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Switzerland in the Local Press

Switzerland warns of terror attacks on vaccine sites ([SCMP](#), Aug 30):

Switzerland's intelligence service agency is warning of potential terrorist attacks on COVID-19 vaccine infrastructure including vaccination centres, transport and manufacturing facilities, local media reported. The Federal Intelligence Service (NDB) is concerned about attacks from jihadist groups, NZZ reported. So far, there are no tangible indications of planned attacks, according to the agency.

Switzerland asks Chinese media to remove fake COVID-19 quotes ([SCMP](#), Aug 11):

A quote by a Swiss biologist who does not seem to exist has been posted on several Chinese websites. The supposed Swiss scientist, Wilson Edwards, was quoted saying he had faced US pressure for backing a Covid-19 origins report by China and the WHO. The Swiss embassy said that it "must unfortunately inform the Chinese public that this news is false". The comments have since disappeared from several Chinese newspaper websites.

Thai man charged over murder of Swiss woman in Phuket ([SCMP](#), Aug 8):

The partially clothed body of 57-year-old Swiss tourist Nicole Sauvain-Weisskopf was found at a waterfall. A 27-year-old Thai man had been charged with the murder and robbery of a Swiss woman who was found dead earlier this week on the resort island Phuket.

Foreign Policy / International Relations

UK receives 64,900 applications for BN(O) visa ([TS](#), Aug 26):

The United Kingdom's Home Office announced that a total of 64,900 people have applied for the British National (Overseas) visa. Over 70% of applications have been approved. 68% of applicants who saw their applications for BN(O) visa approved hold BN(O) passports or Hong Kong passports

U.S. dismisses report that it is urging companies to leave the city ([Bloomberg](#), Aug 10):

The State Department dismissed a report in Chinese media saying that American diplomats in Hong Kong had urged American companies to withdraw from the city as inaccurate. The Global Times, a Communist Party newspaper, said that the U.S. side had pressured firms to leave in a meeting, citing a person it didn't identify.

US & AU offer 'safe haven' for HKers, China condemns the move ([SCMP](#), [SCMP2](#), [TS](#), Aug 5, 9):

In response to crackdown on opposition, the US offers temporary 'safe haven' for Hongkongers who are already in the US. White House press secretary Jen Psaki says the decision shows Joe Biden's support for the city's people 'in the face of ongoing repression'. China reacts with a statement saying that it condemns the US for granting HK residents temporary 'safe haven status', under which they can live and work there for 18 months. Australian Home Affairs department said all those having a skilled migration visa and graduate visa on July 9 last year will have their visa extended for another five years automatically until July 8, 2025. The 'safe haven' policy for Hong Kong residents will be extended to cover HK BN(O) passport holders. They can also apply for permanent residency after the expiry of their five-year visa, according to the spokesman.

Mainland

Beijing policies on HK won't change, says senior mainland official ([RTHK](#), Aug 24):

A senior mainland official overseeing Hong Kong affairs reassured the business sector that Beijing will not change the "One Country, Two Systems" policy, and the legal rights of investors in the SAR will continue to be protected

Mainland officials in town for a three-days briefing on 5-yr-plan ([SCMP1](#), [SCMP2](#), Aug 23):

Huang Liuquan of the State Council's office overseeing the city's affairs meets lawmakers in unprecedented session at legislature, urging lawmakers to focus on economic development after the city had wasted so much time on "endless political disputes and internal frictions". After losing so much time to political infighting, Hong Kong needs to roll up its sleeves and focus on moving forward, he says. He further expressed his support for city leader Carrie Lam, hailing her administration for stabilising society after imposition of the national security law.

Domestic Policy / Politics

Council member withdraws re-election citing safety fears ([SCMP](#), Aug 21):

Liberal candidate Jonathan Ross decided to withdraw from his leadership election, citing unspecified safety fears, while the body has made a police report over "threatening messages". His move follows city leader's earlier warning to the group not to put politics above professionalism.

Beijing to delay anti-sanctions law ([SCMP](#), Aug 21):

All eyes were on Beijing's top legislative body on Friday, with the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee expected to announce a far-reaching law that could potentially affect Hong Kong's reputation as a global financial hub. But its four-day meeting in the capital concluded with no mention of how the city would adopt China's anti-sanctions law, an instrument which would give Hong Kong legal teeth to retaliate against foreign action.

HK Chief Executive warns Law Society over political play ([TS](#), Aug 18):

The government may cut ties with the Law Society if it puts politics before professionalism, Chief Executive Carrie Lam warns. Responding to Lam's comments, Law Society president Melissa Kaye Pang said the legal group has always remained politically neutral and comes from a legal perspective.

Anti-sanctions law to be added to Basic Law on Friday ([RTHK](#), Aug 17):

The city's sole delegate to the country's top legislature, Tam Yiu-chung, said a resolution on adding the anti-sanctions law to Annex III of the Basic Law is expected to pass on Friday. He made the comment on Tuesday, the first day of a meeting of the National People's Congress Standing Committee. When asked whether the law would cause banks and foreign capital to leave Hong Kong, the DAB stalwart said he's not worried that the legislation would undermine investors' confidence or the city's status as an international financial hub.

