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Switzerland

Assisted suicide pod now legal in Switzerland

The pod offers 'painless death' by slowly replacing oxygen with nitrogen to help person die. The pod cleared legal reviews and is set to start operations sometime next year. [SCMP](#), Dec 8

Foreign Policy / International Relations

UK expresses unprecedented reservations on city's legal system, drawing rebukes

UK's Foreign Minister Liz Truss expressed reservations for the first time over a legal system that London had previously called reputable, but said she believed British judges continued to have a constructive role to play by sitting in the city's courts through a long-established tradition. [SCMP](#), Dec 14

G7 foreign ministers discuss HK amidst discussions over China's "coercive economic policies"

The G7 voiced concern over Beijing's actions in Hong Kong during the meetings between G7 foreign ministers in Liverpool. British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said the discussions on China covered a "range of issues and challenges", including Hong Kong. In response, Beijing called the G7 discussion of China "interference in its domestic affairs" and "vilification of China's image". [SCMP](#), Dec 12

China's foreign ministry office in Hong Kong hits back at criticisms from EU and US

China's foreign ministry office in Hong Kong has demanded representatives of other countries stop interfering with the city's rule of law and smearing its national security legislation in a rebuke of recent remarks by EU and US officials. [SCMP](#), Dec 10

Rights groups and academics shunning contact with EU officials over national security fears

Head of the EU Office to Hong Kong and Macao Thomas Gnecchi spoke about how civil rights groups and academics have become reluctant to meet EU officials in Hong Kong following the introduction of the National Security Law. Gnecchi said the impact of the law had rippled beyond political groups to other bodies less likely to cross the red line of authorities, including groups advocating rights for women and labour. [SCMP](#), Dec 10

British Parliament votes not to extend BN(O) scheme for children of parents with BN(O) status

The British Parliament voted against an amendment that would allow Hongkongers whose parents have BN(O) status to apply for BN(O) visas on their own, saying that other options were available for young Hongkongers to come to the UK. The amendment was intended to help Hongkongers born after 1997 to move to the UK. Meanwhile, the Chinese foreign ministry criticised the UK for interfering in Hong Kong affairs with the proposed expansion before the amendment failed. [TS](#), Dec 7

Mainland

Stability and economy "should take precedence" over democratic progress

Wang Zhenmin, director of Tsinghua University's Centre for HK and Macau Studies, has emphasised that maintaining stability and improving people's livelihoods should take precedence over democratic development in the city. He said on Monday that the city had returned from chaos to stability after the first Legislative Council election on December 19 under the Beijing-imposed overhaul. Hong Kong's political development is back on the right track after many wasted years, with the Communist Party and Chinese people owning the "intellectual property" to the city's emerging brand of democracy, mainland experts on local affairs have declared [SCMP1](#), [SCMP2](#), Dec 27

President Xi Jinping praises Hong Kong leader on poll, Covid-19

Carrie Lam left for Beijing on Monday for the final duty visit this term of her office. Chinese President Xi Jinping praised Chief Executive Carrie Lam for her work over the past year culminating in Sunday's first Legislative Council election and also "fully acknowledged" Lam's leadership in effectively containing the coronavirus pandemic. However, he failed to signal support for a second term for Lam. Lau Siu-kai from a state-affiliated think tank said that Xi did not want to indicate who would be the next chief executive. Local media reported that Lam had expressed her intention not to seek re-election to state leaders several months ago. [RTHK](#), Dec 20, [TS](#), Dec 22

Domestic Policy / Politics

HK's Stand News shuts down after national security police arrest 7, freeze HK\$61 mio in assets

Current and former chief editors arrested on Wednesday as more than 200 police take part in morning raids for "conspiracy to publish seditious publications"; ex-Apple Daily editor already in custody among the seven. In addition, Ronson Chan, its deputy assignment editor and the chairman of the Hong Kong Journalist Association, was "taken away" to assist investigation.

