

Plans reinforce medicine, food safety



Police officers in Linyi, Shandong province, help migrant workers get payment that had been withheld by their employers last month.[Zhu Wutao/for China Daily]

The State Council, China's Cabinet, approved two important five-year plans on Friday to enhance supervision of food and medicine safety amid the government's efforts to better protect public health.

The two plans, passed at an executive conference presided over by Premier Li Keqiang, outlined the government's blueprint for ensuring food and drug safety during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-20).

According to the plans, the government will keep a close eye on key areas such as schools and roadside vendors to ensure that the food they sell is safe. The authorities will enhance supervision guarding against excessive pesticide use and misuse of food additives.

The government will speed up the establishment procedures to make sure that all phases of medicine production and sales are retraceable, and the production and sale of counterfeit medicine will be severely punished.

Sample testing will cover all kinds of food, blood products, vaccines and essential medicines to improve risk surveillance and assessment, according to the plans.

The government will also speed up the amendment to the national standard on food safety and raise the safety standard of food, medicine and cosmetics.

The executive conference announced strict measures to protect the legal interests of migrant workers who were not paid by their employers.

Provincial governments will be held accountable for ensuring the timely payment of migrant workers. Provinces that produce large numbers of migrant workers are urged to help workers get their pay on time.

Companies that fail to pay wages promptly will be put on a blacklist that will be published at regular intervals. Their market access will be limited in the future.

“China has made impressive progress largely thanks to the effort and contribution by our migrant workers,” the State Council said in a statement.

Huang Leping, director of Beijing Yilian Legal Aid and Research Center of Labor, said that Li has paid attention to the legal interests of migrant workers, showing the central government’s concern over the suffering of the grassroots.

Those who refuse to pay the migrant workers should face tougher punishment in keeping with the Criminal Law, which rules that employers can face up to seven years imprisonment if they maliciously delay or refuse to pay workers, said Huang, whose NGO has helped more than 140,000 employees, mostly migrant workers, to protect their rights.

Compared with employees in many other occupations, such as teachers, migrant workers are more vulnerable to the infringement of their rights because they have little knowledge and few channels to safeguard their rights, he added.

Beijing to invest US\$4.85B in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei development

Beijing will invest 33.31 billion yuan (US\$4.85 billion) this year in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei coordinated development, according to the municipal finance bureau.

2017 will see the city rein in administrative operation funds while focusing on major missions planned to promote Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei integrated development.

The main expenditure policies incorporate efforts to guarantee the package policies made for “Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei Joint Development Plan”, speed up sub-center construction, increase support for Hebei Province, and give partner assistance to Xinjiang and Tibet, according to Han Jie, spokesman and deputy director of the bureau.

Details of the investment tell that 11.09 billion yuan will fund the new airport construction in an effort to boost the transport network in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.

A total of 11.81 billion yuan will be allocated to ensure trial operation of the new Tiantan Hospital and advance project II in Yizhuang branch of Tongren Hospital as well as new campus construction of Beijing Film Academy, Beijing Technology and Business University, etc.

Moreover, 4.25 billion yuan will be used for facilities establishment in administrative areas in the city's sub-center, and for upgrading of the green landscape along inner ring roads.

Beijing will use 5.7 billion yuan to assist oriented areas including Xinjiang, Tibet, Qinghai, Inner Mongolia and Badong, support Hebei and advance collaboration work of the South-to-North Water Diversion project.

Another 470 million yuan will be put into ecological forests construction.

408 mln trips during Lunar New Year holiday

The week-long Spring Festival holiday witnessed 408 million passenger trips in China, up 2.1 percent year on year, data from the Ministry of Transport (MOT) showed Friday.

Between Jan. 27 and Feb. 2, the number of road trips totaled 336 million, a 0.8 percent increase from last year, while train trips reached 52 million with an annual increase of 8.8 percent.

More breakdown figures showed that air travel exceeded 9.82 million trips, surging 14.9 percent from last year, while boat trips topped 10.35 million, a rise of 3.5 percent.

About 2.98 billion trips are expected to be made during this year's Spring Festival travel rush, known as Earth's biggest human migration, between Jan. 13 and Feb. 21.

The average distance traveled was 262 km as most trips were intraprovince and 87.8 percent of the trips were within a range of 500 km, MOT data showed.

Nearly 80 percent of the travels were for visits to relatives and friends, as the festival is the most important occasion for family reunions.

The Guangzhou South Railway Station was the most used transportation hub during the migration, followed by Shanghai Hongqiao Railway Station and Beijing West Railway Station, all of which are seated in major cities with

significant populations of migrant workers.

