

## 63 pyramid scheme suspects detained in Beijing

Beijing police have detained 63 members of Shanxinhui, a company suspected of organizing and leading a pyramid scheme, who gathered in the city on Monday.

The suspects were held in police custody for allegedly “impairing the administration of social order,” police said Wednesday.

Another four people were put under non-criminal detention for “disrupting order in public places,” according to police.

Some suspects who “took the lead in creating trouble and refusing to listen to police orders” have been taken away for further investigation.

An earlier police statement said “some members of Shanxinhui were incited by those with ulterior motives to illegally gather in Beijing, seriously disturbing the capital’s social order.”

The gathering allegedly broke laws and rules, it said.

Chinese police have previously investigated Shanxinhui for allegedly manipulating people into taking part in pyramid selling and cheating them out of huge amounts of property under the guise of helping the poor.

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## 18 detained in connection to cult activities

Police in east China’s Zhejiang Province have detained 18 suspects in connection to activities of the “Almighty God” cult.

Police in Changxing County caught the suspected cult members following an investigation. Police also confiscated laptops and books used by the cult for dissemination of information.

“Almighty God,” known in Chinese as Quannengshen, grabbed national headlines in 2014 with viral videos showing five of its members beating a woman to death at a McDonald’s in the eastern city of Zhaoyuan, condemning her as an “evil spirit” after she refused to give them her mobile phone number for recruitment purposes.

First appearing in the 1990s in central China’s Henan Province, Quannengshen claims that Jesus has been resurrected as Yang Xiangbin, who is the wife of the cult’s founder Zhao Weishan, also known as Xu Wenshan. The couple fled to

the United States in September 2000.

According to Dong Jianfeng, a police officer from Changxing County, most of the apprehended suspects showed signs of depression.

"Some of them are divorced and do not seem to know how to vent their suppressed emotions," Dong said. "Some of their families have experienced bad accidents and caused them to become depressed."

According to initial investigations, the cult's financial sources mainly came from "donations" from its members. The higher the donation, the more rights a member obtained. More donations allowed members access to higher positions within the cult, according to police.

"Every member was willing to donate their money, and the amounts ranged from 10,000 yuan (1,481 U.S. dollars) to tens of thousands of yuan," Dong said.

"The cult's 'leaders' imposed spiritual control over the members," Dong said. "They were told that as long as they gave donations, the Almighty God would keep their illness at bay."

Of the detained suspects, eight have been "re-educated" and denounced their cult beliefs, police said.

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## [China to select third group of astronauts this year](#)



Three astronauts including China's first female astronaut are ready for the Shenzhou-9 mission in 2012. [Photo/China.org.cn]

China will select its third group of astronauts this year, Yang Liwei, deputy director of China Manned Space Engineering Office said Wednesday.

The first and second astronaut groups were all previously airforce pilots. However, the selection of the third group will also include engineers who will be responsible for maintenance, assembly and other tasks, Yang, China's first astronaut, said at the opening ceremony of the country's inaugural astronaut photography exhibition.

Photos taken by astronauts from different periods reflect the development of China's space exploration, he said.

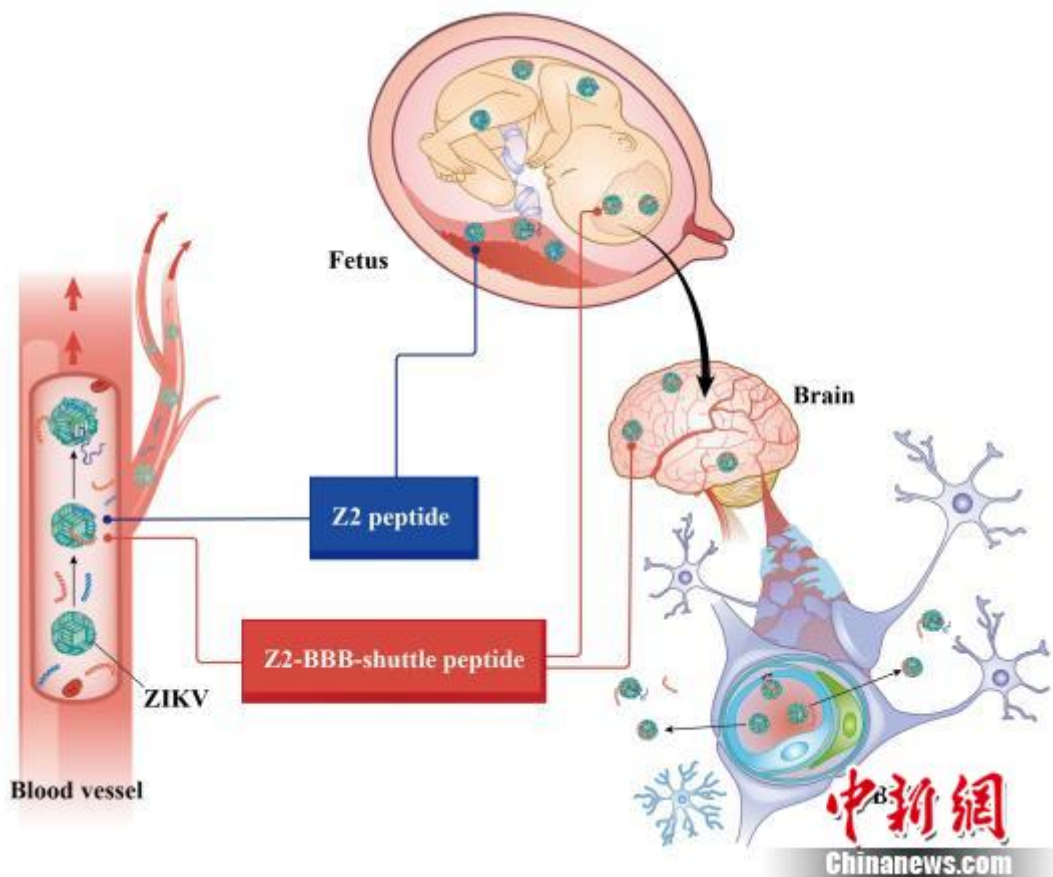
"When I was on the spacecraft, I took photos through two windows. Astronauts on the Tiangong space lab had more perspectives for photography. They had a better working environment and living space than before," he said.

