

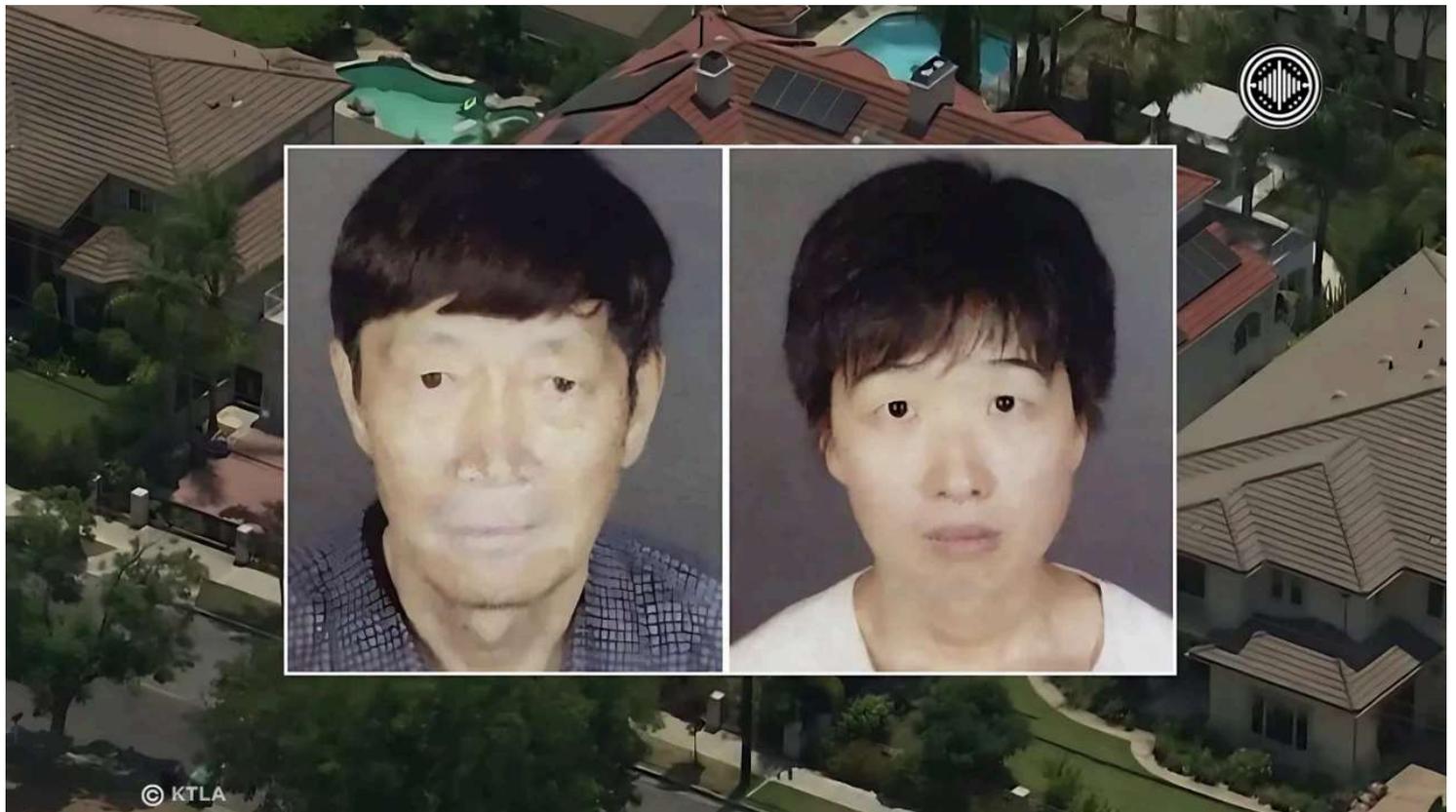
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## California Couple Accused of Using Surrogacy for Suspected Child Trafficking Scheme

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– Categories: Crime



Authorities in California have taken more than 20 young children into protective custody following disturbing claims that a couple used commercial surrogacy to run what appears to be a sophisticated child trafficking operation. Guojun Xuan, 65, and Silvia Zhang, 38, were arrested and charged with child endangerment after police discovered dozens of children inside their \$4 million mansion in Arcadia.

The investigation began when emergency services responded to a call about a two-month-old baby with a serious head injury. But when officers from the Arcadia Police Department entered the home, they found a total of 15 children, with more later discovered in other connected properties. Seventeen of the 21 children were under the age of three.

Police believe the children were all born through surrogacy, and while surrogacy itself is legal in California, the circumstances surrounding the case have raised serious alarms. The children were being cared for by a small staff of nannies, and one of them, 56-year-old Chunmei Li, was arrested after allegedly physically and verbally abusing the children.

## Hidden Operation

Lieutenant Kollin Cieadlo of Arcadia Police described the situation inside the home as disturbing. “The discipline, both verbal and physical, was severe enough to support our belief that child abuse was occurring,” he said. Neighbors were shocked to learn about what had been happening behind closed doors. Michael Bui, who lives nearby, said he had no idea so many children were living at the property.

“I pass by here almost every day and have never seen anything odd. Twenty-one kids? What were they planning to do with all of them?” he said, visibly emotional. “It’s heartbreaking. People like that something will come back around to them eventually.”

Others also noticed strange details. One local mail carrier recalled seeing a man sitting at a desk inside the front room of the house, appearing almost like a receptionist, more fitting for a business than a home.

Despite the arrests, Xuan and Zhang were later released, as having multiple children through surrogacy does not violate California law. However, critics say the case reveals a troubling lack of oversight in the booming surrogacy industry.

Kallie Fell, a spokesperson for the Center for Bioethics and Culture, said the entire situation “smells of trafficking.” She pointed to the lack of transparency and potential exploitation involved, particularly when large numbers of children are born for reasons that remain unclear.

Surrogate mother Kayla Elliot says she is now fighting for custody of the child she carried for the couple. She claims she was misled from the beginning. “They told me they had one

kid,” Elliot said. “You put your trust in these agencies, and then you find out the parents actually own the agency. That was never disclosed. It’s emotionally devastating.”

All 21 children have been placed in the care of Los Angeles County’s Department of Children and Family Services. Investigators are now combing through records, financial documents, and agency contracts to determine whether the case is part of a larger scheme. For many, it has reignited the debate over whether commercial surrogacy laws are too relaxed and vulnerable to exploitation.