

Beijing arrests 77 in crackdown against prostitution

Beijing police announced Tuesday that 77 suspects had been arrested in connection to organized prostitution.

After a raid on Dec. 23, 2016 at three alleged brothels that were operating as entertainment venues, the police submitted an arrest request to the procuratorate so that those linked to organized prostitution could be detained for questioning.

The arrest warrant was approved on Jan. 26, 2017, and the investigation continues.

Vertical forest building to improve air quality in China



An artistic rendering of the vertical forest towers planned for Nanjing. [Photo from the official website of designer Stefano Boeri Architetti]

Nanjing of East China's Jiangsu province will become the third city in the world where Italian architect Stefano Boeri will build Vertical Forest buildings, which could possibly improve the city's air quality, according to CNET, an American media outlet on technology.

In architect Boeri's design, a set of two towers will be stylized with around 1,100 trees and a combination of over 2,500 shrubs and plants, which is believed to make 60 kilograms of oxygen every day by absorbing carbon dioxide.

The two towers are expected to be completed by next year and will stand at 107m and 199m tall respectively. The shorter building will house a Hyatt hotel, while the taller one will be home to a museum, offices and an architecture school.

Two previous vertical forest buildings were built in Milan, Italy, and Lausanne, Switzerland.

Boeri's plan in China is much more ambitious as similar structures are also planned for Shanghai, southwestern Chongqing, northern Shijiazhuang and southern Liuzhou.

[Loan shark lending money with nude photos of women arrested](#)

A suspect who allegedly offered student loans in exchange for nude photos was arrested by police in Gansu province in January.

Authorities said the man, surnamed Yang, had been preying on young women who were in need of money for college and other expenses, seeking his victims through social media, and that he had been doing this activity for many years.

Female students were ordered to disrobe and hold up their personal identification cards for photos before they were provided with high-interest student loans.

The young women were told the photos would be published if they failed to pay off their debts.

Yang also allegedly asked for sexual services from women who were unable to pay their loans.

Yang was arrested after a victim reported her case to the police. JD Capital's Jiedaibao, a platform for individuals to loan and lend, especially between friends and acquaintances, was apparently used several times to set up transactions between perpetrators and victims in similar cases.

Jiedaibao said the company has no control over demands for collateral as such practices are made by a lender as part of "a private trade deal."

Users who were asked for nude photos in exchange of loans are encouraged to contact the police.

To better protect the interests of its users, Jiedaibao's customer service department established a one-million-yuan fund to combat the "naked loans" issue.

The company also said it would work with the police on any investigation of such practices.

Man 'confesses' to killing, freezing wife

A man has confessed to killing his wife and storing her body in a freezer at their home for three months, according to media reports in Shanghai.

The story was first published on Feb 3 on the WeChat feed of Xuan Kejiong, deputy head of the breaking news department at Shanghai Radio and TV Station News Center. However, a municipal police spokesperson was unable to confirm the details of the story.

According to Xuan's post, a woman called the police on Feb 1, saying that her son, surnamed Zhu, had killed someone, before turning him in. Zhu confessed to killing of his wife, surnamed Yang, on Oct 18 last year and storing her body in a freezer at their home ever since, Xuan's post said.

Police discovered the dead body of Yang in a freezer at a residential apartment on Guangzhong Road in Hongkou district, according to Shanghai-based news portal The Paper.

Zhu and Yang, both 29, were married on Dec 31, 2015, and moved into the Guangzhong Road apartment in May last year. Yang was a primary schoolteacher, while Zhu was a display designer at a department store, reports said.

Neighbors had seen Zhu walking his dog and acting in a normal manner over the past three months, according to reports.

Yang's parents are said to have last seen their daughter on Oct 1, when they dined with the young couple and Zhu's divorced parents, adding that they and other family members had kept in contact with Yang via text messages on various digital platforms, such as WeChat and QQ. Yang's parents reportedly requested to meet her on numerous occasions at a nearby relative's home, but their daughter never showed up.

According to text conversations on Xuan's WeChat post, Zhu made up various excuses to avoid Yang's parents, such as that they were sightseeing in Wuxi; in Hong Kong for Spring Festival; and that Zhu was suffering with an ailment.

On Nov 22, Zhu reportedly even faked his wife's birthday celebrations, posting a picture on her WeChat feed, inviting friends to send their blessings.

On Jan 26, Yang's mother is said to have received messages from her "daughter" on WeChat, saying she would spend the Spring Festival in Hong Kong with friends, and would not be back in Shanghai until Jan 29.

According to Xuan's post, Yang's mother didn't see her daughter that day, but she asked Yang to visit her on Feb 1, her father's 60th birthday, which is the day Zhu is reported to have confessed to the police.

It is said that Yang's family and friends described Zhu as unreliable, dishonest and irritable after drinking, while a note handwritten by Zhu was reportedly found among the remains of the victim, promising he would not contact other women.

It is reported that Yang quit her job because her husband had been promoted, and on Oct 14, the couple are said to have visited Yang's school to complete her resignation process, where students and colleagues described Yang as a "beautiful, gentle and kindhearted teacher".

An investigation into the case is said to be ongoing, with law enforcement authorities yet to confirm details of the case.

China sees faster trains ahead

China is expected to supply next-generation bullet trains capable of traveling at 400 km per hour for Russia's Moscow-Kazan line by 2020, which could enhance the country's position as the world's leader in high-speed rail products and services, said an expert working on the project.

The line is expected to be about 770 kilometers long and will run through seven Russian regions with a total population of more than 25 million. It will use regular high-speed trains rather than magnetic levitation trains.

"To ensure the operation, China will test the 400 km/h train in a selected part of the 709-kilometer Beijing-Shenyang high-speed railway line," said Yang Guowei, a researcher at the Institute of Mechanics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing. The railroad is expected to be completed in 2019.

Yang's work unit is responsible for designing the shape of the high-speed trains.

Yang said China will be able to produce cargo trains for transporting regular goods, high-end products and industrial equipment at speeds ranging from 120 to 250 km/h between Asia and Europe by 2020.

Through innovation and development, China has the technology to make electric multiple-unit passenger trains with speeds between 200 and 250 km/h and has established a technology platform for producing trains with a speed of 350 km/h, according to data on the website of the National Railway Administration.

The country does not currently have trains with a speed of 400 km/h. However, Yang said that once they are developed, China can introduce them to the domestic market as well. However, the ticket price may increase because of higher operating costs.

Jia Limin, head of China's high-speed rail innovation program under the management of China Railway Rolling Stock Corp, said, "This could help China build cross-border high-speed train services with its neighboring countries that can alternate between different track gauges, ranging from 60 cm to 1.676 meters." The CRRC is China's rail vehicle manufacturer and exporter.

Wang Mengshu, an academician at the Chinese Academy of Engineering, said it will take time to test safety and control if the speed is increased to 400 km/h.

He said there is a big difference between Chinese engineers getting a high-speed rail system up and running at home and doing something similar in foreign markets. The differences in standards and regulations remain the challenges for China's rail vehicle exporters and infrastructure suppliers hoping to set up overseas. In addition, building costs are fairly expensive.

"Rather than investing in high-speed railway networks overseas, China should focus on expanding domestic lines with faster train speeds," said Wang.

The CRRC is trying to overcome technical barriers in its push to develop maglev trains with speeds of 600 km/h in its Qingdao research center in Shandong province.