News story: Defence Minister visits a hub for Queen Elizabeth Class Carrier Programme

The Minister visited some of the aircraft and met with personnel stationed at the base. RNAS Culdrose is the heart of the naval air fleet, where naval aviators train. The base is an important part of the programme, which will deliver the two Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC) aircraft carriers, the largest warships ever built in the UK and from which the UK's new F-35B Lightning II jets will fly.

After visiting the Merlin training facility, the Defence Minister saw the Dummy Flight Deck, designed to train QEC aircraft handlers among others, where she witnessed live training exercises. The skilled aircrew and engineers at the base specialise in anti-submarine warfare and Airborne Surveillance and Control.

Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin, said:

It was an honour to visit one of Europe's largest helicopter bases and meet the men and women behind its success. The state-of-the art facilities are helping to test and safeguard our maritime aircraft capacity.

The base provides 3,000 civilian and military jobs and is one of the biggest single-site employers in Cornwall, pumping £100m into the local economy every year, bringing welcome regional investment.

Many of the Merlins based at Culdrose will be fitted with the Crowsnest system, as [announced recently](#) in a £269 million deal. The system will act as the eyes and ears for the Royal Navy's ships, providing long range air, maritime and land detection and tracking capability. Crowsnest is an important step in the ambitious carrier programme, which will be vital to protect the new vessels.



A weapon being loaded onto the Merlin Weapons Systems Trainer. Crown Copyright.

The Commanding Officer of RNAS Culdrose, Captain Danny Stembridge ADC said:

It was a privilege to welcome the Defence Minister to Culdrose this week, and to discuss the vital role its people continue to play in the defence of our nation. She visits at a very important time for us; whilst we continue to deliver our primary roles of protecting the Nuclear Deterrent and supporting Counter Terrorism, we are also getting ready to defend the Royal Navy's Carrier Task Groups.

HMS Queen Elizabeth, the Nation's new flagship, will sail into Portsmouth Harbour this year and Naval Air Power will be at the forefront of this nation's deployed capabilities. It is essential that we at RNAS Culdrose are ready to play our important role in this exciting new venture. Indeed, aircraft from 820 Naval Air Squadron, will be the very first to land on the flight deck of the new carrier.

The Minister also visited A&P Group and World Fuels at Falmouth docks. A&P support and maintain the Royal Fleet Auxiliary's four Bay Class ships, one of which is currently stationed in The Gulf. Last year the ships conducted operations in the Caribbean and Mediterranean.

Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin said:

I am delighted to be in Falmouth, which has a vital ship repair capability, sustaining jobs and part of a UK-wide carrier effort.

Press release: Milestone reached for Ipswich Flood Barrier scheme

The cofferdam, which is a structure that can be pumped dry to enable construction of the barrier to take place below the river bed level, is now in place.

Over the last few months, VBA the contractors working for the EA, have installed the cofferdam, pumped it dry and they have now excavated the river silts and gravel.

The next stage is to pour the base slab, which is more than 700 cubic metres of reinforced concrete. At the moment the steel reinforcement is being placed by a team of 20 people and the first pour of the base slab will be completed in the next couple of weeks.

The actual tidal gate is being fabricated in Holland and will be delivered later in the year when the concrete structure and control building have been completed.

Progress has been made elsewhere on the site, with the foundations for the flood walls and the control building now installed.

The project, which will reduce the risk of flooding to 1,608 homes and 422 businesses and support key infrastructure, has been partnership funded by: the Environment Agency, Ipswich Borough Council, Department for Communities and Local Government, the Haven Gateway Partnership, and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership.

EA project manager Andrew Usborne said:

The integrated team at the barrier are making good progress and are on programme to complete the works in spring 2018.

I am really looking forward to the next key milestone, which is the delivery of the tidal gate from Holland later in the summer.

Nick Culshaw, VBA operations director, said:

It has been a real honour to be working with and supporting the EA on this vital project in Ipswich. In order to protect around 2,000 properties, both commercial and residential, within the town from flooding in the future, a 20m wide tidal barrier gate, along with the relevant controls, will be installed.

The barrier, along with additional flood defences undertaken by VBA, will prevent any surge tides and allow the control of fluvial flow as required in the future.

The scheme is due to be completed in 2018.

If you're worried about the risk of flooding to you or a vulnerable person check your flood risk and other information here: <http://ow.ly/SWdMz>. Sign up for Flood Warnings here: <http://ow.ly/SWdVp>. Alternatively you can call Floodline on: 0345 988 1188 or sign up for Facebook Flood alerts at: <http://ow.ly/SWdVp>