

# CHINA

## Experts condemn threats to HK judges

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Hong Kong's legal sector has strongly condemned death threats against three judges who convicted the special administrative region's first defendant under the National Security Law.

Experts said such threats seriously challenged the rule of law and judicial independence in Hong Kong, and urged more protection for judges.

After the High Court judges found a motorcyclist who rode into police guilty of terrorism and incitement to secession on Tuesday, Judge Esther Toh Lye-ping received a phone call that threatened to launch a bomb attack against her and slash the other two judges with knives.

Police categorized it as a criminal threat and the case is being investigated by the Organized Crime and Triad Bureau.

Hong Kong's Department of Justice said in a statement issued on Tuesday night that criminal intimidation of judges is "unacceptable" and constitutes a serious offense.

Under section 24 of the Crimes Ordinance, anyone convicted of threatening another person with injury could face up to five years in prison.

Separately, a spokesperson for the judiciary said that any attempt to impose undue pressure on judges should be severely condemned, as judges and judicial personnel are fulfilling their legal duties in accordance with the law and upholding the rule of law in a spirit of impartiality and selflessness.

Barrister and lawmaker Priscilla Leung Mei-fun said that no one should undermine justice by insulting or threatening judges. Dissatisfaction toward a judicial decision must be conveyed through appropriate and lawful means, she said.

She said Hong Kong people's respect for the rule of law had declined since the Occupy Central movement in 2014, when Benny Tai Yiu-ting took the lead to pursue political goals through unlawful means.

The consequences were seen in the social unrest of 2019, during which a wide range of residents, even teenagers, engaged in reckless acts that disregarded the law.

Noting that laws are the most civilized solution to social disputes, she called on Hong Kong people to cherish and respect the current legal system.

Barrister Lawrence Ma Yankwok cautioned that such threats to judges' safety may impair the impartiality of trials and affect the city's judicial independence.

He said Hong Kong has witnessed an intensification of threats and insults toward judges in recent years. Law enforcement agencies should take such behavior seriously and strengthen the protection of judges.

On May 28, after District Court Judge Amanda Woodcock sentenced eight defendants who organized and participated in an illegal assembly in 2019 to prison, the judge's office received at least three calls that contained insulting and threatening remarks.

On Dec 3, So Wai-tak, chief magistrate of the West Kowloon Magistrates' Court, who was designated to hear National Security Law trials, received a menacing phone call that threatened to kill his family. So reported the call to the police.

Expressing concerns that such hostility toward judges may escalate, Ma suggested the authorities arrange personal bodyguards for judges handling politically sensitive cases, such as those related to the National Security Law.

The Small and Medium Law Firms Association, whose membership includes 1,000 legal practitioners in Hong Kong, said such intimidation challenged the bottom line of the rule of law and hurt the fundamental interests of Hong Kong people.



A pharmacist weighs traditional Chinese medicine ingredients to make a decoction for preventing COVID-19 infection at Jiangning TCM Hospital in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, on Wednesday. The soup is provided free to medical workers and people at quarantine sites. YANG BO / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

## Nanjing records 47 new COVID-19 cases

### Health official says multiple clusters detected, advises residents to stay home

By CANG WEI in Nanjing  
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The daily tally of new locally transmitted COVID-19 cases in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, hit a record high of 47 on Tuesday, the city's health commission told a news conference on Wednesday.

A total of 153 locally transmitted cases have been reported in Nanjing since July 21, including four who are in severe condition and are receiving treatment at Nanjing Public Health Medical Center, the city's designated hospital for COVID-19.

The strain behind Nanjing's outbreak has been identified as the highly contagious delta variant, the city's center for disease control and prevention said on Tuesday.

In Nanjing, Jiangsu's provincial capital, most of the newly confirmed cases have been linked to the city's Lukou International Airport and neighboring areas, the commission said.

"Multiple cluster infections have been detected in Nanjing," Yang

Dasuo, the commission's deputy director, told Wednesday's news conference.

He urged residents to avoid gatherings, stay home and stop visiting others.

Confirmed cases have been found among people across a range of occupations, including a taxi driver and a photographer, as well as students. Young children, including an 8-month-old boy, have also been infected.

