

Long-term care insurance may become mandatory

As part of the national effort to defuse a demographic “time-bomb”, China is very likely to introduce compulsory long-term care insurance to cope with ever-increasing care needs, particularly for the elderly who have a difficult time living independently due to age, illness or disability, said a national political advisor.

Hu Xiaoyi, former vice-minister of human resources and social security and a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, made the remarks on the sidelines of the ongoing two sessions.

China has an increasingly aging population coupled with surging chronic diseases, and “it’s the right time to introduce such a new social insurance program as a pre-emptive approach”, said Hu, now head of the China Social Insurance Association.

China has 150 million people aged 65 and older, with at least 40 million of them partially and fully disabled.

To leave such elderly people fully dependent on their children for long-term care is, in Hu’s opinion, unrealistic.

“It has become a universal social problem facing all families and thus should be addressed with a package of resources including the individual family, the government and the entire society, or the social insurance,” he noted.

Currently, China has five social insurance programs – elderly care, health, unemployment, work injury and maternity. They are run by the government and premiums are paid by the individual and the employer on a compulsory basis.

Hu expected long-term care would be the sixth.

All families, whether or not in urgent need of care, should participate in the program to prepare for potential future challenges, he urged.

According to him, care under the program is more household-based and would sometimes require professional medical intervention.

Recipients should be categorized according to various levels of dependency, he added.

But he stressed that more testing and research are required to roll out the program nationwide.

“The trial run should start with disabled seniors,” he said.

Such trials also assist in setting standards and level of premiums, he added.

Hu suggested a family-based approach for premium collection rather than an individual basis.

Countries such as Germany, Japan and South Korea have pioneered setting up such social security programs, according to the World Health Organization.

Sun Jie, another CPPCC member, said the program had proved helpful in addressing the long-term care demands of the old who have disabilities.

Sun, also deputy director of the School of Insurance and Economics at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing, added that some trials under way in China would provide experience for a future scale-up of the program nationwide.

Press release: 'Brand Britannia' dominates the field at world's largest music, film and interactive media festival

Brit Award and Turner Prize winners, including Rag n' Bone Man, will join over 70 leading UK tech and digital businesses showcasing 'Brand UK' at the world's largest creative festival in Texas this weekend.

Over 1,500 UK delegates are traveling to Austin, Texas, as the UK is set to have the biggest international presence at the South by Southwest (SXSW) festival. Performers and businesses will look to break into lucrative US and international markets, supported by government and industry experts such as Mick Fleetwood of Fleetwood Mac.

The Department for International Trade is supporting UK businesses to attend including virtual reality technology firms from Northern Ireland, companies from London developing smart cities solutions and delegates from Birmingham, Manchester and Wales. They will be helped by DIT to build vital contacts with international investors, bringing in tens of millions of pounds to the UK economy.

International Trade Minister Greg Hands, who will visit the event this weekend, said:

Our huge presence here at South by Southwest, the biggest of any country outside the US, shows the strength of 'Brand Britannia' internationally. From what we watch and listen to, to the new technologies making our cities better places to live – UK companies

and individuals are here demonstrating ground-breaking ideas that are leading the world.

Last year we helped boost new export opportunities for our home-grown businesses by around £10 million and with our biggest ever delegation, this year aims to be even bigger and better.

The festival, which last year welcomed 87,000 participants including former US President Barack Obama, is a huge opportunity for performers and businesses to attract investment into the UK's £90 billion creative industries.

Through government support in 2015 over 20 inward investment projects to the UK, and over £10 million in new export business wins for UK companies, was generated from SXSW. One company, Trackd, an app which allows musicians to record and share music studio-style, secured a £1.25 million contract through DIT support at SXSW.

Also, successful artists such as Bastille, and The 1975 have used the festival to launch their US careers, selling millions of records in the country. DIT is the lead partner of the British Music Embassy, a venue in Austin where for the tenth year the department and UK music industry will showcase the best new British music artists. The British Music Embassy will host over 50 performances from artists such as Rag n' Bone Man and Yorkshire-based punk newcomers Life, who are included in the BBC Introducing showcase.

