

Security guard stole 6 million yuan 'to pay off debts'

A man in northeastern China who stole 6 million yuan (US\$874,000) after hijacking an armored bank truck he was driving said he carried out the heist to pay off his debts.

Li Xuyi took four security guards hostage on Sept 7 using a "gunlike object" and then fled with the truck, according to a statement by the Yingkou Intermediate People's Court in Liaoning province.

The defendant, who confessed to the crime, was hired by a security company in July and was transporting 35 million yuan in cash from the Agricultural Bank of China's Yingkou branch to a cash storage center.

He was arrested at his home eight hours after the robbery. Police recovered 6 million yuan from the home of one of Li's relatives, while the rest of the cash was left in the truck, which was abandoned in a residential parking area.

China Central Television reported that a guard in the truck said Li diverted the vehicle from its normal route and disarmed the guard in the passenger seat by threatening him with a "black gun", which it was later discovered was not a real firearm.

Li then produced duct tape and ordered the guard and two other unarmed guards to tie themselves up. According to police, he took three bags of cash, which he intended to use to pay off his debts to a bank.

A news website owned by NetEase reported that Li, who was tried on Jan 24, used to be a construction contractor and once had a car wash business.

The Yingkou court will sentence Li at a later date.

Black swans refuse to eat after eggs stolen

A police investigation is underway into the theft of black swan eggs at a scenic spot over Spring Festival, which has left the Swan pair grief-stricken and unable to eat.



The male black swan keeps guard as the female swan hatches the eggs. [Photo: 1545ts.com]

The eggs were taken from the breeding pair at the swan scenic spot of Mount Tai, east China's Shandong province.

Staff members have reviewed security camera footage and said that two tourists may have been responsible for the theft.

Li Yaming, general manager of the swan breeding company in Taian city, told reporters that the swan eggs went missing on February 1. Keepers found that the black swan couple had left their nest, were making a lot of noise, and were being aggressive towards people coming too near to them.

"The two black swans were behaving very abnormally, and then the breeder found out that the five black swan eggs were all gone," said Li Yaming.

Swans tend to stay in the nest during the incubation period. In general, male swans keep guard while female swans incubate the eggs. The thieves would have needed to wait for the swan couple to take a break before taking the eggs, said Li.

According to the staff at the scenic spot, unhatched eggs are useless to ordinary people. The eggs can't be eaten nor can they be hatched. Also, the eggs could explode in hot weather. But even if they were returned by the thieves, the five missing eggs can no longer be hatched.

Swans are nationally protected animals, and as they are strictly monogamous, they are seen as a symbol of loyalty in love.

Incubating eggs for swans is a painful process. Female swans only produce 4-7 eggs every spring, and the time needed for the eggs to incubate is 36 days. Even with great care by swan couples, the survival rate of eggs is only 50 percent.

NEWS FROM LABOUR: Shadow Cabinet appointments

Jeremy Corbyn MP, Leader of the Labour Party, said:

“I’m pleased to announce appointments to Labour’s Shadow Cabinet. We have a wealth of talent in our party and the strength of our shadow team will develop Labour’s alternative plan to rebuild and transform Britain, so that no one and no community is left behind.”

The new appointments are:

Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy – Rebecca Long-Bailey

Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs – Sue Hayman

Shadow Secretary of State for Wales –
Christina Rees

Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury – Peter Dowd

Ends

Ministers must do much more to ensure that every victim of domestic abuse has access to support they need – Champion

Sarah Champion MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Women and Equalities, responding to today’s statistical release from the ONS on violent

crime and sexual offences, said:

"It is unacceptable that hundreds of thousands of women still suffer violence in the home every year. And the official figures significantly underestimate the true extent of the problem.

"But under this Tory Government domestic violence services are in crisis and funding for front-line professionals is being cut.

"Ministers must do much more to ensure that every victim of domestic abuse has access to support they need."

Ends

Officials in E. China punished for infection scandal

Several hospital officials in east China's Shandong Province have been sacked after nine patients were infected by hepatitis B there.

The head and deputy head of the People's Hospital in Chengyang District of Qingdao City have been removed from their administrative and Communist Party of China posts, according to the district government.

The director of the hospital's infection-control and nursing departments, and the director and nursing head of the hemodialysis unit have also been removed from their posts. Other staff implicated have received discipline punishments of the CPC.

According to the local government, the district's health and family planning bureau received a report about nine patients infected by hepatitis B in January. Investigators later found that it was staff with the hospital's hemodialysis unit who operated against regulations that led to the infections.

The patients are receiving treatment and are stable.