The Children's Hospital of Nanjing Medical University has formed a team of 32 medical workers from its intensive care unit and respiratory and infectious disease departments to help treat the children.

As of Wednesday, Nanjing had four high-risk areas for COVID-19 and 42 medium-risk ones.

Suqian, another city in Jiangsu, reported one new locally transmitted case, the Jiangsu Provincial Health Commission said. The 7-year-old is the daughter of the city's first confirmed case, who tested positive after visiting Nanjing.

Yangzhou, a popular tourist city

in Jiangsu, reported that one person tested positive for the virus on Wednesday. The person arrived in Yangzhou from Nanjing by bus on July 21 and went to hospital on Tuesday.

Yangzhou launched large-scale testing in its downtown areas on Wednesday and shut down public spaces like gymnasiums and after-school training institutions.

Five locally transmitted cases and an asymptomatic case were reported in Chengdu, Sichuan province, on Tuesday and Wednesday, the city's health commission said at a news conference on Wednesday evening.

Three of the six cases were members of a family that had spent over a week in Hunan province. They visited Changde, Hunan, from Friday to Sunday after touring Zhangjiajie, also in Hunan.

The other three cases had also been to Hunan.

Changde's Wuling district reported one new locally transmitted asymptomatic case on Wednesday, the district's COVID-19 response headquarters said. The 36-year-old woman had been in contact with the three newly confirmed cases reported in Chengdu.

## Inhaled vaccine shows signs of promise

By WANG XIAOYU  
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A two-dose inhaled COVID-19 vaccine developed by Chinese researchers appears to be safe and capable of eliciting strong immune responses comparable to those of its one-dose injected counterpart, a preliminary study released this week said.

Cansino Biologics, which created the vaccine with the Academy of Military Medical Sciences' Beijing Institute of Biotechnology, said it is the first company in the world to publish clinical data on an aerosol COVID-19 vaccine.

Results from its early stage human trial are promising and support further research into what promises to be an effective and economical candidate, it said.

The company's injectable COVID-19 vaccine gained conditional approval from the top drug regulator in late February, and the new version is identical in terms of composition, packaging and manufacturing process, except that it is delivered through inhalation and contains a lower dosage — about one-fifth that of the injection.

The study's results were published in *The Lancet Infectious Disease*, based in the United Kingdom, on Monday. It recruited 130 volunteers aged 18 or older in late September. They were given five different vaccine combinations that varied in dosage and delivery method.

The results show that the inhaled vaccine, known as aerosolized Ad5-nCoV, was well tolerated,

“Because the novel coronavirus usually invades human bodies through the respiratory mucosa, setting up the first defense against the virus at its inception point will generate good protective effects.”

Yu Xuefeng, chairman and CEO of Cansino

with no severe adverse reactions reported. The most common symptoms included fever, fatigue and headache.

The study said the proportion of participants reporting adverse reactions was markedly higher among those who received injections than among those in the inhalation group.

In terms of efficacy, the study said one dose of the inhaled vaccine could induce a strong immune response, and after two doses, it "could produce similar SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing antibody titers (concentrations) as one dose of intramuscular vaccination".

The study also looked into the effects of first administering an injection and then delivering the second dose through inhalation as a booster, which also triggered

robust antibody responses.

"In conclusion, the aerosol inhalation of Ad5-nCoV is painless, simple, well tolerated, and immunogenic, and the current data support the evaluation of aerosolized Ad5-nCoV in ongoing phase 2 and 3 clinical trials," the study said. It added that the study was limited in that the sample size was relatively small.

No inhaled COVID-19 vaccines have been approved for use, but researchers around the world have stepped up research due to their potentially unique strengths.

Hou Lihua, a researcher at the institute, told China Central Television that in addition to humoral and cellular immune responses — protections triggered by regular injected vaccines — inhaled vaccines can induce an extra layer of protection known as mucosal immunity.

"Because the novel coronavirus usually invades human bodies through the respiratory mucosa, setting up the first defense against the virus at its inception point will generate good protective effects," he said.

## 'Sound camera' helps make rail lines quieter

By LUO WANGSHU  
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Technology developed in China has helped improve noise control along the nation's railway lines, including its world-leading high-speed network, making trips more comfortable for passengers and bringing quieter lives to people living near the lines.

