

CHINA

Bus driver responsible for crash held grudge

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The driver of the bus that plunged into a lake in Anshun, Guizhou province, on Tuesday was found to have been holding a grudge after his house was demolished on the same day, Anshun police said in a statement on Sunday.

He had consumed some alcohol that day and intentionally steered the bus across several lanes and through a guardrail before it plunged into the Hongshan Reservoir, which led to the death of 21 people and injured 16.

The driver was among those killed.

After an autopsy and examination of physical evidence, it was determined that the driver, surnamed Zhang, had drowned. Ethanol was found in his body, and 200 milliliters of alcohol was detected in a beverage bottle found at the scene, the police statement said.

An investigation team sent by the city government concluded that Zhang had received no physical or verbal interference while driving. The vehicle involved was an electric city bus that was put into use in October, and it met national standards at the time of the incident and had no mechanical failures, the statement said.

Zhang is suspected of the Criminal Law offense of intentionally endangering public safety, it said.

21 people

died after a bus broke a railing and plunged into a reservoir in Anshun, Guizhou province.

He divorced his wife in 2016 and lived in a house that he rented from his niece. Police learned that he used to lament that his family was not happy and his life was not satisfactory, according to the statement.

Zhang once worked in diesel engine factory in Anshun's Xixiu district. The factory provided him with a house with an area of 40 square meters, with the factory maintaining property rights. The house was included in a shantytown reconstruction project and was scheduled to be demolished, it said.

According to the investigation, Zhang had not lived in the house for a long time. However, once the project was launched, the project headquarters contacted Zhang to negotiate compensation for the house, the Anshun government said.

On June 8, he signed an agreement with the district's housing authority, which offered him 72,542 yuan (\$10,360) in compensation, but he didn't claim it. He also applied for public housing but his application was not approved, it said.

On Tuesday morning, Zhang found the house was being demolished. He then called the government service hotline to complain about the demolition and the rejection of his application for new housing.

At 8:50 am, Zhang, who usually began driving buses at noon, called the shift driver and requested to work earlier.

Zhang bought alcohol from a store, poured it into a nonalcoholic beverage bottle and went to the bus hub to begin his day. He picked up passengers and drove the bus to the terminal railway station at 11:37 am, where they all disembarked. He then called his girlfriend via WeChat, expressing his unhappiness.

At 11:47 am, Zhang started driving again. At 12:09 pm, he was drinking while passengers got on and off the bus. Three minutes later, the bus arrived at the dam of the Hongshan Reservoir. Zhang slowed down at first to avoid other vehicles, then accelerated, crashing through a guardrail and plunging the bus into the reservoir.

The Anshun government said further investigation will be conducted, and any violation of laws and discipline during the process of the house's demolition and the handling of Zhang's complaints will be dealt with strictly.

Isolation over



People leave a centralized quarantine location in Beijing on Saturday after their isolation period for potential COVID-19 infection ended. They are the second group of people with links to the Xinfadi wholesale market to be released from quarantine. The market was linked to a cluster of COVID-19 cases in the capital in mid-June. LIU PING / FOR CHINA DAILY

5.1 magnitude quake hits Hebei's Tangshan

City reports no casualties; temblor is result of 1976 incident, expert explains

By **ZHANG YU** in Shijiazhuang and **ZHAO YIMENG** in Beijing

No casualties or serious damage were reported as of Sunday night after a 5.1 magnitude earthquake hit Tangshan, Hebei province, at 6:38 am, the city's publicity department said.

Rescue teams have conducted a survey in the city's Guye district, the epicenter of the quake, which was also felt by residents in neighboring Beijing and Tianjin.

The quake struck at a depth of 10 kilometers, the Ministry of Emergency Management said. The district is about 170 km southeast of Beijing and around 130 km northwest of Tianjin.

There was no need for residents to be too worried about the quake, the Beijing News reported, citing an expert at the China Earthquake Networks Center.

Tangshan was destroyed by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake in 1976 that killed more than 240,000 people and injured over 160,000.

The 5.1 magnitude quake on Sunday was an aftershock of the 1976 one, and another quake of more than 5 magnitude was unlikely to occur in the area in the short term, Liu Jie, the center's deputy head, told a news conference in Beijing on Sunday afternoon.

