

Infectious diseases kill 18,000 Chinese in 2016

Infectious diseases killed 18,237 people on the Chinese mainland in 2016, according to official data revealed Thursday.

In 2016, there were more than 6.9 million cases of infectious diseases reported on the mainland, according to the National Health and Family Planning Commission.

Of that total, one case of pestilence and 27 of cholera, both Class A infectious diseases, were reported but did not lead to fatalities.

More than 2.9 million cases were classified as Class B infectious diseases, which resulted in 17,968 deaths. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, rabies, hepatitis, and human infection of H7N9 avian influenza accounted for 98.8 percent of deaths in this category.

Category C diseases were responsible for more than 3.9 million cases and 269 deaths. Foot and mouth disease, infectious diarrhea, and influenza were the most prevalent in this category, accounting for 98.5 percent of deaths.

No new runways is still the only option, reveals new report on Heathrow expansion



23 February 2017

Keith Taylor MEP: "Today's report is an important reminder that campaigners have been right all along; Heathrow expansion is still a climate-wrecking decision that is bad for the British people and the planet."

The Government is still not able to demonstrate that it can mitigate the destructive environmental impacts of a new runway at Heathrow, according to a [report published today](#) by the Environmental Audit Committee.

The report on Heathrow expansion reveals the Government is still failing to take into account major concerns about the air pollution, carbon emissions and noise pollution effects of expansion.

Responding to the findings Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East and a member of the European Parliament's Environment Committee, argued that the

report was further proof that 'Heathrow expansion is an unnecessary environmental disaster in waiting'.

Mr Taylor, a vocal anti-airport expansion activist who has written about the [legal difficulties](#) a third runway will face, said:

"Today's report is an important reminder that campaigners have been right all along; Heathrow expansion is still a climate-wrecking decision that is bad for the British people and the planet."

"The report reveals that the Government has paid little consideration to the triple threat of unacceptable environmental risks the prospect of a new runway brings with it, from air pollution to carbon emissions and noise pollution."

"A new runway will breach legal air pollution limits and further worsen an air quality crisis that the Government is already [failing to tackle](#). And there is still no answer forthcoming on any plan to reduce current levels of air pollution which are responsible for the unnecessary [deaths of 50,000 people in Britain](#) every year."

"Expansion will bust Britain's carbon budgets and make a mockery of Theresa May's legal-binding commitments under the Paris Agreement. Astonishingly, the Government's response appears to be its willingness to water down already dangerously-lax limits on aviation emissions, despite the recommendations of its own advisors."

"Thousands of local residents will be appalled to read today's report only to discover that not only will a third runway ensure the air they breathe is about to get more toxic but the Government has no plans to tackle the cacophony of noise pollution that expansion promises."

"There are no two ways about it; expansion is a disastrous decision for the people of the South East, London, Britain, and the planet. Britain's 'airport capacity crisis' is, and always has been, a dangerous myth driven by corporate greed, not by actual need. Not only is all but one airport in the UK operating under capacity, sponsoring the exponential growth of an aviation industry that is a [top-ten global polluter](#) is wholly incompatible with Britain's Paris climate agreement commitments."

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China to step up property tax legislation: official

China will move more swiftly in legislating a long-discussed property tax law, an official said on Thursday.

“It is a major task in China’s tax reform determined by policymakers, and the lawmaking process will be accelerated,” Lu Kehua, vice minister of housing and urban-rural development, said when answering questions on progress on the tax law during a press conference.

Related government agencies and legislators are carrying out work according to the plan, Lu added.

China has pushed forward the work for years, but progress has remained slow. A trial property tax has been introduced in Chongqing and Shanghai.

The law will fill the gap in taxing home ownership, as China’s current housing tax mechanism mainly taxes development and property sales.

Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds continue to perform worse than their peers in school – Cat Smith

Cat

Smith MP, Labour’s Shadow Minister for Voter Engagement and Youth Affairs, commenting on the ONS Young NEET figures out today, said:

“While it is welcome that the latest figures show a decline in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), this Tory Government continues to fail young people.

“There are still 826,000 young people who are NEETs. Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds continue to perform worse than their peers in school.

“Those who manage to find work are excluded from the national living wage and many are

subjected to exploitative zero-hours contracts.

“Only

Labour will prioritise young people’s needs and address these failings.”

Former Shanghai vice mayor stands trial for graft

Former vice mayor of Shanghai Ai Baojun on Thursday stood trial on charges of corruption at a court in the city of Zhangzhou, east China’s Fujian Province.

Prosecutors alleged that from 2002 to 2014, Ai, a former member of the Standing Committee of the Communist Party of China Shanghai Municipal Committee, took advantage of various official positions to help agencies and individuals with business operations and development, among other offences.

Ai was said to have accepted bribes worth more than 43.2 million yuan (6.28 million U.S. dollars) either personally or through his family.

In addition, he was accused of taking advantage of his positions to embezzle public assets worth more than 7.5 million yuan from 2001 to 2009.

Ai pleaded guilty and expressed remorse.

More than 40 people, including Ai’s family, representatives of legislators and political advisors at national and local levels, as well as journalists and members of the public, were present at the open trial.

The verdict will be announced at a later date.