Commerce chief Yau says local anti-sanction law good for business ([RTHK](#), Aug 11):

Commerce chief Edward Yau on Wednesday said the mainland's anti-sanctions law, when adopted by the SAR, can help safeguard the interests of companies operating in Hong Kong. The commerce minister dismissed concerns that the proposed legislation would hurt Hong Kong's status as an international finance centre. He said international investors have not been deterred over the past two years despite the social unrest, pandemic and national security law.

Carrie Lam endorses incorporating anti-sanctions law into the Basic Law ([ST](#), Aug 10):

Chief Executive Carrie Lam said on Tuesday she supports the implementation of a mainland Chinese law in HK to respond to foreign sanctions, the strongest signal yet that the city is set to adopt the legislation. Lam, speaking at her weekly news conference, said she would prefer the law be introduced through HK legislation rather than Beijing legislation, by adding it to an annex of Hong Kong's mini-constitution, known as the Basic Law. She added that she had already conveyed her views on this issue to the central government.

Economy / Finance

Hong Kong to align with national policies to cash in on China's 5-year plan ([SCMP](#), Aug 29):

Hong Kong's financial secretary Paul Chan said that HK needs fresh strategies in everything from asset management to renminbi promotion if it hopes to take advantage of the opportunities offered by Beijing's latest five-year plan. Chan on Sunday said speeding up the development of Hong Kong's bond market was the first item on the agenda, and that a review of its "ecological system" was needed, covering everything from how bonds were issued to how they were traded and taxed.

South East Asia seeking Mainland investment through Hong Kong ([SCMP](#), Aug 29):

Deputy Executive director of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council Patrick Lau says that positioning Hong Kong as a dealmaking hub and capitalising on a surge of interest from mainland Chinese investors and Southeast Asian companies could deliver a boost to the city's professional services industry. Since 2019, the HKTDC has accelerated its efforts to facilitate deals, organising about 3,000 "matchmaking" meetings in the past two years. The biggest interest is coming from companies based in Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines that are seeking investment.

HK Commerce chief Yau says border won't open until COVID-19 kept at bay ([TS](#), Aug 23):

Commerce secretary Edward Yau has defended the government's abrupt U-turn to re-impose some of the world's strictest quarantine policies, emphasizing COVID-19 must be kept at bay before borders are fully reopened.

USD641 consumption voucher scheme expected to boost economy ([SCMP](#), Aug 15):

Financial Secretary Paul Chan says private expenditure continued to improve since beginning of 2021 after it experienced a 1.5-year contraction. He added that jobs market and unemployment rate will improve as private consumption increases.

COVID-19 / Health & Environment

Myopia is worsened amid the COVID-19 pandemic ([TS](#), Aug 31):

Short-sightedness in children has worsened amid the Covid-19 pandemic, a study by the Chinese University of Hong Kong has found. Their myopia also worsened a lot quicker than before the pandemic because children spend more time indoors and attend Zoom classes, the researchers said.

Hong Kong loses on personal and environmental security ([SCMP](#), Aug 30):

Hong Kong is 8th on the Safe Cities Index, but ranks badly when it comes to personal and environment security. According to The Economist Intelligence Unit, the city rebounds from 20th position in 2019.

Foreign businesses threaten to quit Hong Kong over strict quarantine rules ([FT](#), Aug 27):

Edward Yau, HK's Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, admitted that the city's stringent travel quarantine regime had caused "suffering" for international businesses as executives warned that its reputation as a global financial hub was under threat. The European Chamber of Commerce, one of the largest business lobby groups in the territory, issued an unprecedented letter last week warning HK leader Carrie Lam that the territory's strict quarantine rules put its status as an international finance center at risk.

Waste charging law passes Legco ([TS](#), Aug 26):

Residents will have to pay 11 cents per litre of rubbish they dump after a municipal waste charging law was passed. The law, which has been over 15 years in the making, passed this morning with 37 votes in support and one vote against. Secretary for Environment Wong Kam-sing said there will be a preparation period of at least 18 months before the law's enforcement.

Singapore announces quarantine-free travel for HKers and Makaneses ([RTHK](#), Aug 19):

From 11:59pm on Friday, August 20, visitors from Hong Kong and Macau will be allowed to enter the garden city without the need for quarantine – regardless of their vaccination status.

Switzerland new on "high risk" category, HK tightens entry rules for arrivals ([SCMP](#), Aug 16):

HK imposes more stringent boarding, quarantine and testing requirements on relevant inbound travellers in order to uphold the local barrier against the importation of COVID-19. **15 new high-risk countries** will be: the US, France, Malaysia, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Greece, Iran, the Netherlands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Turkey, **including Switzerland**. This results in 21 days hotel quarantine and only fully vaccinated residents are allowed to enter Hong Kong from Friday onwards.

