

China's population to reach 1.45 bln around 2030

China's population is expected to peak at about 1.45 billion around 2030, according to the national population development plan for 2016-2030 released by the State Council, China's cabinet, Wednesday.

The country will enter a key transitional period between 2021 and 2030 in its population development as it will witness a decrease in the number of people of working age, more elderly people, still active population migration and diversified family patterns, according to the plan, which was signed and approved by Premier Li Keqiang.

"China's basic national condition of a large population will not fundamentally change. The population pressure on economic and social development will not fundamentally change. The tensions between population and resources and environment will not fundamentally change," the plan said.

The country will adhere to the family planning policy as a basic state policy, and fully implement the two-child policy to promote balanced population development, according to the plan.

The government will improve the policy adjustment mechanism for child birth, allocate public service resources rationally, improve development and support systems for families to achieve a suitable fertility rate, it said.

Efforts will also be made to improve the skill set of new workers, make full use of workers' potentials, develop the human resources of the senior population, and make good use of international talent.

Measures will be taken to promote urbanization, improve policies on population movement, address the problem of an aging population, promote women's development, and enhance protection of minors and the disabled.

As of 2015, China's population was 1.375 billion.

China allowed all married couples to have two children in 2016. This follows an earlier easing of the policy in 2013 that allowed couples to have a second child if either parent was an only child.

The latest change ended the one-child policy that was implemented in the late 1970s to rein in the surging population.

China's population to reach 1.45 bln around 2030

China's population is expected to peak at about 1.45 billion around 2030, according to the national population development plan for 2016-2030 released by the State Council, China's cabinet, Wednesday.

The country will enter a key transitional period between 2021 and 2030 in its population development as it will witness a decrease in the number of people of working age, more elderly people, still active population migration and diversified family patterns, according to the plan, which was signed and approved by Premier Li Keqiang.

"China's basic national condition of a large population will not fundamentally change. The population pressure on economic and social development will not fundamentally change. The tensions between population and resources and environment will not fundamentally change," the plan said.

The country will adhere to the family planning policy as a basic state policy, and fully implement the two-child policy to promote balanced population development, according to the plan.

The government will improve the policy adjustment mechanism for child birth, allocate public service resources rationally, improve development and support systems for families to achieve a suitable fertility rate, it said.

Efforts will also be made to improve the skill set of new workers, make full use of workers' potentials, develop the human resources of the senior population, and make good use of international talent.

Measures will be taken to promote urbanization, improve policies on population movement, address the problem of an aging population, promote women's development, and enhance protection of minors and the disabled.

As of 2015, China's population was 1.375 billion.

China allowed all married couples to have two children in 2016. This follows an earlier easing of the policy in 2013 that allowed couples to have a second child if either parent was an only child.

The latest change ended the one-child policy that was implemented in the late 1970s to rein in the surging population.

This is a significant and welcome U-turn from the Prime Minister – Keir Starmer

Keir

Starmer MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, commenting on

the Government's announcement that they will publish a White Paper, said:

"This

is a significant and welcome U-turn from the Prime Minister.

"Labour

has repeatedly called for the Government to publish a plan for Brexit before Article 50 is triggered and we made clear Labour would table amendments on this

to the Article 50 Bill.

"This

U-turn comes just 24 hours after David Davis seemed to rule out a White Paper,

and failed to answer repeated questions from MPs on all sides of the House.

"The

Prime Minister now needs to confirm that this White Paper will be published in

time to inform the Article 50 process, and that it will clear up the inconsistencies, gaps and risks outlined in her speech."

University of Northumbria fined after botched experiment nearly kills students

The University of Northumbria at Newcastle has been fined after two students fell seriously ill following a laboratory experiment.

Newcastle Crown Court heard how students were learning about the effects of caffeine as part of a sports experiment. Part of the course included a practical exercise where volunteer students would take quantities of caffeine to demonstrate the impact.

Two of the volunteer students drank a solution with 100 times the amount that should have been taken as part of the experiment. They immediately suffered from dizziness, blurred vision, vomiting, shaking and rapid heartbeat. They were rushed to hospital where their conditions were considered life threatening. Dialysis was required to rid their bodies of the excessive levels of caffeine.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive found that the protocols set out for the experiment were not followed. The instructions were to use 200mg tablets but as they were not available the students were provided with caffeine in a powdered form. This created a situation where the students miscalculated the amount of powder to use and overdosed the two volunteers.

University of Northumbria pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and were fined £400,000 and ordered to pay costs of £26,468.22.

HSE inspector Cain Mitchell said: "Procedures where students are given supplements to assess their effect on the body need to be stringent and subject to very careful control. Caffeine is most popularly known as a constituent of coffee but it can be very dangerous and life threatening where pure caffeine powder is consumed.

"The University completely failed to control the risks during these experiments and two young students were made seriously ill which resulted in intensive care treatment for a number of nights. In other reported cases people have died after taking doses which were less than those administered to these two students.

"All organisations who engage in experiments where people are given chemical substances should ensure that the risks are fully identified and strict procedures are devised and followed to ensure that the experiments can be undertaken safely."

Notes to editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. It aims to reduce work-related death, injury and ill health. It does so through research, information and advice, promoting training; new or revised regulations and codes of practice, and working with local authority partners by inspection, investigation and enforcement. www.hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>

Journalists should approach HSE press office with any queries on regional press releases.

News story: UK Government leads Burns Night celebrations around the world

Scottish Secretary David Mundell and Foreign Office Minister Sir Alan Duncan will host tonight's reception, where guests will be welcomed by bagpipes, enjoy a whisky tasting, and listen to Scottish folk singer Katy Thompson, who will perform 'My Heart is in the Highlands' and 'My Love is Like a Red Red Rose'. In addition, Ryan Hunter, 2nd year BA Acting student from at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, will recite Burns' poem 'A Mans A Man for A' That'.

Address to a Haggis

The video shows UK Government staff and Scottish service personnel including Major Jonny Rourke, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Mackenzie, Bombardier Steven Cunningham and Chief Petty Officer John Boyle reciting Burns' most famous work, the 'Address to a Haggis'.

Secretary of State for Scotland, David Mundell said:

This week the whole country will celebrate the life and work of Robert Burns, one of Scotland's greatest cultural icons. His works are justly famous right across the globe. From Ayrshire to Atlanta, and from Cumbernauld to Canberra, on Wednesday Burns' work will be celebrated in homes and Burns societies all over the world.

Burns' legacy remains relevant around the world, and as someone from Dumfries, Burns has always played an important part in my life. On Burns Night, I will be promoting Scotland's fine produce at a reception with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. And, of course, toasting the Bard with a wee dram of "guid auld Scotch.

Foreign Office minister Sir Alan Duncan said:

The clue is in the name – my father and many Duncans before us were born and brought up in Wick, Caithness, so I'll be in my Duncan tartan tonight.

Burns' enduring global influence demonstrates the impact of Scottish culture around the world and I know that Burns night will be celebrated all over – not just by British troops, embassies, aid workers and expats, but by people from many countries throughout the world. It shows us that Burns' appeal is as strong as ever.