Throughout the week long event, DIT will host performers, businesses and investors for three days at the Great Britain House – a national pavilion showcasing the very best the UK has to offer in the tech, creative and music industries.

Events include:

- a Q&A session for British businesses with Mick Fleetwood: legendary drummer, band leader and founding member of world-renowned rock group, Fleetwood Mac
- sessions on the impact of AI on artists with Arts Council England and nine creative delegates, from an interactive dance company to a cutting-edge virtual orchestra
- workout sessions from global UK sports brand Sweaty Betty

One company attending SXSW with DIT support is Pavegen, based in London and Cambridge – demonstrating its revolutionary street paving which generates electricity from footsteps and captures data within the urban environment.

Laurence Kemball-Cook, founder and CEO of Pavegen said:

This year's South by Southwest is crucial for us, helping us to build vital relationships with some of our most important

international customers. With the support of the Department for International Trade we're now closing some of our biggest deals yet, in the US and beyond.

Notes to editors

- Founded in 1987 in Austin, Texas, SXSW is best known for its conference and festivals that celebrate the convergence of the interactive, film and music industries
- SXSW 2016 featured more than 2,000 sessions including keynotes by President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama, plus dozens of visionaries at the forefront of their industries to more than 87,000 participants

Further information

[News story: Jetty completion marks major milestone in Carrier works](#)

This is a major milestone in preparations at the naval base where £100m has been invested by the Ministry of Defence (MOD).



USNS Robert E Peary on the Jetty

The jetty, parts of which date back over 90 years, has been refurbished to prepare for the first of the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers. This is in addition to the dredging of the approach channel, inner harbour area and berth in order to make them deep and wide enough for the new ships, moving three million cubic metres of clay, sand and gravel from an area the size of 200 football pitches.

Bespoke navigational lights, a high-voltage electrical supply and specialist carrier-specific gangways, known as 'brows' are also being provided as part of the huge programme of works. The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) has worked with VolkerStevin and BAE Systems to deliver the package of infrastructure needed for the carriers.

DIO Project Manager Philip Wise said:

"I am delighted that the works to the jetty are completed. It is a crucial element of the £100m infrastructure package being delivered to support the arrival of the carriers into their homeport of Portsmouth. We are looking forward to seeing the first of the ships berthing against the new and improved jetty later this year."

With the core jetty works complete and new specialist equipment delivered, the Naval Base's preparations for the arrival of the Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC) Carriers are centred on a programme of Familiarisation, Integration and Testing, otherwise known as FIT.

This has been designed by BAE Systems on behalf of the Portsmouth Naval Base

Commander and Naval Base staff to prepare equipment, personnel and processes for the arrival of the Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carriers. They provide a valuable means to practice and refine standard operating procedures designed for the QEC and to role-play emergency scenarios.

David Mitchard, Managing Director, BAE Systems Maritime Services said:

“In readiness for the arrival of HMS Queen Elizabeth our team at BAE Systems in Portsmouth has put in place a rigorous testing programme for the new infrastructure at the Naval Base. We have a long expertise in maritime support and servicing and are committed to delivering the most innovative and cost-effective solutions to the Royal Navy for these remarkable ships.”

Today (10th March) saw the start of Phase 3 of the FIT trials, using the visit to the Naval Base of the 40,000 Tonne United States Naval Ship Robert E. Peary for live testing of people, processes and equipment.

Royal Navy Captain Iain Greenlees, the QEC Infrastructure Director said:

“This jetty lies at the very heart of the preparations for the arrival of HMS Queen Elizabeth and the wider development of the Base for this century. It is tangible evidence of how close we are to the dawn of the QEC era and I am proud of the way the Royal Navy, DIO and Volkerstevin have been able to work together on this challenging project to get us ready for today.”

[Speech: Priti Patel: Commonwealth Trade speech](#)

My Lord Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'm delighted to be here with you this evening to celebrate the inaugural Commonwealth Trade Ministers' Meeting.

I'd like to thank Lord Marland and the Commonwealth Secretariat for organising the event, and the Lord Mayor for hosting this wonderful reception in such a fantastic setting.