Hong Kong Universities tear down Tiananmen Massacre monuments

In the early hours of Thursday, the University of Hong Kong dismantled and removed a statue commemorating the democracy protesters that were killed by Chinese troops around Tiananmen Square in 1989 and the Chinese University of Hong Kong removed the Goddess of Democracy from its campus on Friday morning, whilst Lingnan University removed a Tiananmen Massacre relief citing safety and legal issues. Observers say that 'a piece of the city's history died with it'. Chinese University (CUHK) political scientist Ivan Choy Chi-keung said the removal of the eight-metre pillar could be interpreted by the international community as the end of "one country, two systems" [HKFP](#), [TS](#), [SCMP](#), Dec 23 & 24

Beijing issues White Paper on Hong Kong's "democratic development"

Beijing has mapped out a strategy of developing "democracy with Hong Kong characteristics" for the city, with "patriots" in charge of governance, according to an official white paper released on Monday morning. Issued just a day after the first Legislative Council election under a new Beijing-imposed political system, the document, titled "Hong Kong Democratic Progress Under the Framework of One Country, Two Systems", is the second such white paper on HK affairs since 2014. [SCMP](#), Dec 20

Those who identify as 'Hongkongers' drop to lowest since 2017

Those who identify themselves as "Hongkongers" have dropped to a record low since 2017, according to a poll by the independent Hong Kong Public Opinion Research Institute. This is potentially because people no longer dare to proclaim that identification. [TS](#), Dec 14

Tiananmen vigil convictions an affront to human rights and international law

Responding to the convictions of three Hong Kong pro-democracy figures – Jimmy Lai, Gwyneth Ho and Chow Hang-tung – over their involvement in the city's annual Tiananmen vigil on 4 June 2020, Amnesty International's Deputy Secretary General Kyle Ward said: "The HK government has once again flouted international law by convicting activists simply for their involvement in a peaceful, socially distanced vigil for those killed by Chinese troops on 4 June 1989." [Amnesty.org](#), Dec 9

Jimmy Lai and two activists found guilty over last year's June 4 vigil

Apple Daily founder Jimmy Lai and activist Chow Hang-tung were found guilty of inciting people to join a banned June 4 candlelight vigil last year. The District Court also convicted Chow and activist Gwyneth Ho of taking part in the unauthorised assembly at Victoria Park which the police banned citing the Covid-19 pandemic. Judge Amanda Woodcock said Lai had attended a press conference outside Victoria Park in the evening, along with members of the now-defunct Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China. [RTHK](#), Dec 8

Reporters Without Borders says press freedom in Hong Kong is in "free fall"

Reporters Without Borders' said press freedom in HK is in "free fall," as it voiced concern over the increasing sophistication with which the Chinese Communist Party carries out media censorship. [HKFP](#), Dec 8

HK must respect China's socialist system: Paul Chan

Financial Secretary Paul Chan said on Sunday that HK must respect the mainland's socialist system and support the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party in line with the country's constitution. [RTHK](#), Dec 5

Mainland lawyer who helped Hong Kong activist got license revoked

Mainland civil rights lawyer Liang Xiaojun, who was involved in Hong Kong's "12 fugitives" case, has seen his license revoked by authorities. Liang was appointed by the family of Andy Li Yu-hin, who was one of the 12 Hongkongers who crossed illegally into mainland waters in August last year. However, he failed to represent the activist in the end, as authorities told him Li got another lawyer. [TS](#), Dec 1

Economy / Finance

Govt sets minimum 280 sq ft rule for housing project

The government has set a minimum flat size requirement of 280 square feet for a residential plot that it is tendering out in the next quarter. [RTHK](#), Dec 30

Business confidence in HK unchanged: Christopher Hui

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Christopher Hui, says figures show the confidence of international investors in Hong Kong remains unchanged after the introduction of the national security law. Speaking on RTHK, Hui said both the deposits in the banking sector and the foreign currency reserve have increased following the introduction of the law. [RTHK](#), Dec 29

Home prices slip to seven-month low

Private home prices have fallen for a second consecutive month to their lowest level since April. New government indices show that private flat prices in Nov. fell 1.2 percent month-on-month, widening from the 0.5 percent drop recorded in Oct. But on year, prices were still 2.9 percent higher. [RTHK](#), Dec 29

