



The plot allegedly involved blowing up a statue outside the trading centre. Paulo Vecina / The National

Men jailed over DragonMart plot

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Court documents released in January said the men first drew the attention of authorities when they made a wire transfer of Dh50,000 to China, and then moved the cash to Saudi Arabia.

The money was to be used to fund the attack, the documents say, although it was not made clear what the suspects planned to purchase.

Prosecutors said the men travelled several times to Saudi Arabia from the UAE while planning the attack.

The men said they were travelling for religious reasons.

Under UAE law, anyone convicted of terrorism-related offences is sentenced to death. The sentence can, however, be reduced. The sen-

tence on the Uighurs was limited to 10 years because they were in the "preliminary stages" of planning an attack.

Ethnic Uighurs are a Turkic group who live mainly in a semi-autonomous region of Xinjiang province in China. The East Turkestan Islamic Movement campaigns for the creation of a separate homeland for that area's largely Muslim population. The group is described by the United Nations as a terrorist organisation.

DragonMart is the world's largest trading centre for Chinese goods outside mainland China, according to its website. The centre opened in December 2004 and houses nearly 4,000 shops.

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Developers get used to green demands

Capital building codes target water use

A new rating system that measures buildings' environmental factors lays down basic requirements and will soon be expanded

Vesela Todorova

ABU DHABI // Green building codes which set out environmentally friendly requirements for new developments will soon be expanded to cover villas, schools and offices.

Since the start of last month, any new communities with at least 1,000 residents have had to meet the guidelines set out by the Urban Planning Council. From September, this will be extended to include residential villas, schools, offices and general buildings.

The guidelines place great emphasis on electricity and saving water.

Gregory Acker, the council's senior planning manager, said developers behind such projects had to ensure that they achieved at least the first tier of the capital's new green building rating system. "It is a big step forward," said Mr Acker.

The Estidama Pearl Rating System, designed by the council and unveiled in April, evaluates communities and buildings on a number of environmental criteria.

It awards credit points earned whenever certain objectives are met. The system has five tiers, each placing increasing demands on developers.

New communities and buildings would have to achieve at least one pearl, said Mr Acker.

Government-owned buildings such as schools, mosques and buildings housing different insti-

tutions, have to go a step further and achieve a minimum of two pearls.

There are around 30 assessment systems for green buildings in the world. All look to improve the environmental performance of buildings, but they attribute different weights to factors depending on the local context.

"Around 50 per cent of our point system is related to water and energy," said Mr Acker.

Both electricity and water consumption in the UAE, and Abu Dhabi, have been growing at double-digit rates year-on-year. While the country has abundant fossil fuel resources, it has virtually no renewable water.

Yesterday, Mr Acker told the Water Days Conference, held at The Yas Hotel, that compliance with the Pearl Rating System would cut water consumption in Abu Dhabi.

Communities achieving the one pearl rating would be, on average, 16 per cent more efficient in their water use, he said.

Abu Dhabi is one of the biggest per-capita consumers of water in the world. On average, each resident uses 550 litres a day.

Ways to reduce water consumption include avoiding water features on landscaping, monitoring for leakage and saving condensation from air-conditioning units.

Reid Donovan, associate director of WSP Middle East, an environmental and engineering consul-

tancy, said achieving the rating would not place large burdens on developers.

"The baseline of one pearl is quite easy to achieve," he said.

Water savings required for a one-pearl rating could be achieved simply by installing low-use fixtures, such as taps, a practice that was becoming the norm, he said.

However, since not all design companies in the UAE adhere to the same practices, the new requirements will set a minimum requirement for all buildings.

"This will set a benchmark across all projects," said Mr Donovan. "It is a good thing."

Achieving two pearls will be more challenging. As with other rating systems, the Estidama system leaves it up to building designers to decide how objectives are met.

"Once you aim for two pearls you have about 70 different pathways to do this," said Mr Acker.

"Design teams on these projects have a lot of flexibility on how to achieve this."

A big chunk of water savings could come through re-thinking landscapes, through reducing grass and lawns, and making water features smaller, he said.

Landscaping was identified as the area with the greatest potential water savings in a study by RTI International, a US-based research institute, for the Abu Dhabi Government.

Glenn Whaley, of RTI, said the study found that, of 199.2 million imperial gallons of water used every day by residents, companies and institutions in Abu Dhabi, 62.9m could be saved.

"Landscaping irrigation accounts for more than half of the technical potential savings," said Mr Whaley.

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Jail for lawyer who gave away secrets

American gets three years for leaking company information

Awad Mustafa

DUBAI // A corporate lawyer was sentenced yesterday in his absence to three years in jail for industrial espionage, and ordered to pay his former employer almost a quarter of a million dirhams in compensation.

JC, a 37-year-old lawyer for Dubai-based Meeras Capital, was found guilty of revealing sensitive information to a rival firm, Abu Dhabi-based al Qudra Holdings, last February.

He was ordered to pay the company Dh200,000 in temporary civil compensation, and he is also facing a civil suit for an undisclosed amount from the company. The

American was tried in his absence at the Dubai Criminal Court of First Instance after his lawyer presented the court with a letter claiming he was dealing with a family emergency outside the country.

Meeras Capital is a subsidiary of Meeras Holdings. According to the chief of the Bur Dubai Prosecution Sami al Shamsi's chargesheet, e-mail records revealed communications between JC and AS, a 48-year-old South African woman, a corporate lawyer for al Qudra Holdings. They included company secrets about Meeras Holding's Jumeirah Gardens development.

It is claimed that in her first e-mail AS asked JC to provide her with a full list of the consultants used by Meeras Holdings, as well as a list of the major planners and consultants in Dubai. In his reply, JC stated that Meeras Holdings had used many consultants for its

projects, and that the company was in debt to them.

In a second e-mail, he revealed the names of the contractors, and said the company had decided to deal with another contractor that was expensive and eventually led to the Jumeirah Gardens project being scrapped.

JC went further in a third e-mail, telling AS that Meeras Holdings employees were leaving the company and that it was facing liquidation.

JC told prosecutors he acknowledged his error of judgement, claiming he sent the e-mails in the hope of getting a job with al Qudra, but had not meant to hurt Meeras's interests.

AS said she had only asked JC for a list of contractors and planners, claiming he had given up the sensitive details of his own accord.

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corrections

In "Gas shortage squeezes crude output" (June 30, page b6) we stated that Fereidun Fesheraki was the vice chairman of FACTS Global Energy. In fact, he is the chairman of the firm.

In "Spy Ring threat to US-Russian detente" (June 30, page a11) we quoted Vladamir Gruzdev, a Russian parliamentarian and former member of Russia's intelligence service, the SVR, as saying all countries maintain intelligence agents abroad. His first name was given incorrectly as Sergei, which is his patronymic.

prayer times

	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
Abu Dhabi	04:09	05:34	12:26	15:51	19:17	20:47
Al Ain	04:04	05:29	12:21	15:46	19:12	20:42
Dubai	04:04	05:29	12:21	15:46	19:12	20:42
Fujairah	04:00	05:25	12:17	15:42	19:08	20:38
RAK	04:00	05:25	12:17	15:42	19:08	20:38

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