And thank you to all of you who have travelled so far to contribute to this event, at a time when we are seeing great change across the world in terms of economic development and our shared prosperity.

A crucial juncture for the Commonwealth

You heard this morning from the Secretary of State for International Trade Liam Fox, that this is a time of historic change for Britain.

Our Prime Minister could not have been clearer – it is time for Britain to

rediscover our place as a champion of global trade.

We must stand tall in the world as the brightest beacon for free trade and liberal markets.

And I want to be clear, that as Britain fixes its gaze on the global horizon, the Commonwealth, and how we can strengthen and deepen our cherished ties with our Commonwealth partners, is foremost in our minds.

Secretary of State for International Development Priti Patel gives her Commonwealth Trade speech

In some of the darkest days in world history, it has been our friends and allies in the Commonwealth who have remained steadfast on the side of freedom.

We're at a new and exciting moment in history, one that presents a vital chance to revitalise our partnerships with Commonwealth countries, and secure a stable and prosperous future, built upon our shared institutions, cultures, values and often a shared language.

My Lord Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe that in this new era Britain and the Commonwealth should be ambitious about the future.

The benefits of trade

And breaking down barriers to free trade will be a central part of this.

Trade between nations has the power to lift millions out of grinding poverty.

It is both a crucial driver of development, and one of the most dynamic forces for good in the world.

It creates jobs, and fosters peace. It raises incomes and it unleashes the power of private enterprise.

It changes individual lives, and by doing so it can transform entire economies.

As Margaret Thatcher once said:

"The market is a more powerful and more reliable liberating force than government can ever be."

Promoting trade, free markets, private enterprise and liberal economies are the most powerful way we can break the cycle of debt and dependency,

And put countries on the path to long term economic growth so that they can provide for themselves and their people.

The Commonwealth is an exemplar of this potential.

We only have to look around this room to be reminded of the stunning impact trade can have as a weapon in the fight against poverty.

In recent months I've visited India, Kenya, and Pakistan and been struck again by the power of jobs and economic growth to enhance people's choices and prospects – particularly women and their families.

Embracing free trade can jump-start an economy and turbo-charge growth.

On the other hand, shutting a country off from trade means depriving people the power of innovation, technology, ideas, and the chance of a better life.

And they set themselves up to remain poor and weak, with growing inequality.

But those countries which embrace reform, who welcome the free flow of trade, technology and ideas, and who want to be a part of a globalised world, will be well-placed to be prosperous and strong.

Faster growth for our partners in developing countries is a win-win.

We can enable countries to trade their way out of poverty, liberate them from aid dependency, and build stable, strong trading partners for the future.

And with an unprecedented number of young people in many Commonwealth nations, the need to create jobs and better economic opportunities has never been more pressing.

In the long run, it is sustainable growth, trade and investment that will really tackle poverty, and build shared prosperity.

We need to work to ensure free markets deliver for everyone, and that the benefits of economic success are felt by all our citizens.

Trade, development and continuity

So development must be, and will continue to be, at the heart of the UK's approach to international trade.

My department and this Government will continue to support humanitarian relief. We will continue to help alleviate poverty.

We will continue to support better health and education services in developing countries.

And we will also support stronger governance so that developing countries can have the confidence to embrace trade, markets, and investment.

The Commonwealth countries will be right at the heart of this effort.

And my department is also accelerating our work on trade, to help link developing countries to global markets and to enable them to reap the rewards of trade access.

The cost of bilateral trade for Commonwealth partners is, on average, 19%

lower than between non-Commonwealth members – because of the similarities in language, institutions and regulatory systems.

Some 80% of Commonwealth members benefit from preferential access to UK markets.

These mutually beneficial ties grow stronger every day.

UK trade with these Commonwealth partners has increased by a staggering 50% since 2005, to over £42 billion in 2015.

So as we leave the EU, a key priority will be to ensure that we do not disrupt our vital trading partnerships with the Commonwealth.

And my Government confirmed last month that we aim to achieve continuity and a smooth transition in our trading arrangements with all developing countries.