HK has 'golden window of development', as finance chief calls for input on coming budget

Hong Kong's finance chief has called on residents to provide their input for his next budget, which he says will be instrumental in seizing opportunities to revitalise the city's economy. Writing on his blog on Sunday, Financial Secretary Paul Chan said he had met representatives of various sectors and organisations since a public consultation for the 2022-23 budget started last Tuesday. [SCMP](#), Dec 26

City's 2021 IPO ranking slips to fourth place amid China's regulatory clampdown

Hong Kong's annual tally of initial public offerings shrank this year for the first time since 2017. This took place as a regulatory crackdown on technology companies in mainland China sent a chill through the market and hurt fundraising activity in the second half of 2021. Several accounting firms, including KPMG, Ernst and Young and Deloitte had forecast earlier that the Hong Kong stock exchange would not make it into the top three IPO venues globally this year and was likely to drop to fourth place from second last year. [SCMP](#), Dec 21

Chinese property stocks surged in Hong Kong

Chinese property developers surged in HK on speculation banks will cut a key borrowing cost for the first time in 20 months amid a liquidity crunch and sliding home sales. Speculation has been mounting that China will further loosen policies to shore up growth and ease a credit squeeze. [SCMP](#), Dec 16

Hong Kong drops to fifth place in expensive city rankings

HK has been ranked the fifth most expensive city in the world. According to data by the Economist Intelligence Unit's World Cost of Living Index, the SAR was knocked off the top spot by Tel Aviv followed by Paris and Singapore in joint second, and Zurich in fourth. [RTHK](#), Dec 1

COVID-19 / Health & Environment / Social

CX suspends laung-haul cargo services for a week

Cathay Pacific said on Thursday that it was suspending all long-distance cargo flights for a week, after HK ramps up quarantine for its aircrew from 3 to 7 days of hotel quarantine. It says this affects trans-Pacific, European, Southwest Pacific, Riyadh and Dubai services cargo flights. [RTHK](#), [SCMP](#), Dec 31

CX requires London-Hong Kong passengers to test negative within 24hrs of departure

Cathay Pacific will only allow London passengers to board its flights to Hong Kong if they have tested Covid-19 negative within 24 hours of departure, imposing even stricter requirements than mandated by officials in an attempt to preserve the route after the government announced new rules to ward off omicron a day before. [SCMP](#), Dec 21, [The Standard HKFP](#) [RTHK](#), Dec 20

Macau

CE stresses people's livelihood, national security in handover anniversary speech:

On the day marking the 22nd anniversary of the handover, Chief Executive Ho Iat-seng said that the government would continue to improve its legal system and implementation mechanism for safeguarding national security, in order to ensure Macau's long-term prosperity and stability. At the same time, the government will continue to advance a string of development and construction projects, based on the interests of the population. [MacauPostDaily](#), Dec 20

Mainland, Macao SAR to step up cooperation on ecological, environmental protection

Mainland and Macao will further step up exchange and cooperation on ecological and environmental protection. Macao will try to reach the peak of carbon emission by 2030. [China Daily](#), Dec 17

Macao releases second five-year plan

Macao released its second five-year plan, setting economic and social development goals for the next stage. According to the plan, by 2025, Macao will have enriched its position as a global tourism and recreational center as well as expanded its function as a service platform for business and trade cooperation between the Chinese mainland and Portuguese-speaking countries. [China Daily](#), Dec 16

Sino-Portuguese STARLab joins Belt and Road

Ministers from both countries call for Macao to strengthen its role as a scientific and technological go-between. STARLab, a Sino-Portuguese laboratory dedicated to the development of technology to monitor the oceans, has become part of the Chinese Belt and Road initiative. According to China's Ministry of Science and Technology, STARLab – properly called the Joint Space and Maritime

Technology Laboratory – was awarded the distinction during a seminar with nearly 40 representatives from universities and scientific research institutions in China and Portugal. [Macao News](#), Dec 15