He said the epicenter of Sunday's quake was 28 km from the epicenter of the 1976 quake, well within the aftershock zone, and was considered a normal fluctuation.

"The aftershock zone of the 1976 Tangshan earthquake, with a long axis of 140 kilometers, covers some areas in Tianjin and Hebei, but Beijing is not in the zone," Liu added.

According to international research on earthquakes, the slower a seismic structure is formed, the longer the aftershock will last.

"The energy accumulation of Tangshan's earthquake in 1976 took



thousands of years, so it's a normal phenomenon that the aftershocks of the quake can last for dozens of years," Liu said. "The frequency and magnitude of aftershocks of earthquakes will decrease with time."

Data from the center show Sunday's quake was the strongest to hit the area within 200 kilometers of its epicenter in the past five years. The area witnessed 17 quakes above magnitude 3 during the period.

A total of 332 aftershocks of more than 4 magnitude have been recorded since 1976, but they have been weak since May 1977.

Since then, only five earthquakes above 5 magnitude have been recorded, including the one on Sunday. The last major aftershock, another 5 magnitude quake, was recorded in Guye in 1995, according to the center.

Following Sunday morning's quake, two aftershocks — one of 2.2 magnitude at 7:02 am and the other of 2 magnitude at 7:26 am — hit the district, Hebei Daily reported.

According to Tangshan's emergency management bureau, no casualties or serious damage were found. There were reports that several old houses in the district had developed some cracks after the quake.

Local residents remained calm, and transportation, communica-

tion, and electricity supplies were stable, the bureau added.

Railway authorities halted the operation of trains that were scheduled to pass through the quake zone and conducted a thorough check of railway facilities and equipment, Hebei Daily reported. At around 10 am on Sunday, suspended trains had mostly resumed operation.

"My bed collided with the wall next to it for about 10 seconds, and bottles on my table shook violently, but this was a small earthquake after all," said Zhang Xin, a 20-year-old resident of Fengnan, a district neighboring Guye. She added that nothing serious had occurred.

Some residents of neighboring cities, including Beijing, Tianjin, and Qinhuangdao in Hebei, said they were awakened by tremors. Yin Yu, who lives in Beijing's Shunyi district, said she felt her bed shaking and started to wonder if it was an earthquake.

A warning was sent out by a network jointly established by the Institute of Care-Life, based in Sichuan province, and emergency management organs, China-news.com reported.

Residents of neighboring regions, including Beijing and Tianjin, received a warning about 30 seconds before the tremor arrived in those locations via their mobile phones or televisions with earthquake warning functions activated.

The Ministry of Emergency Management has started a level four emergency response for coping with quake disasters, while Hebei's provincial government has started a level three response, with rescue teams and quake experts dispatched to the district.

Wang Dongfeng, Party secretary of Hebei province, ordered a thorough check of damage and losses caused by the quake during a visit to Tangshan on Sunday.

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Factory, agriculture park help Lianzhang village farmers boost incomes

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Feng Caixia began working at a toy factory in Lianzhang village, her hometown in Qingyuan, Guangdong province, in 2017 after quitting her job of seven years at a shoe factory in the Pearl River Delta region.

"The toy factory now has more than 100 workers from my hometown, helping us to earn a monthly salary of about 3,000 yuan (\$427)," Feng said.

Working at the toy factory, established in 2017 with an investment of about 500,000 yuan, has been one of the most efficient ways for farmers in Lianzhang, a formerly impoverished village in the north of the province, to boost their incomes.

"It used to be a school, but now it is a factory that helps provide us jobs at home," said Feng, who is a processing line director at the factory.

She said the factory employs more than 100 workers during peak seasons, with most from Lianzhang and nearby villages.

"Many of us had to work outside our hometown in the past because there were few job opportunities," Feng said.

About 500 meters from the factory, a modern agricultural scientific demonstration park, jointly invested in by the village committee and property giant Country Garden, was put into operation in 2019, encouraging a growing number of villagers to stay put.

Aiming to advance targeted poverty alleviation efforts, a new model integrating agriculture, industry, and poverty alleviation has been launched in Lianzhang, which President Xi Jinping visited in October 2018.

After operations began at the toy factory and agricultural park, the per capita income of the village — which has 482 households — reached more than 22,000 yuan last year, the village committee said, representing a year-on-year increase of 42.3 percent.

