

[News story: CMA investigates Heineken/Punch Taverns pubs acquisition](#)

From:

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The CMA has opened an investigation into Heineken's proposed acquisition of part of the Punch Taverns pubs portfolio.

The first phase of the investigation is currently scheduled to last until 24 April 2017. During this period, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) will assess whether the deal could reduce competition and choice for customers.

If it could reduce competition, the CMA would launch an in-depth merger investigation, which lasts up to 24 weeks, unless the merging parties offer undertakings which address any competition concerns identified.

More details will be available on the investigation case page shortly. Interested parties and individuals are invited to submit their views to lasse.burmester@cma.gsi.gov.uk by 2 March 2017.

[Electronic fence to be launched in Baiyun Airport](#)



An airplane flies over the Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport in Guangzhou, capital of south China's Guangdong Province, June 6, 2012. [Xinhua photo]

With the development of drones, airliners' safety has been threatened in recent years. Since the beginning of 2017, the safety of some airliners was influenced by drones.

Huang Hao, vice-general manager from Baiyun International Airport, said they are designing an electronic fence to block unmanned aircraft from flying in sensitive areas.

Huang also said they will establish the electronic fence to block UVA within airport boundaries. Once UVA enters into its boundary, the electronic fence system will disturb the UVA system and make it return automatically. Also, the Baiyun International Airport will cooperate with the local government and the police to strengthen the safety campaign and the daily monitor.

Yang Jieqiong, the deputy secretary-general of Shenzhen UAV Industry Association, said that there are more than 50,000 unmanned aerial vehicle (UVA) players in China, and more than half of them are in the Pearl River Delta region. The number of the UVA players is still increasing rapidly. Most of players do not have qualifications for UVA operation.

Technical measures could be taken to block UVA from the airport, said Yang. However, these technical measures have not been used in airports in Guangdong Province. Moreover, Yang calls for strengthening law enforcement and establishing real-name registration system for UVA players to ensure the safety of airliners.

The electronic fence is expected to be launched within the year.

Facts at a Glance- Uttar Pradesh Assembly Elections -2017

Third Phase- Date of Poll 19.02.2017

Global Crude oil price of Indian Basket was US\$ 54.49 per bbl on 15.02.2017

The international crude oil price of Indian Basket as computed/published today by Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas was US\$ 54.49 per barrel (bbl) on 15.02.2017. This was lower than the price of US\$ 54.79 per bbl on previous publishing day of 14.02.2017.

Too many banquets to handle: an endemic disease

The Chinese tradition of giving monetary gifts on wedding or funeral banquets has been around for centuries, but the hosting of various banquets aiming to make money has become an unbearable burden especially in rural areas.



Hosting banquets under different pretexts aiming to make money has become an unbearable burden especially in rural areas. [Photo: Xinhua]

During important occasions like weddings and funerals, the family would host open-air banquets for friends and relatives, and those who are invited will pay an amount of money, depending on closeness, as a gesture of affection and care.

"I spent over 40,000 yuan (US\$ 5,824) last year on various banquets," said a winery boss surnamed Yang in a small town in central China's Hunan Province. "This way of returning other's favor is really costly."

In some places, however, banquets are also held for various reasons. Moving into a new house, family members getting enrolled into college and celebrating someone's birthday are some of the justifiable excuses. And there could be also not-so-justifiable ones like hosting a banquet to "prevent miscarriage" for pregnant women and to "start a new life" after being

released from prison.

Relief fund used for monetary gifts

Those banquets could be a huge burden for some people, especially in rural areas.

“The average annual income of a farmer is between 30,000 and 40,000 yuan, and some people are spending half of it to pay for monetary gifts on those occasions,” said Lyu Caifu, a farmer at the Three Gorges Reservoir Region in Chongqing Municipality.

Some low-income families are even drawing on their government allowance for those banquets, he added.

Hosting banquets under different pretexts has grown into a vicious cycle. Understandably, those who have paid could rack their brains to find any excuses for others to return the favor.

Tightened regulatory measures

Many places have rolled out measures to cure the “endemic” disease, with some targeting party and government officials and some the general public as well.

Regulations may vary from region to region but they mostly forbid any banquets except for wedding and funerals and limit the scale as well as attendees of those events.

As for punishment, party cadres are regulated based on party discipline. Some have even been removed from their current posts and expelled from party membership; non-party members were often investigated by the public security department or food and drug regulators. For example, a town in the Three Gorges Reservoir Region stipulated that the violator will be disqualified from enjoying subsistence allowances.

Some places have seen preliminary results. “Much of our burden has been lifted since then,” said Yao Qiong, a self-employed business owner in a small town of Chongqing.

In the past, the average annual amount paid on banquets was over 40,000 yuan, and the number has reduced to only 3,000 yuan after the campaign.

There were also some controversial measures adopted during the campaign. Some cities even banned wedding banquets for second marriages and a declaration needs to be filed ahead of hosting a banquet.

“Local government has the responsibility to curb unhealthy customs, but it should never cross the line,” said Li Ping, a professor at Renmin University of China (RUC). Li advised the local community to formulate its own rules after soliciting opinions from the masses and lead the transformation of old habits in a step by step manner.