

《上海七名房产中介散布谣言被刑拘》

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SHANGHAI - Seven real estate agents in Shanghai have been detained for spreading rumors about new government property restrictions, which have been blamed for a jump in divorce rates and a buying frenzy in China's commercial hub, local police announced Thursday night.

The seven suspects, who allegedly spread rumors online over new property curbs for better sales and commission fees, have been blamed for affecting the stability of the local housing market, according to a police statement.

Rumors have spread on social media and websites since late August that under a new regulation in the city starting Sept. 1, those who have been divorced less than a year will face restrictions and higher minimum down payments and mortgage interest rates.

The rumors allegedly triggered a rush to marriage registrar's offices in Shanghai, even though the city government later denied it was planning any changes to the city's home purchasing rules.

Home sales in the city nearly doubled in the week of August 22-28 compared with the previous week, with home buyers snapping up 555,700 square meters of floor space in anticipation of stricter rules, data from the research unit of real estate chain Lianjia showed.

Housing prices also went up 5.6 percent from the previous week to nearly 43,700 yuan per square meter, it said.