

# Expert: Adjust the population policy

## Relaxation of previous restrictions have not encouraged enough births

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China should further relax or even abolish the family planning policies to increase births and ease the impact of rapid population aging, a leading expert has suggested.

The latest relaxation in the family planning policy, which allows all couples to have two children, will to some extent encourage births and ease population aging in China, but it is not enough, said Zhang Chewei, vice-president of China Population Association.

"I think birth restrictions should be abolished so people have the right to decide how many children they have," he was quoted by China Newsweek, a Beijing-based news weekly, as saying on Friday. "After this is carried out, authorities can consider more measures to encourage births."

China's total fertility rate, a key population index, declined gradually after 1990, the year when the rate reached 2.1, the minimum level to ensure China's population will not shrink, Zhang said. The rate has generally remained between 1.5 and 1.6 since 2000, indicating a serious lack of births, he said.

According to China's National Health Commission, total fertility rate — the average number of children a woman gives birth to during her lifetime — rose to 1.7 in 2016, the first year when the universal second-child policy was carried out.

Last year, about 17.23 million babies were born in China, roughly 630,000 fewer

than in 2016, according to data released in January by the National Bureau of Statistics.

The result was unexpected by the public and many experts, and some experts have suggested abolishing restrictions in the number of births.

On Monday, State-owned China Post released the design for a special stamp marking the beginning of 2019, the Year of the Pig according to the traditional Chinese calendar. The stamp depicts two big pigs with three piglets.

The design aroused public attention, with many people speculating a further relaxation of China's family planning policy next year.

The National Health Commission did not comment on Friday on the possibility of policy changes.

The commission previously said the universal second-child policy has increased births, and it will evaluate the effect of the policy and research population fluctuation.

China's fertility rate is very low and there is no possibility that it will rebound greatly in the future, Zhang said, and China's population will inevitably decrease even with more stimulation measures.

A major impact of low fertility rate is a rapidly aging population, which is causing an increased social burden, he said, adding China's population aging has been among the fastest in the world.

The number of people aged 60 or above in China exceeded 240 million last year, accounting for 17.3 percent of its population. The rate could exceed 30 percent by the middle of the

century, according to some experts.

Some provincial regions in China have proposed various measures to encourage births. In Liaoning province, couples who have a second child are expected to enjoy preferential policies in taxation, education of children and housing, according to a plan released by the province earlier this year.

Zhang said such measures will not be enough, as many couples will not have a second baby even if they are allowed.

Yang Wenzhuang, an official in charge of grassroots family planning supervision at the National Health Commission, said in February that China's population will drop to 1 billion by the end of the century, the same level as that of 1981.

Yang said the commission had organized a survey conducted by a third party, which showed economic pressure is the main cause that prevents couples from having a second child. Another reason is couples do not have enough time to take care of a second child, he said.

Yuan Xin, a professor of population studies at Nankai University in Tianjin, believes the decline in the number of births will become more pronounced in the next few years, with the number of women of childbearing age — those between 15 and 49 — falling by about 5.2 million per year.

"A population decrease in China is an irreversible trend, even if the family planning policy is further relaxed," he said.

Yuan suggested that authorities now need to take more concrete measures to encourage births, such as building more public nurseries and kindergartens, which are lacking in many cities.

## Dry run rescue



A helicopter of the Beijing Red Cross 999 Emergency Rescue Center transports injured personnel during a drill near National Stadium, or Bird's Nest, in Beijing on Friday. The exercise, jointly held by China and the Czech Republic, was part of the medical training session for the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. More than 100 volunteers participated in the event. ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY

## Websites of US airlines re-evaluated

By ZHANG YI  
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The Civil Aviation Administration of China said on Friday that it is evaluating how the websites of four United States-based airlines refer to Taiwan.

On April 25, the administration demanded that 44 foreign airlines review their websites and apps and cease listing the Hong Kong and

Macao special administrative regions and Taiwan as independent countries.

By the July 25 deadline, the 44 airlines had all made some changes and 40 of them had made the full changes demanded by China, but four airlines based in the US has not fully corrected how they referred to Taiwan on their booking websites, the CAAC said.

American, Delta, Hawaiian

and United airlines submitted rectification reports to the CAAC on July 25, saying that they have started making corrections and asked the administration to check the websites in two weeks.

A check of the websites of American, Delta and United airlines on Friday showed only the airport code and city names of airports in Taiwan, without adding the name Taiwan behind them, but they

didn't use the expression "Taiwan, China", as other foreign airlines did.

The website of Delta airlines showed in its listing of "country or region", the company listed Taiwan independently without adding "China" behind it the way it lists "Hong Kong, China".

In the country list of Hawaiian Airlines, Hong Kong is listed independently as a country from China.

## Results of defective DPT vaccine probe publicized

Authorities on Friday released the findings of a probe into a previous investigation of substandard DPT vaccines produced by Wuhan Institute of Biological Products Co.

The inspection team, formed by members of departments including the State Drug Administration and National Health Commission, found misconduct in vaccine production, as well as in fulfillment of local supervisory responsibilities.

DPT refers to a combination of vaccines for three infectious diseases: diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus.

In the previous investigation of the incident in 2017, the punishment was too light and not in line with laws and regulations, said inspectors on the new team.

"The SDA and related government agencies will demand the rectification of the wrongdoings, hold the company and supervisory departments involved accountable, conduct re-vaccination for children affected, and release results to the public in a timely manner," the inspectors said.

