

Former Shanghai vice mayor stands trial for graft

Former vice mayor of Shanghai Ai Baojun on Thursday stood trial on charges of corruption at a court in the city of Zhangzhou, east China's Fujian Province.

Prosecutors alleged that from 2002 to 2014, Ai, a former member of the Standing Committee of the Communist Party of China Shanghai Municipal Committee, took advantage of various official positions to help agencies and individuals with business operations and development, among other offences.

Ai was said to have accepted bribes worth more than 43.2 million yuan (6.28 million U.S. dollars) either personally or through his family.

In addition, he was accused of taking advantage of his positions to embezzle public assets worth more than 7.5 million yuan from 2001 to 2009.

Ai pleaded guilty and expressed remorse.

More than 40 people, including Ai's family, representatives of legislators and political advisors at national and local levels, as well as journalists and members of the public, were present at the open trial.

The verdict will be announced at a later date.

Press release: £191 million cash boost for the South West to help create local jobs and growth

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid today (23 February 2017) announced a government cash boost of £191 million for the South West to help create jobs, support businesses and encourage growth.

Some of the locally-chosen projects likely to benefit over the next few years include:

- a new roundabout and access road on the A40 in Gloucester
- new space for low-carbon energy businesses to grow at Huntspill Energy Park in Bridgwater
- the Institute for Advanced Automotive Propulsion Systems in Bath which will help deliver future generations of clean and energy efficient vehicles

These, alongside other projects, will improve skills, create jobs, build homes and improve infrastructure. This latest award of [Local Growth Funding](#) is on top of £780 million of growth funding already awarded to the 6 Local Enterprise Partnerships in the region – an investment which will see jobs created, homes built and extra investment.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The South West is home to some of Britain's top businesses, and they know the best way to create jobs and boost growth in their local area.

That's why we're backing their ideas with almost £1 billion for business and infrastructure projects across the region, so the South West can reach its full potential, and we create a country that works for everyone.

Creating an economy that works for everyone

The [£12 billion Local Growth Fund](#) provides local leaders with the cash they need to support locally determined projects. Under the fund, England's 38 local enterprise partnerships – made up of council leaders and business representatives – bid for investments based on local priorities.

Bids are highly competitive and to be successful, local enterprise partnerships need to work with partners to agree strong and accountable governance and put forward proposals that boost growth and bring in private sector funding.

Over £9 billion of the Local Growth Fund has now been awarded to local enterprise partnerships through 3 rounds of Growth Deals, helping more than 1,000 projects get started across England already – this is supporting vital infrastructure, improving skills and creating thousands of jobs.

Together with money for unlocking housing sites to support home building and investment in very large transport schemes – both announced in 2016 – we have fulfilled our commitment to a £12 billion Local Growth Fund.

In the South West this has already:

- enabled the major rebuild of the A338, a £22 million project – delivered on time and on budget – helping to unlock growth around Bournemouth
- provided significant funding to Bristol Robotics Institute of Technology, helping to link industry and academia in high-tech robotics
- created a Gloucestershire Renewable Energy Engineering and Nuclear Skills Centre (GREEN) to provide the next generation of low-carbon and engineering experts
- created 60 new jobs in Penzance at the Train Care Centre

Now this latest award will help do even more to benefit the lives of local

people across the country. New projects include:

- a new roundabout and access road on the A40 to release land for housing at Longford and mitigate traffic impacts
- over £4 million for Enterprise Zone infrastructure to unlock a 91 hectare site at Huntspill Energy Park at Bridgwater
- support for space, aerospace and marine renewable energy activity at Cornwall's Enterprise Zones

Further Information

Today the government has announced the [Local Growth Fund 3 allocations](#).

The 6 Local Enterprise Partnerships in the South West have received:

Local Enterprise Partnership Funding awarded

Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	£18.03 million
Dorset	£19.46 million
GFirst	£29.13 million
Heart of the South West	£43.57 million
Swindon and Wiltshire	£28.09 million
West of England	£52.80 million

[News story: London seminar: Reducing homelessness in England and Wales \(22 March, 2017\)](#)

From:

First published:

23 February 2017

In this free seminar John will discuss the reality implementation of the Welsh legislation on homelessness two years on.

22 March, 2017

featuring

John Puzey

Director, Shelter Cymru

Please see the attached flyer for details and how to book

PDF, 218KB, 1 page

If you use assistive technology (such as a screen reader) and need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email academy@noms.gsi.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.

News story: David Mundell: Celebrating Scotland's LGBT Community

The Secretary of State for Scotland, David Mundell, will tonight [23 February 2017] host leading figures in Scotland's LGBT community at an event to celebrate diversity and tackle prejudice.

The event is being held to mark LGBT history month in Scotland, and comes the day before 'Purple Friday', a day for people across Scotland to show their support for the LGBT community and stand together for equality.

The Scottish Secretary will be joined by representatives from the TIE Campaign, LGBT Youth Scotland, Stonewall Scotland, MSPs and businesses like Barclays, Blackrock, GenAnalytics and Edrington.

The event will also feature a performance by the Edinburgh Gay Men's Chorus and a speech from Commander Douggie Ward MBE, who will talk about his experience of being out in the Royal Navy.

Speaking ahead of the event, Mr Mundell said:

Tonight's event is not only a celebration of Scotland's rich diversity and compassion, but proves that we stand shoulder to shoulder against ignorance, prejudice and bullying.

Young people in Scotland deserve a society where their gender and sexuality has no limitation on their experiences or their aspirations. I am determined to ensure everyone in the Scottish LGBT community is treated with the respect and equality they deserve.

This month we celebrate the history of the LGBT movement, but also its future, building a Scotland which is tolerant, inclusive and diverse.

Commander Douggie Ward MBE Royal Navy said:

From the moment that I came out as a gay man to my family, friends and colleagues in the Royal Navy, I have received nothing but whole-hearted support. "It is this support that has enabled me to develop and grow both personally and professionally as a Naval Officer.

Events like tonight's reception help send out a powerful message that we are all part of a wonderfully diverse society and no matter what your sexual orientation or gender identity, you are not alone and you can succeed.

Students learn to blossom at horticulture careers day

Horticulture students from SRUC were among those from around Scotland who attended the Grow Careers event at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh.