

China provides update on returned corruption fugitives



An unidentified fugitive returns from Indonesia to China. [Photo/Xinhua]

China Wednesday released an update on the cases of 40 corruption fugitives on the Interpol red list who have either voluntarily returned or been extradited to China, including two spared from prosecution.

As of Monday, 15 returnees had already been sentenced to terms of up to life in prison, according to a statement from the office in charge of fugitive repatriation and asset recovery under the central anti-corruption coordination group.

The cases of another nine fugitives have been accepted by courts, but no sentence has yet been given.

Another 13 cases are still under investigation or awaiting review, including the case of Yang Xiuzhu, the No. 1 most wanted on the red notice list, according to the office.

One case was withdrawn in late 2015 after prosecutors confirmed the death of the suspect, Gu Zhenfang, in Thailand.

Among the 15 fugitives already convicted is Li Huabo, a former local finance official in east China's Jiangxi Province, who was sentenced to life

imprisonment in January.

Li's illicit gains worth 4.83 million yuan (700,000 U.S. dollars) were returned and 5.5 million Singapore dollars (4 million U.S. dollars) was confiscated.

Li, who fled the country in January 2011, remained in Singapore until he was repatriated in May 2015.

In a separate case, Fu Yaobo and Zhang Qingzhao were sentenced to life imprisonment for bribery and embezzlement in August last year.

Zhang Dawei was exempted from criminal prosecution in November 2016 because Zhang had confessed his crime and returned all his illegal gains voluntarily.

Two of the fugitives, Zhu Zhenyu and Zhang Liping, were spared prosecution because Zhu was an accessory to the crime and turned himself in voluntarily, while Zhang's offense involving falsifying value added tax invoices was minor.

The handling of these cases reflects China's policy for the fugitive hunt, namely offering leniency to those who voluntarily return to China while meting out harsh penalties for those who are brought to justice after being arrested, the statement said.

The Interpol red notice of 100 Chinese corruption fugitives was released in April 2015.

As a move to close a loophole in China's renewed anti-corruption drive, which in the past mainly targeted domestic corruption and left out those who have fled the country, China has launched operations such as "Sky Net" and "Fox Hunt" in recent years, focusing mainly on corruption fugitives and assets recovery overseas.

[China to offer all help to school bus crash relatives](#)

China will offer every assistance to crash relatives, ministry says

The Chinese leadership has issued instructions for relevant departments and localities to help deal with the aftermath of the deadly Tuesday traffic accident in Weihai, Shandong province, the Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday.

Twelve people, including 11 kindergarten pupils, were killed when a school bus crashed and then burst into flames as it traveled through a tunnel in the coastal city in northern China.

Of the 11 children, who were aged between three and six, five were from the Republic of Korea and six were Chinese nationals. They were all pupils at an international kindergarten in Weihai, Xinhua quoted local authorities as saying.

“The Chinese side is in communication with the ROK through diplomatic channels” and will help with any issues to be resolved, said a written statement issued on the ministry’s website.

Members of the ministry’s staff have been assigned to provide comfort and assist the families of the dead, the statement said.

Shandong province and Weihai city launched contingency response plans immediately after the crash, and leading local officials went to the site and guided operations by relevant departments, it said.

Duo detained for killing swan in downtown Shanghai



Two men has been detained by police for allegedly stealing and killing a black swan from Xujiahui Park in Shanghai, police said.

The duo, surnamed Zhou and Wang, allegedly stole the black swan around 1am on April 20 from the park and slaughtered it at their rented home. Zhou confessed to police they kept it in the fridge and planned to eat it later. They later threw it away because it didn't taste good.

The suspects had planned to catch fish in the first but gave up after seeing security guards patrolling. On their way out, they saw the black swan and grabbed it around its neck, police alleged.

The missing of the bird was reported to the police on April 20 by the park securities who also provided surveillance footage.

The two people were detained on charges of hunting and killing wild animal and further investigation is underway, police said.

Two-thirds of inspected firms violate environment rules

Some 5,594 companies, or 66.2 percent of those examined, violated environmental standards during the latest round of air pollution inspections, China's environmental authority announced Tuesday.

The findings came after a month of inspections across 28 cities in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and other nearby areas, which resulted in the discovery of problems including excessive emissions and insufficient pollution control equipment.

Inspectors reported the issues to the local authorities for further investigation, the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) said in a statement.

As of May 2, local authorities had shut down 131 companies and halted production at another 213 due to failure to meet environment protection standards.

Chinese enterprises were fined around 264 million yuan (\$38 million) for violating standards in the first quarter of this year, the MEP said last month.

The ministry issued punishments in nearly 5,000 cases related to violations of environmental protection regulations and laws in Q1, up around 200 percent year on year.

In 224 cases, companies had to pay between 10,000 and 100,000 yuan per day after failing to rectify violations within the time frame set by the MEP.

China has 3.5 mln registered nurses

The number of registered nurses in China reached 3.5 million at the end of 2016, the National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC) announced Wednesday.

Guo Yanhong, senior official at NHFPC, released the figure at a press conference ahead of International Nurses Day, which falls on May 12.

Registered nurses make up 42 percent of the country's healthcare professionals, Guo said, adding that China will launch a plan to retain nursing talent and motivate workers.

NHFPC will continue to provide improved nursing services to cope with the

aging population and the increasing need for rehabilitation and hospital care, Guo said.