The inspectors have conducted spot-checks, looked through files and documents, and interviewed relevant people since they arrived in Hubei on Aug. 1.

The batch of DPT vaccines, produced on July 19, 2016, proved substandard due to a short-term equipment failure, which resulted in improper distribution of the active constituent.

The official findings showed the company failed to take into account the mal-

function and make targeted tests on the quality of its products during internal inspections. The defective vaccines were not chosen in the random test of the National Institutes for Food and Drug Control before being permitted to enter the market.

The National Institutes for Food and Drug Control found in later tests last year that the effectiveness of the vaccine against whooping cough did not meet national standards.

In Hebei and Chongqing, where the defective vaccines were sold, 71 percent and 75 percent of the children affected were reinoculated with quality vaccine against whooping cough.

All unused defective DPT vaccines have been recalled and destroyed.

XINHUA

### Briefly

#### BEIJING Xi's envoy to attend opening of Games

President Xi Jinping's special envoy and Vice-Premier Sun Chunlan will travel to Jakarta, Indonesia, to attend the opening ceremony of the 18th Asian Games on Aug. 18. She is invited by Indonesian President Joko Widodo, Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang announced on Friday.

#### HEILONGJIANG 14 people infected with anthrax

Fourteen people had been found infected with anthrax in Heilongjiang province as of 6 pm on Thursday and all but one are still hospitalized, said local authorities. All those hospitalized are in stable condition and the anthrax outbreak that started on Tuesday has been "effectively controlled", the province's publicity department said on Friday at a news conference. It said the current weather in the province, which features high humidity and temperature, is favorable for the outbreak of anthrax. Livestock suspected of being infected have been killed, incinerated and buried in a timely manner, but it didn't disclose the specific number.

#### GUANGDONG Suspect confirmed dead in house fire

A man suspected of killing five other family members and then setting a house on fire in Guangdong province has died, local police said on Friday. A preliminary investigation showed that six people were found dead after the residential house fire in Jingdu town in the city of Shantou on Wednesday morning. Among the six dead, five had knife wounds and showed no symptoms of smoke inhalation. Police said injuries by sharp objects caused the deaths. The suspect had no wounds and died from asphyxiation. Police said the suspect killed the five family members because of strained relationships with them.

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## Officers mourned

People bid farewell to Wang Tao and Liao Xuan, two police officers who died while fighting a criminal suspect, during a memorial in Renshou county, Sichuan province, on Friday. The officers died after being stabbed by a wanted killer who drove a car into their police station on Monday. Wang shot and killed the suspect, surnamed Zhang.

PAN JIANYONG / FOR CHINA DAILY



## Authorities to crack down on falsification of monitoring data

By HOU LIQIANG  
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The country's top environmental authority vowed on Friday to curb the falsification of monitoring data and ensure institutes are not interfered with, as it unveiled a three-year campaign on environmental monitoring.

The campaign will cover all 31 provincial regions on the Chinese mainland from 2018 to 2020. Key areas for inspections will be the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei cluster, Yangtze River Delta, and Fenhe-Weihe plain in Shaanxi and Shanxi provinces, according to the plan released by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment.

The campaign will also cover service providers to monitoring stations and the monitoring facilities of polluting enterprises, it said.

Inspections will be done randomly. The ministry will choose 10 percent of the air or water monitoring stations, 200 environmental monitoring institutes and 100 motor vehicle detecting companies to inspect each year, the ministry said in a statement on Friday.

"The ministry will strengthen cooperation with the State Administration for Market Regulation and carry out joint action to exploit the two government bodies' advantages to the full. An information sharing mechanism will be established to enhance the efficiency of environmental monitoring institute supervision," it said.

The two government bodies will launch a special inspection on environmental monitoring institutes and motor vehicle detection centers after mid-August. The cooperation will be of "milestone significance"

as it could help develop a "long-term mechanism" for the supervision work, it said.

Institutes with violations will be fined or have their monitoring qualifications revoked. Those involved in data falsification will be transferred to judicial bodies and be prosecuted for criminal liability. Officials involved in falsification will also face disciplinary penalties, it said.

The ministry vowed to create an atmosphere in which no one dares to falsify data by exposing typical violations via media.

The campaign was launched against the backdrop of polluting enterprises being frequently found to have falsified their environmental monitoring data, and some local authorities have also been found to have "beautified" data.

Six air quality monitoring stations in Linfen, Shanxi, for example, were tampered with more than 100 times from April 2017 to March this year.

A local court has sentenced 11 people involved in the incident, including the head of Linfen environmental protection, to prison or detention of up to two years in May.

## Zhejiang county getting ready for geospatial congress in Nov

By MA ZHENHUAN  
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Deqing, a scenic county in Zhejiang province, is going all out to be fully prepared for the upcoming United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress, slated to open from Nov 19 to 21.

So far, over 90 percent of the construction work for the facilitation of the congress, such as an international conference center and an exhibition hall, has been completed, the congress' organizing committee said on Friday. Saturday marks the 100-day countdown before the opening of the meeting.

"Currently, we are sparing no effort to ensure the international conference center — the main venue for the congress — be completed

### 3,000

street lamps in Deqing county have been newly installed or revamped to offer a beautiful nightscape during the United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress.

and pass the project check and acceptance before Aug 25," said Jiang Zuanwei, an official with the local bureau of construction.

The hosting of the international meeting, another major global event after Hangzhou successfully hosted the G20 Summit in 2016, has also brought about a facelift to the county, which boasts green bamboo forests and breathtaking natural views.