"I started working here at the end of 2017, and I have seen great changes in the village," said Zeng Chunlan, an employee at the toy factory.

She said many young people who had taken jobs outside their hometowns had returned to work at the factory.

"The factory has helped solve the problem of left-behind chil-



dren, as the job allows many women like me to take care of children," Zeng said.

She said a school bus service was put into operation last year.

In many once-poor counties in northern Guangdong, a growing number of modern factories have been set up in recent years, allowing farmers to work in their hometowns.

In Lianzhou, a nearby city, a factory that produces dried bean milk cream in tight rolls has also helped provide jobs for dozens of local farmers.

"The city has a long history of making dried bean milk cream, but there was low production efficiency as most farmers had been making such agricultural products in their family run workshops," said Pan Wenge, general manager of Qilian Agricultural Products.

In 2017, GAC Group, a leading automobile company based in Guangzhou, Guangdong's provincial capital, set up the Qilian company with an investment of 4.5 million yuan to help upgrade the efficiency of producing traditional agricultural products.

"We invited workers, most of whom are local farmers, to visit our automobile factory in Guangzhou to show them what modern production should be like," Pan said.

After upgrades, the factory's production value has increased by more than 300,000 yuan a year, he said.

"In addition to providing jobs for local farmers, we also purchase beans from local farmers," Pan said. "The operation of the factory has helped increase their incomes."

He said the factory is planning to invest more to further upgrade production efficiency, focusing on making high-end dried bean milk cream for sale in the Pearl River Delta region.



He Wei (left), a worker at the modern agricultural park in Lianzhang village, in Qingyuan, Guangdong province, explains how to plant watermelon to a visitor. QIU QUANLIN / CHINA DAILY

Imported shrimp removed from shelves

By **WANG XIAODONG**
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Imported shrimp from three Ecuadorian companies are being pulled off shelves across China after the novel coronavirus was detected on packaging.

To eliminate epidemic and food safety risks, China has suspended imports from the three producers. Six samples recently collected from inside shipping containers and the outer packaging of frozen white shrimp tested positive for the coronavirus, the General Administration of Customs, the National Health Commission and the State Administration for Market Regulation said in a notice released on Friday.

Samples of the shrimp and their interior packaging tested negative, the notice said.

"The testing result indicated risks of novel coronavirus contamination for external packaging of products from the companies and the containers used to ship them, as well as inadequate implementation of food safety management systems by the enterprises," it said.

In addition to suspending imports from the three companies, customs across China must intensify supervision to make sure all frozen shrimp they produced after March 12 are returned to Ecuador or recalled from the domestic market to eliminate food safety risks and protect public health, the notice said.

Recalled products and those that cannot be returned to Ecuadorian exporters will be destroyed properly, it said.

After the notice was released, the Zhejiang Provincial Administration for Market Regulation began inspecting frozen shrimp imported from Ecuador across the province, and 78 metric tons of related products were removed from shop shelves by noon on Saturday, the administration said.

In Shanghai, the city's administration for market regulation has told its branches across the city to urge distributors and sellers to immediately suspend the sale of frozen shrimp produced by the three companies after March 12

and to cooperate in the inspection of samples.

JD, a major Chinese e-commerce platform, said it has started a new round of testing for the novel coronavirus on Ecuadorian white shrimp products, including the packaging, sold on the platform.

It has completed novel coronavirus testing on hundreds of batches of meat and seafood products, including white shrimp imported from Ecuador, sold on the platform since mid-June, and all have tested negative, it said.

Li Ning, deputy director of the China National Center for Food Safety Risk Assessment, said food may be contaminated by the novel coronavirus in the surrounding environment or by food processing staff, although the risks of virus transmission via food are low.

The risks of novel coronavirus

transmission via imported food products have been a source of increased public concern since a recent COVID-19 outbreak in Beijing linked to a major wholesale food market in the capital that has resulted in 335 confirmed cases since June 11. Before the outbreak, Beijing had reported no domestically transmitted COVID-19 cases for nearly two months.

Bi Kexin, head of import and export food safety at the General Administration of Customs, said customs across China have conducted risk monitoring for the virus on imported cold-chain food since the start of the outbreak in Beijing last month. Nearly 228,000 samples, including food and packages, had been tested by Thursday, with all but the six samples from Ecuador testing negative, he said.