Restaurants call for clearer guidelines with Hong Kong's move to ban plastic ([SCMP](#), Aug 14):

Hong Kong's move to ban plastic cutlery leaves restaurants fretting over supply, cost of eco-friendly alternatives. Hong Kong tosses out an estimated 14.6 billion pieces of plastic cutlery each year, or about 1,940 per person, based on 2019 data.

Another batch of BioNTech vaccines arrive in the city ([TS](#), Aug 6):

26 Community Vaccination Centres to extend operation for one month. Meanwhile, the latest batch of about 956,000 doses of German-made BioNTech vaccines arrived in the city.

Macau

CAEAL disqualifies some voters in association representation ([MT](#), Aug 16):

The Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission (CAEAL) has published the list of those who are legally recognized as voters in the representation of associations and groups in the 12 September Legislative Assembly elections. According to a statement from CAEAL, several voters have been temporarily disqualified due to irregularities and will have until August 18 to appeal the decision.

Candidates prepare for Legislative Assembly elections ([MN](#), Aug 3):

At the Legislative Assembly elections on 12 Sept., 128 candidates will contest for the 14 directly-elected seats. The final list of candidates was published by the Legislative Assembly Electoral Affairs Commission yesterday morning. The 128 candidates will represent 14 rival Lists. All 12 candidates for the 12 indirectly-elected seats in the legislature have all been approved by the commission, hence the indirect election will be uncontested.

Macau Pro-Democrat fears further action after democrats barred from election ([HKFP](#), Aug 3):

One of the 21 pro-democracy politicians barred from contesting Macau's legislative elections this year says he fears being "pursued" by the authorities over his past support for pluralism.

Special Focus: National Security Law

Non-pro-establishment lawmaker unseated from Legco ([RTHK](#), Aug 26):

Civic Passion's Cheng Chung-tai was stripped of his Legislative Council seat after national security officials decided he was not fit to be on the Election Committee (EC) as he was not loyal to the Special Administration Region. Chief Secretary and Candidate Eligibility Review Committee (CERC) chair John Lee announced the decision, saying that CERC would not be misled by people who "sugarcoat" their words and only pretend to uphold the Basic Law. Cheng's removal from the legislature came into effect immediately, and he will lose eligibility to run for elections in the coming five years.

Leader of Hong Kong Federation for a Democratic China faces investigation ([TS](#), Aug 26):

Wong Yuen-cheung, the leader of the Hong Kong branch of the Federation for a Democratic China, is being investigated by police over activities endangering national security. The report said that police have requested Wong to hand over information on its assets and activities it organized so as to detect and prevent any activities that endanger national security.

HK's PolyU tells student union to take magazine off shelves ([SCMP](#), Aug 24):

Latest issue of publication touched on now-illegal protest slogan and featured articles on impact of Beijing-imposed security law. PolyU management had asked the student's union to remove hard copies as well as the online version stating that the issue contained "inappropriate and unfounded content".

Tiananmen vigil group decides to disband ([SCMP](#); Aug 24):

The Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China becomes latest opposition group to dissolve. The group, responsible for organising the annual June 4 Tiananmen vigil, has called for end to 'one-party dictatorship' in mainland China was viewed by some pro-establishment figures as an act of subversion. The 32-year-old group is the latest opposition organisation to fold after two other civic bodies being investigated under the national security law disbanded.

Hong Kong to amend law to step up film censorship ([AP](#), [RTHK](#), Aug 24):

The proposed changes to Hong Kong's Film Censorship Ordinance would step up censorship of movies in the semi-autonomous city, expanding an ongoing crackdown on political dissent that has led to the closure of various pro-democracy organizations and the arrests of dozens of activists. The changes to the law, if passed, take the city a step closer to censorship levels in mainland China.

Civil Human Rights Front disbands over 'suppression' ([RTHK](#), Aug 15):

The Civil Human Rights Front on Sunday said it's disbanding, saying it can no longer operate in the face of what it described as suppression from the authorities. The front was founded in 2002, and was the organiser of some of the largest protests in the city – including the annual July 1 demonstrations and a number of anti-extradition law rallies in 2019. Police in April said it's investigating the front's finances, and had accused the front of failing to register under the Societies Ordinance. The force has yet to give any updates on their probe.

Hong Kong experiencing a drop of population ([SCMP](#), Aug 12):

Number of people in the city now estimated to be 7.39mio, a 1.2% drop in a year. Nearly 90,000 residents have left Hong Kong amid a wave of emigration in the year after the national security law was imposed, leading to a significant 1.2 per cent drop in the city's population.

Professional Teacher's Union disband after government accusations ([RTHK](#), Aug 10):

The Professional Teachers' Union (PTU) announced on Tuesday that it is disbanding, around a week after the government severed ties with the body as it came under attack by state media. The union said it would no longer comment on or participate in social events. Representing almost 100,000 members, the PTU was not just the largest teachers' group in HK, but also the biggest union for a single profession. Pro-Beijing figures have accused these organizations of violating the national security law.

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