China denies report it may detain Americans

Reuters | Beijing

Donald Trump, the US President and Xi Jinping, the Chinese President

China denied yesterday that foreign nationals are under threat of arbitrary detention, following a newspaper report that Beijing had warned Washington it might arrest Americans in China.

The Chinese foreign ministry said it was Washington that was mistreating foreign citizens, accusing the United States of "outright political repression" of Chinese academics.

"The US claim that foreign nationals in China are under threat of arbitrary detention is playing the victim and confusing black and white," Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a regular news briefing. China protects the safety and legitimate rights of foreigners, he said.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Saturday that Chinese officials had issued repeated warnings to US government officials that China may detain Americans in response to the Justice Department's prosecution of Chinese scholars affiliated to the military.

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>
> FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN ZHAO LIJIAN

In September, a State Department advisory warned against travel to China, saying the Chinese government uses arbitrary detention and exit bans for U.S. citizens and others "to gain bargaining leverage over foreign governments".

The Trump administration has increasingly accused China of using cyber operations and espionage to steal US technological, military and other know-how. Beijing denies this.

Zookeeper mauled by bears in wildlife park

ABC News

A screenshot from a video of bears running towards a staff member

A zookeeper has been killed by a group of bears at a wild animal park in China as horrified visitors on a passing tour bus watched on.

Warning: The following story contains an image which may be upsetting.

The Shanghai Wildlife Park confirmed that a staff member was attacked on Saturday afternoon while working in the "wild area" where dangerous animals such as bears and tigers roam around relatively freely.

Park visitors on a tour bus in that section of the park saw the bears run towards the staffer and filmed parts of the tragedy as it unfolded.

Chinese state-owned tabloid Global Times reported that an excavator working nearby drove towards the animals in an attempt to move the bears and save the person, but it was too late.

The video has since been widely shared on Chinese social media network Weibo, and watched more than 658,000 times within the last 18 hours.

The park released a statement saying they are investigating the matter, and have since closed their dangerous wild animal section.

Nokia, NASA to build 4G mobile network on the moon

- **Nokia said the network would be using 4G/LTE**

Reuters | Helsinki

Struggling to get a phone signal at home on planet Earth? Perhaps you'll have better luck on the moon.

Nokia has been selected by NASA to build the first cellular network on the moon, the Finnish company said yesterday, as the US space agency plans for a future where humans return there and establish lunar settlements.

NASA aims to return humans to the moon by 2024 and dig in for a long-term presence there under its Artemis programme.

Nokia said the first wireless broadband communications system in space would be built on the lunar surface in late 2022, before humans make it back there.

It will partner with a Texas-based private space craft design company, Intuitive Machines, to deliver the equipment to the moon on their lunar lander. The network will configure itself and establish a 4G/LTE communications system on the moon, Nokia said, though the aim would be to eventually switch to 5G

> Nokia said the network would be using 4G/LTE, instead of the latest 5G technology, because the former was a more known quantity with proven reliability. The company would also "pursue space applications of LTE's successor technology, 5G".

The network will give astronauts voice and video communications capabilities, and allow telemetry and biometric data exchange, as well as the deployment and remote control of lunar rovers and other robotic devices, according to the company.

The network will be designed to withstand the extreme conditions of the launch and lunar landing, and to operate in space. It will have to be sent to the moon in an extremely compact form to meet the stringent size, weight and power constraints of space payloads.

UN stockpiling billion syringes for Covid-19 vaccine

AFP News

The United Nations said yesterday it would stockpile one billion syringes around the world by the end of 2021, to be used for the delivery of any future coronavirus vaccine.

UNICEF, the UN Children's Fund, said it aims to get 520 million syringes in its warehouses by the end of this year, to guarantee an initial supply in countries ahead of the vaccine.

"The world will need as many syringes as doses of vaccine," UNICEF said in a statement.

UNICEF said it was also buying five million safety boxes for used syringes.

