital believed the twins would have a good chance of survival after liver separation surgery.

Six officials sacked after gas disaster



A trapped miner is lifted from the shaft at the Jilingqiao colliery in Huangfengqiao Township, Youxian County, central China's Hunan Province, May 8, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

Six officials, including a deputy county chief, were sacked Monday after 18 miners died in a poisonous gas leak in a coal mine in central China's Hunan Province.

Rescuers confirmed the death toll Monday, after saving another 37 miners.

The accident happened on Sunday morning at the Jilingqiao Colliery in Youxian County.

Cai Yongheng, rescue team director, said rescuers had to carry oxygen tanks during the search.

Investigators are testing the makeup of the poisonous gas. Police have detained those allegedly responsible for the accident.

A miner who declined to be named said that after the mine manager was informed of the gas leak, he asked workers to enter the mine to rescue their colleagues.

Some of the rescue team, including the manager himself, were among those miners killed.

Another employee said a discontinued mine near the Jilingqiao Colliery had been discharging chemical waste gas, which may have triggered the fatal gas leak.

Local authorities placed responsibility for the accident on six officials, including the deputy county chief Wang Zhuowen, who were removed from their posts.

[New drug price markups show positive results](#)



A patient is given her physical checkup results at a community medical service center in Beijing in April, after a comprehensive medical reform started in the capital. [Photo/China Daily]

A move to scrap drug price markups has shown early signs of success in optimizing medical resources—particularly the work of specialists—and in lowering the costs of medicine for most patients, according to the Beijing health authority.

As part of the general healthcare reform, measures introduced on April 8 aimed at ending the markup on drugs prescribed at public hospitals and modifying the prices for registration, consultation and treatments.

The average drug cost for each outpatient visit during the past month has decreased by 9.6 percent compared with March, the Beijing Health and Family Planning Commission said.

For inpatient care, the average drug cost for each hospitalization has fallen by nearly 18 percent, while the entire cost dropped by 4.1 percent compared with March.

Fang Laiying, head of the commission, said the latest measures worked well to provide better and more rational treatment at more affordable prices.

Under a hierarchical medical system, he said, patients with minor diseases visit community clinics. Only the seriously ill go to large hospitals for specialist care.

But with no price difference, patients tend to swarm into already crowded large hospitals, even those suffering from a common cold, experts said. Meanwhile, community clinics are underused, resulting in a waste of medical resources.

After modifying the prices for registration, consultation and treatment in the latest reform, more residents, particularly those suffering chronic diseases, began to visit community clinics, Fang said.

Total outpatient visits in community clinics increased by 3.4 percent during the past month over March, according to official data, while visits at large top-level hospitals dropped by 15 percent.

All 3,600 medical institutions in the city, under the new reform, were required to purchase drugs directly from pharmaceutical manufacturers through an open public bidding platform to further reduce prices, he added.

That has helped the capital save 420 million yuan (\$60.8 million) in the past month, according to the latest figures available.

Starting in the 1950s, a system to add an average 15 percent to drug prices was implemented at all public hospitals in China to help subsidize hospital operations.

But that led to hospitals prescribing too many medications, and more expensive ones, which contributed to soaring healthcare costs.

Li highlights craftsmanship, innovation in vocational education



Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong (C front) launches the 2017 National Vocational Students Skills Competition in north China's Tianjin Municipality, May 8, 2017. [Photo/Xinhua]

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang had called for craftsmanship and innovation in developing vocational education.

Vocational schools should cultivate craftsmanship and encourage students to start businesses, said Li in a written instruction delivered to a competition of vocational students which started on Monday.

Vocational education is crucial to the transformation and upgrading of the real economy, in terms of strengthening the country's advantages in human resources, the premier said.

Vice Premier Liu Yandong, at the opening ceremony in Tianjin, called for vocational education to play a greater role in poverty reduction and offering more opportunities for youth.

Liu suggested vocational schools cover socialist core values throughout their curriculum.

The National Vocational Students Skills Competition has been held annually since 2008.