

Visit to Papua New Guinea and India

My first official visits to Papua New Guinea and India will focus on trade, security, economic growth and education.

I will spend 7-9 April in Papua New Guinea and 9-12 April in New Delhi and Mumbai.

During my time in PNG, I will meet with Prime Minister Peter O'Neill and visit the Kokoda Track to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the New Guinea Campaign in World War Two.

The visit is an opportunity to build upon our bilateral economic relationships in the Pacific, and will involve multiple business events, including a joint Australia-PNG Entrepreneur and Innovation Showcase.

I look forward to reflecting on our strong shared history, and cementing the special relationship with our neighbour.

In New Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and I will discuss the enormous opportunities for collaboration between Australia and India.

With converging political, economic and strategic interests, we will use the meeting to strengthen our relationship even further for the benefit of both nations.

India is the world's fastest growing major economy. Two-way trade exceeded \$19 billion in 2015-16 and there is scope for significant growth.

With the Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, I will address a dinner to celebrate our partnership in education, recognising how Australian expertise in skills training can help India to meet its goal of training 400 million people by 2022.

In Mumbai, meetings with leading Indian CEOs and business people will focus on growing two-way trade and investment. Australian energy and resources are helping to power India's growth, while our collaboration on innovation and technology will open new business opportunities in the future.

Australia is home to a vibrant Indian community which makes a significant contribution to the fabric of our multicultural society. It provides a vital bridge between our two countries, and this visit will ensure that the ties between India and Australia become even stronger.

Inspections expose mass environmental violations



Heavy smog hits Beijing. [Photo/China.org.cn]

Inspections have exposed violations by companies illegally discharging pollutants and falsifying monitoring data, despite emergency responses to the ongoing air pollution in northern regions, according to the Ministry of Environmental Protection.

Severe violations were exposed by the nation's top environmental officials during random inspections in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and the neighboring provinces of Henan, Shanxi and Shandong, it said.

The ministry announced the launch of a yearlong intensified inspection program in the area's 28 major cities, starting on Wednesday. Up to 5,600 government workers will be transferred from across the nation to support the mission, making the campaign the largest-ever national operation in the field of environmental protection.

On Tuesday, Chen Jining, the minister of environmental protection, visited Sinopec Beijing Yanshan Co, a major petrochemical enterprise in Fangshan district, to inspect levels of discharged pollutants. Chen said that after waiting for 20 minutes, he was unable to obtain records on the repairing of equipment related to emissions monitoring.

It showed the company failed to operate as required in controlling and reducing emissions of air pollutants, and it has been required to correct its problems, Chen said.

In addition to poor management, Zhao Yingmin, the vice-minister of environmental protection, exposed severe violations by a new material production company in Anyang, Henan province, which was found to have falsified monitoring data to make sulfur dioxide emission levels show a negative reading.

As of Monday, inspectors in seven cities in northern regions had exposed 200 pollution problems, including excessive emissions, falsified monitoring data and weak implementation of laws by local governments, according to the ministry.

The ministry said on Wednesday that blue-sky days in the 28 major cities in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and neighboring provinces of Henan, Shanxi and Shandong accounted for 60.9 percent of the month, an increase of 20.6 percent year-on-year.

But in the first quarter of this year, only 42.8 percent of days had good air, a decrease of 0.7 percent compared with last year.

The air pollution that blanketed many cities on Monday started to ease on Wednesday, with pollution levels falling from severe to lightly polluted or good, according to data from the China National Environmental Monitoring Center.

Beijing started to see the air quality improve by 5 pm on Wednesday, but it is forecast to worsen again on Thursday, becoming severe, the second-highest level in the six-tier quality system, according to the monitoring center.

At least 13 cities, including Beijing, had issued orange alerts, the second-highest emergency response level, as of Wednesday, requiring limited use of vehicles and the suspension of production at some industrial sites.

"It's essential to implement the restriction efforts fully, and tighten the controls on construction sites and dust caused by vehicles," Chen said.

[2022 Olympic Winter Games facility construction launched](#)

Cai Qi, Mayor of Beijing, attended a meeting on the construction of the ancillary facilities and venues for the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games on March 31, marking the first meeting of its kind and officially launching the construction work of the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games venues and related infrastructure.

Beijing is responsible for the construction of 31 venues and the related infrastructure. The major venues and facilities will be completed by the end

of 2019.

Beijing Mayor Cai Qi said the city needs to ensure a “wonderful, extraordinary and outstanding” Olympic Winter Games as it is a major event in China and has brought development opportunities to Beijing.

Cai said the construction needs to create a “Winter Olympics speed” while ensuring safety and quality.

The plan for the National Speed Skating Stadium needs to be improved, and the National Stadium (Bird’s Nest) and the National Swimming Center (Water Cube) needs to be upgraded.

Cai also said that the venue in Yanqing District should follow the rules of the games and the requirements of the International Olympic Committee. He said the construction of the venues should follow the principles of cost-saving and environmental friendliness.

Premier Li: Unleash productivity through thorough reforms

China is prioritizing reforms to bring better economic vitality and higher living standards for its people.

The State Council’s executive meeting on Wednesday came with an outline for specific plans for this year’s economic reform, short-listing areas that require focused reform. The meeting was presided over by Premier Li Keqiang.

“Chinese economy is fundamentally motivated by the country’s reform efforts,” Li said. “To deliver results we have projected for the year, it is still down to how well we carry on with reforms.”

He pointed out that reforms will inevitably touch the cheese of vested interest, and joint efforts are called from all government departments.

Efforts in deepening economic reform will be carried out in several aspects in 2017.

Improvements were urged in areas such as cutting overcapacity, destocking, deleveraging, reducing corporate costs and shoring up weak links through using force of the market and law-based measures, aiming for a more effective economic growth with high quality.

Efforts in transforming government functions and streamlining administration will continue with stricter and more comprehensive regulation, creating a more inviting business environment for the real economy.

Innovation and entrepreneurship will be further encouraged with an incentive mechanism. The government will also come out with wider and more effective regulation on private property protection.

Fiscal and tax reform as well as reform in state owned enterprises (SOEs) were also urged. The country will also enhance reform measures on furthering opening up, environmental protection as well as the agricultural supply-side structural reform.

The new guideline also suggested inviting private capital participation in social welfare, including medical care, education reform, and social organizations.

“The government needs to focus on key reform steps that catches greater traction. This is similar to clenching our fist firmly when holding something vital,” Li pointed out.

“The key to reform is to unleash the hitherto pent-up productivity,” Li added. “Our job is to make big businesses stronger, small businesses more vibrant, through means firmly adhered to market principles and the rule of law. Given greater latitude for their own initiatives, all businesses, big or small, will work together to invigorate the Chinese economy.”

[News story: New type of limited partnership](#)

The Legislative Reform (Private Fund Limited Partnerships) Order 2017 came into force 6 April 2017.

New legislation came into force on 6 April 2017 which introduces a new type of limited partnership. The Order introduces private fund limited partnerships (PFLPs) and amends the 1907 Act, which applies to PFLPs and partners in PFLPs.

New and existing private investment schemes can be structured as limited partnerships.

To register as a new PFLP, use Form LP7. An existing limited partnership applying for designation as a PFLP should use Form LP8. Some changes have also been made to the existing forms LP5 and LP6.

All new and amended [LP forms](#) are available to download.

You can find the new legislation in [the Legislative Reform \(Private Fund Limited Partnerships\) Order 2017](#).

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