A national engineering laboratory in Tianjin is the base of the world's largest and most advanced sound source identification system for commercial use.

At first glance, the equipment, known as a sound camera and consisting of a big wheel with a supporting frame, resembles a mini Ferris wheel that lacks seats and cannot rotate.

A closer look at the 5-meter-diameter wheel reveals high-tech features like an array of 144 sensors used to capture, identify and analyze the source of noise on railways.

Engineers set up the equipment close to a railway line. When a train passes by, the machine captures the features of the noise it makes and generates a report for analysis.

It can be used to analyze all kinds of railway lines, including high-speed lines, freight lines and subways.

"It is like a sound radar for discovering noise along the railway when a train passes by," said Hu Wenlin, deputy head of the National Engineering Laboratory for Noise Control and Reduction at China Railway Design Corporation.

He added that the data produced by the machine allows engineers to have a better understanding of the sounds generated when a train passes by, such as which part produces the most noise.

After analyzing the data, engineers can formulate precise plans to reduce noise and make construction plans accordingly.

For example, if a railway passes a residential area with stricter noise abatement requirements, engineers can come up with a plan to minimize noise, usually at greater expense.

But if a railway passes a place with more relaxed noise control requirements, designers can make a cheaper plan.

"We can use the machine to carry out precise plans and invest the amount of money accordingly, which achieves the optimum balance of investment and construction," Hu said.

Noise control technologies have been applied to dozens of major railway projects across the country.

The sound camera, fully developed in China, is advanced by world standards, said Wang Changjin, deputy chief engineer at China Railway Design and also the director of the National Engineering Laboratory.

Before the sound camera was available, engineers usually used a pole fitted with sensors to measure sound and collect data along railway lines.

"It cannot be compared to the technique we are using now, which is far more accurate," Wang said.

The machine is just one of many innovations developed by the laboratory.

It has conducted many research projects on railways, leading to the development of key noise control equipment for high-speed railways and making railway lines and stations quieter.

## Bridging mountains



The main arch of the Dafaqu bridge in Zunyi, Guizhou province, is completed on Tuesday. With a length of 1,427 meters, the bridge is part of the Renhuai-Zunyi expressway, which is being built in the north of the province. TAO LIANG / XINHUA

## Interns gain insight on Bay Area job prospects

By ZHENG CAIXIONG  
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The first batch of 110 university students from Hong Kong and Macao has begun internships in the Nansha district of Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province, taking a step toward greater understanding of the development of the mainland, and pursuing their dreams of working in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Enrolled at prestigious universities around the world, the students are now in a variety of different organizations, ranging from local government departments, industrial park administrations, international arbitration organizations and financial institutions, to large State-owned companies, Hong Kong-funded corporations, joint ventures and local enterprises. Their internships will last for six weeks.

Located at the mouth of the Pearl River, Nansha is home to one of Guangdong's pilot free trade zones. It is offering 300 such internships this year, with the aim of encouraging more young talent from Hong Kong and Macao to work or to start businesses in the area in future.

Chu Wing-sze, a postgraduate majoring in applied statistics at Guangzhou-based Jinan University, said she was glad to be given an internship in the district, which is near Hong Kong.

"I am learning a lot," she said. "I want to become a civil servant or a

teacher in the Bay Area in the future, and the internship allows me to understand the working environment in government departments, so that I can decide on my future direction."

Nansha's district government has introduced a series of preferential policies and regulations to encourage university students from Hong Kong and Macao to work there, she said.

"Now the district offers living allowances to university students from Hong Kong and Macao who wish to work here, and allows us to compete equally with local residents for civil service positions," Chu said.

"We have many choices, and I think more and more young people from Hong Kong and Macao will be attracted to work in the Bay Area in the future."

Kou Chi-cheng, a postgraduate law student from the University of Macau, said she has learned how to draft and review legal instruments and has participated in remote video reviews since her internship at the Nansha District People's Court began last week.

"I know more about mainland law now," she said, adding that the internship is a valuable opportunity.

"I think the Bay Area has more potential and greater development prospects for Hong Kong and Macao youth in the coming years," Kou said.

"I am learning a lot," she said. "I want to become a civil servant or a

Wu Yiyi contributed to this story.