

Police investigate illegal gathering of pyramid scheme members

Beijing police are investigating some members of Shanxinhui, a company suspected of organizing and leading a pyramid scheme after they gathered in Beijing on Monday, authorities said.

According to a statement by Beijing police, "some members of Shanxinhui were incited by those with ulterior intentions to illegally gather in Beijing, seriously disturbing the capital's social order."

The gathering is suspected of breaking laws and rules, it said.

The statement also said police persuaded the demonstrators to leave in an orderly manner. Those who "took the lead in creating trouble and refusing to listen to police orders" have been taken away for further investigation.

Police said the activity was illegal and those who incite, organize and participate in illegal gatherings in China will be punished.

Previously, Chinese police have cracked down on Shanxinhui, which allegedly manipulated and talked people into taking part in pyramid selling and swindled them out of huge amounts of property under the guise of helping the poor.

Zhang Tianming, legal representative of the company, and other suspects have been put under coercive measures, which may include summons by force, bail, residential surveillance, detention or arrest.