The number of confirmed coronavirus cases worldwide passed 40 million on Monday, according to an AFP tally based on official sources. More than 1.1 million deaths have been recorded across the globe.

"Vaccinating the world against Covid-19 will be one of the largest mass undertakings in human history, and we will need to move as quickly as the vaccines can be produced," said UNICEF executive director Henrietta Fore.

News in brief

Coronavirus cases surpass the 40 million

- **Worldwide coronavirus cases crossed 40 million on Monday, according to a Reuters tally, as the onset of winter in the northern hemisphere fuelled a resurgence in the spread of the disease.** Record one-day increases in new infections were seen at the end of last week, with global coronavirus cases rising above 400,000 for the first time. The United States, India, and Brazil remain the worst affected countries in the world. COVID-19 cases in North, Central, and South America represent about 47.27% or nearly half of global cases.

Pakistan to unblock social media app TikTok

- **Pakistan has decided to lift a ban on popular social media app TikTok** after the company vowed to block all accounts involved in spreading "obscenity and immorality", the country's telecom authority said yesterday. The move comes some 10 days after Pakistan blocked TikTok for failing to block "immoral and indecent" content.

Half of Indians may have had coronavirus by February

- **At least half of India's 1.3 billion people are likely to have been infected with the new coronavirus by next February, helping slow the spread of the disease, a member of** a federal government committee tasked with providing projections said yesterday.. India has so far reported 7.55 million cases of the coronavirus and is second only to the United States in terms of total infections. But COVID-19 infections are decreasing in India after a peak in mid-September, with 61,390 new cases reported on average each day, according to a Reuters tally. "Our mathematical model estimates that around 30% of the population is currently infected and it could go up to 50% by February," Manindra Agrawal, a professor at the Indian Institute for Technology in Kanpur and a committee member, said.

Nagorno-Karabakh says death toll among its military rises to 729

- **The defence ministry of the Nagorno-Karabakh region said on Monday it had recorded** another 19 casualties among its military, pushing the military death toll to 729 since fighting with Azeri forces erupted on Sept. 27. The fighting has surged to its worst level since the 1990s, when some 30,000 people were killed.

Austria introducing rule of six for indoor gatherings

- **Austria is limiting gatherings to a maximum of six people indoors and 12 people outdoors,** Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said on Monday as the country is struggling to stop the steady rise in daily coronavirus infections. Professionally organised events will have higher limits combined with requirements such as assigned seating, Kurz told a news conference. Austria's daily tally of confirmed coronavirus cases hit a new record of 1,747 on Saturday.

Global

Covid-19 Cases: 40,464,499

Deaths 1,120,749

Recovered: 30,234,158

New cases +200,367

New deaths +2,585

Countries worst affected

	Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths
1	USA	8,393,974	+6,175	224,840	+110
2	India	7,590,514	+42,276	115,163	+521
3	Brazil	5,237,961	+2,617	153,982	+77
4	Russia	1,415,316	+15,982	24,366	+179
5	Argentina	989,680		26,267	
6	Spain	982,723		33,775	
7	Colombia	959,572		28,970	
8	France	897,034		33,477	
9	Peru	868,675		33,759	
10	Mexico	851,227	+4,119	86,167	+108
11	UK	741,212	+18,804	43,726	+80
12	South Africa	703,793		18,471	
13	Iran	534,631	+4,251	30,712	+337
14	Chile	493,305	+1,545	13,676	+41

Middle East

Figures as of closing

Country	Total cases	new cases	Total deaths	New Deaths	Total recovered	Active cases	Serious, Critical	Tot cases/1m pop
Egypt	105,424		6,120		98,247	1,057	41	1,025
Saudi Arabia	342,583	+381	5,201	+16	328,895	8,487	844	9,795
UAE	116,517	+915	466	+3	108,811	7,240		11,739
Kuwait	116,832	+686	710	+9	108,606	7,516	133	27,238
Oman	110,594	+641	1,114	+13	96,400	13,080	201	21,498
Qatar								