Looking at the Earth from space is different with looking out from an airplane, Yang said. "The higher you are, the larger your angle of view is. The Earth seen from space is sphere-shaped, and mountains and rivers also look different."

"As Chinese, we are so proud when we look at the Earth," he said, reminiscing about viewing the motherland from space.

Yang hopes the exhibition will cultivate an increased interest in space among the general public. "Space exploration is a massive project which needs the support of more people, especially youth," said Yang.

## Chinese medical experts develop drug to kill Zika virus



Chinese medical experts have developed Z2, an antiviral peptide that can kill the Zika virus. [Photo/Chinanews.com]

Chinese medical experts have developed Z2, an antiviral peptide that can kill the Zika virus.

The achievement was published in the international journal Nature Communications on July 26 and has aroused wide attention in the global medical field, China News reported.

The World Health Organization warned about the Zika virus after 2007 outbreak, calling it a public health emergency of international concern. More than 80 countries have reported infection cases by March 2017.

The new drug has been show to kill the Zika virus in rats and can prevent pregnant rats from passing on the virus. It was developed by Lu Lu and Jiang Shibo's research team at the School of Basic Medical Sciences at Fudan University and by research teams at the Shanghai Public Health Clinical Center as well as the Institute of Microbiology and Epidemiology under the Academy of Military Medical Sciences.

Jiang said there is currently no vaccine or drug that can effectively prevent infection. But the Z2 peptide can combine with surface proteins of the virus to make it inactive.

Jiang added that the peptide is able to penetrate the placental barrier. This not only lowered the infection rate of the pregnant rat but also that of the fetus, stopping vertical transmission.

Experts said that the polypeptide inactivating agent could become a new drug for preventing the virus, as it is also safe for high risk groups, including the pregnant.

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## **Public hospitals to become nonprofit by 2020, State Council says**

Public hospitals in China will operate under a new system not driven by profits by 2020, according to a guideline the State Council, China's Cabinet, released on Tuesday.

China should establish a "modern hospital management system" that adheres to putting people's health at the center and adheres to the nonprofit nature of public hospitals and putting the public's interest as a priority, the guideline said.

By 2020, it said, the new system will ensure that a nonprofit, higher-efficiency and sustainable development has been established.

Public hospitals are the main provider of healthcare in China. These hospitals, which numbered more than 12,700 by the end of last year, provided 2.85 billion outpatient and emergency services last year, accounting for more than 87 percent of the cases provided by all hospitals in China, according to the National Health and Family Planning Commission. Private facilities accounted for the rest.

To ensure the new nonprofit hospital structure is sustainable, health authorities will make new health plans and establish integrated healthcare systems in different regions for a better distribution of health resources between big hospitals and community health centers, Wang Hesheng, vice-minister of the health commission and head of the State Council Medical Reform Office, said at a news conference on Wednesday.

The government will increase funding to public hospitals and help them repay loans so they can retain a nonprofit status, he said.

Health authorities also will establish a new merit evaluation system on presidents of public hospitals that is not profit-oriented, highlighting

indexes such as quality of medical services provided, cost control and satisfactory ratings from patients, he said.

The result of the evaluations will be linked with the amount of government subsidy, payment of public medical insurance fund and salaries and promotions of hospital presidents, he said.

China started a new round of medical reform in 2010 aiming at public hospitals. One major task was abolishing the generally practiced price markups of drugs sold in hospitals. Drug prices contributed to a profit-driven system, in which many public hospitals were encouraged to use excessive and more expensive drugs and even unnecessary checkups to generate higher profits, according to experts.

Under the system, doctors' incomes are closely linked with the incomes of their departments in public hospitals, which increased medical bills for patients, according to some experts.

The practice of markups for medications, which has been practiced in public hospitals in China for decades, will be abolished in all public hospitals before the end of September, the National Development and Reform Commission said earlier this year.

"Establishing the new public hospital management system in China that emphasizes their nonprofit nature can ensure a healthy development of public hospitals," said Fu Wei, director of the Health Development Research Center, which is part of the health commission. "In the process, public hospitals should be given more autonomy in their management, and more participation from hospital employees in management and supervision of hospitals should be encouraged."