

Environmental inspectors expose pollution problems

China's environmental inspectors found that nearly two-thirds of the more than 32,000 enterprises they checked have violated environmental rules.

The findings came after three months of inspections across 28 cities in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and other nearby areas, which resulted in the discovery of problems including excessive emissions and insufficient pollution control equipment, the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) said Friday.

The inspectors, who are on a year-long on-site investigation to discover the sources of air pollution in the region, exposed 6,662 companies with unauthorized locations, lacking relevant certificates, or failing to meet emission standards.

The teams also found nearly 2,000 companies have been operating without any pollutant treatment facilities, while another 1,732 companies have pollutant treatment facilities that have been malfunctioning.

MEP official Tian Weiyong said the ministry will urge local authorities to further investigate these firms and rectify the problems.

The MEP will also send inspectors to recheck these companies, ensuring the problems be rectified, he said.

The inspections are part of China's campaign to fight pollution and environmental degradation as decades of growth have left the country saddled with smog and contaminated soil.

China started the inspections amid widespread concerns about smog in its northern region.

Tian said such inspections have helped control air pollution in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and other nearby areas.

Macao former chief prosecutor sentenced to 21 years in prison

Macao's former chief prosecutor Ho Chio Meng was found guilty for more than over 1,000 charges and sentenced to 21 years in prison, the special administrative region (SAR)'s Court of Final Appeal said in its final

judgment on Friday.

The judges agreed that the accused had violated so many laws in a long period of time, which makes his cases very rare and severe.

As a top official of the public prosecutions office of the Macao SAR, Ho had carried out legal practice for many years but he abused the power in his position and ignored law and discipline.

The former chief prosecutor was brought to trial in December 2016 in Court of Final Appeal on charges such as fraud and abuse of power.

His cases involved about 76 million patacas (about 9.5 million U.S. dollars).

[The Government has failed to deliver the 10,000 extra nursing places they promised](#)

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow

Health Secretary, responding to reports in Nursing Times

that universities are reducing the size of their nursing courses in the wake of

the removal of bursaries in England, said:

"The Government's decision to remove the bursaries for health degrees is a terrible misjudgment. They have failed to deliver the extra 10,000 nursing places they promised and in fact some universities are now planning to offer fewer places.

"Applications for nursing degrees have fallen by 23% this year and now universities say they have not yet received enough responses from prospective students to fill the number of training places they are offering.

"The Government has created a crisis in the nursing workforce which is causing chaos for patients. They should urgently revisit their decision to charge fees for health degrees before it is too late."

Joint statement by Presidents Donald Tusk and Jean-Claude Juncker on the passing away of Liu Xiaobo

13/07/2017 – Culture, education and youth / Justice and citizens' rights / Security and defence

The European Commission has today put forward new rules to clamp down on the illegal import and trafficking of cultural goods from outside the EU, often linked to terrorist financing and other criminal activity.

Richard Burgon congratulates Sir Ian Burnett on his appointment as Lord Chief Justice

Richard Burgon MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Justice, commenting on the appointment of Sir Ian Burnett as the new Lord Chief Justice, said:

"I congratulate Sir Ian Burnett on his appointment as Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales from October 2017.

"One of the Lord Chief Justice's key responsibilities is representing the views of the judiciary to Parliament and the government.

"I look forward to working with Lord Justice Burnett in upholding the independence of the judiciary, which is a cornerstone of our legal system."