Breaking down the barriers to trade

So the UK's commitment to free trade has never been stronger, and we will place the Commonwealth front and centre in this work.

But, let's be clear, tariff barriers aren't the only things that hold back trade.

Burdensome regulations, high transport costs, delays at customs and weak infrastructure all increase the cost of trading, and stop countries from competing on a level playing field.

Tackling corruption and building stronger, more accountable and more open governance structures and institutions are key to breaking down trade barriers.

And I know you are also working hard to ensure that the opportunities free trade offers are available to all.

It is this government's ambition to tear down the barriers to free trade, and help support our partners to build open economies, where the poorest are free to work and trade.

That way we can empower those groups who have been excluded.

Small businesses, rural communities, women and minority groups – they all stand to benefit from the growth and job creation that trade brings.

My Department is committed to using our programmes to do this, and to helping our partners create the hard infrastructure for trade.

A few months ago I saw a fantastic example of this myself when I visited Mombasa Port. This is East Africa's biggest port and serves 200 million people across the region. And over the last few years the UK has helped modernise this port, by building viable roads and expanding docking points.

This has helped reduce the amount of time that it takes to move goods from Mombasa to neighbouring countries by 75%, contributing to a 10% increase in Kenya's annual exports and hundreds of millions of pounds' worth of additional trade.

Helping countries harness the power of trade to reduce poverty, including investment in infrastructure and other areas that drive economic growth, is a top priority for my Department.

Conclusion

Now more than ever, we must remember that free trade, open markets and the expansion of global commerce have not just fuelled unprecedented growth, lifting millions of people out of poverty.

They have also bound nations more tightly together. Trading nations are less likely to be warring nations.

Trade is not a zero-sum game. Trade between nations creates jobs, prosperity and strong economies. It underwrites peace, it drives down prices and it increases choice.

We must recognise the risks, but be bold in our solutions.

And we must continue to speak up for free trade as one of the bedrocks of global prosperity and stability.

We must entrench the Commonwealth's position as a beacon of co-operation, trade and partnership.

And through the crucial institution of the Commonwealth, we can and must work together to build a better, more prosperous, and more stable world for us all.

Thank you.

Norfolk farming company fined after death of worker

The grain storage facility

A family owned Norfolk farming company has been fined after an employee died at its grain storage facility.

Norwich Crown Court heard that on 9 July 2014, Arthur Mason, 21, took turns with a colleague to undertake cleaning work inside grain bins at Hall Farm,

Fincham, near Kings Lynn, run by Maurice Mason Ltd. He was standing directly on the stored grain, using a broom to clean down the exposed inner surfaces of the bin. He wore a harness fitted with a fall-arrest lanyard, which was secured to a fixed ladder inside the bin.

He began to sink into the grain, which was emptying slowly through a small opening at the bottom of the bin several feet below its surface. The court heard that any such movement or cavity in grain may be enough to create a 'quicksand' like effect.

The forces involved caused the fall-arrest component of the lanyard to unravel and extend. This caused him to sink still deeper into the grain. After alerting colleagues, who tried to assist, he swiftly became engulfed in the grain and subsequently drowned, despite most determined rescue efforts by farmworkers and emergency services.

An investigation by Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the employer of the deceased, Maurice Mason Ltd, failed to adequately identify and manage the deadly risks associated with cleaning grain stores. There was no safe system of work in place for this task, nor had anyone involved been provided with suitable training in how to complete it safely.

Maurice Mason Ltd of Hall Farm, Fincham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and was fined £50,000 and ordered to pay prosecution costs of £22,000.

Speaking after the hearing HSE Inspector Paul Unwin said: "This tragic incident led to the avoidable death of a young man. This death could easily have been prevented if his employer had acted to identify and manage the risks involved, and to put a safe system of work in place. There should be little need for anyone to enter such grain bins as it may be reasonably practicable to clean them remotely from outside".

"The dangers associated with grain storage are well known and a wealth of advice and guidance is freely available from HSE and other organisations."

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^{[1][1]}
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ ^{[2][2]}
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.