CE presides signing of 12 key projects in Hengqin cooperation zone

Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng has presided over the signing of 12 key projects in the Hengqin in-depth cooperation zone, of which four will be financed by the Macao SAR. The 12 key projects encompass areas such as integrated circuits, electronic information, biomedicine, traditional Chinese medicine, big health and modern finance. [Macao Business](#), Dec 7

Beijing decides to institute advisers to Committee for Safeguarding National Security

The central government has decided that the Committee for Safeguarding National Security of Macao shall have a national security affairs adviser and three national security technical advisers. [China Daily](#), Dec 3

Gaming revenues improve 54% in November

Following the year's worst gross gaming result tally in October, gaming results have improved by 54% to MOP6.7 billion (EUR 737 million) in November, data published by the Gaming Inspection and Co-ordination Bureau revealed. However, November results have remained basically the same as in the same month of last year, with only a minimal 0.01% improvement. [Macao News](#), Dec 1

Special Focus: Legislative Council election on 19 Dec 2021

Beijing, Hong Kong authorities issue slew of statements hitting back at foreign critics: Beijing

and Hong Kong authorities have issued a slew of statements hitting back at foreign critics after the Group of Seven (G7), the European Union and the Five Eyes intelligence alliance voiced “grave concern” over the outcome of the Legislative Council election and Washington’s decision to sanction five Chinese officials for allegedly undermining the city’s semi-autonomous status. Meanwhile, A Chinese mainland spokesperson slammed Taiwan’s authority for its slanderous comments on the recent election. [SCMP1](#), [SCMP2](#), Dec 21

- **Beijing's Foreign Ministry office, Xinhua hit out at poll criticism:** The Foreign Ministry's office in HK has strongly condemned international criticism of Sunday's poll. State media Xinhua described the “five eyes” as having “colour-blindness” and “lazy eyes.” [RTHK](#), Dec 21

- **Carrie Lam defends LegCo poll: “no one size fits all” democratic model:** Chief Executive Carrie Lam defends the new LegCo poll and she adds she still believes that HK can one day achieve universal suffrage for the city’s leadership and legislature. The HK chief says that HK’s Security Bureau has been making preparations to revive Article 23, a long-shelved legislation to complement the existing Beijing-decreed national security law. Some 1.3 million registered electors in geographical constituencies cast ballots, for turnout rate of 30.2 per cent, lowest since 1997. [SCMP](#), [HKFP](#), Dec 20

- **Pro-Beijing candidates sweep ‘patriots-only’ Hong Kong vote amid record low turnout:** Pro-Beijing candidates swept to victory in an overhauled ‘patriots-only’ legislative election that was deemed regressive by critics, with turnout hitting a record low amid a crackdown on the city’s freedoms by China. Non-establishment candidates said apathy among pro-democracy voters was a key reason behind their poor showing in the poll. [TS](#), Dec 20

- **Pro-Beijing candidates claim all 20 seats in directly-elected constituencies:** Pro-establishment candidates have claimed all 20 seats in the geographical constituencies, shutting out all non-establishment peers. By contrast, DAB (The Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong) has emerged as the big winner, with its candidates winning in each of the 10 constituencies. [The Standard](#), Dec 20

- **Allan Zeman lost in Election Committee constituency; Priscilla Leung named as top winner:** Allan Zeman, “father of Lan Kwai Fong”, was among the losers in the Election Committee constituency. Zeman remained unsure of the reasons behind his defeat, which his friends and allies have expressed surprise over. Meanwhile, Priscilla Leung snatched the highest number of votes with a total of 1,348 ballots in her favor. [RTHK](#), [TS](#), Dec 20

- **Turnout hits new low in “all patriots” election:** The 30.2% turnout was the lowest since Britain handed the city back to China in 1997, falling below the 43.57% recorded in 2000. [RTHK](#) [HKFP](#), Dec 19

- **Chinese emblem replaces HK insignia in legislative chamber for oath-taking:** The Chinese emblem has replaced HK bauhinia insignia in the main chamber of the city’s legislature. [HKFP](#), Dec 17

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