

Britain plans to expand TB test for visa

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The British government plans to expand a pilot program now requiring visitors from seven countries with high rates of tuberculosis to be tested.

India and China are candidates to be added to the list, The Daily Mail reported. About 95,000 Chinese and 270,000 Indians now visit Britain every year, numbers that are expected to rise significantly with growing economic prosperity in the two countries.

"Currently we have a pilot project with seven countries -- the countries in which TB is most prevalent -- in which we test people before they receive their visas," said Baroness Janet Royall, the government whip in the House of Lords. "This is a scheme which is now being evaluated and I think we will probably roll it out to more countries, like China and India."

Tuberculosis rates have been rising in Britain, while remaining stable in the rest of Europe. The rate increased 11 percent between 2004 and 2005.

About 400 people a year die from TB every year in the country.

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