

Dozens sickened by new 'Langya' virus in China

NEARLY three dozen people in China have been sickened by a newly identified virus from the same family as the deadly Nipah and Hendra viruses, though there's no evidence the pathogen can be transmitted from person-to-person.

The virus, named Langya henipavirus or LayV, was found

thanks to an early detection system for feverish people with a recent history of exposure to animals in eastern China. The patients — mainly farmers — also reported fatigue, cough, loss of appetite and aches, with several developing blood-cell abnormalities and signs of liver and kidney damage. All survived.

Among the 35 patients, 26 were infected only with LayV, according to a report published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

There was no evidence they had been in close contact or had a common exposure history, suggesting human infection may be sporadic, the researchers said. Tests detected

the virus in 27% of shrews, a known vector for similar henipaviruses, suggesting the small, furry mole-like mammals may be a natural reservoir, they said.

Further investigation is needed to better understand the infection, according to the researchers from Beijing, Singapore and

Australia. Taiwan's Centers for Disease Control said it is paying attention to the report, and plans to start screening for the virus.

The spread of germs from animals to humans, called zoonosis, is common, accounting for more than six of out of every 10 known infectious diseases in people,

according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Most of the time they cause limited disease, dying out without having a major impact. In the aftermath of COVID-19, however, more tracking systems now are in place and picking up novel pathogens. — **Bloomberg**

China extends military drills around Taiwan after Pelosi's visit

TAIPEI/BEIJING — Chinese navy ships remained active off both Taiwan's east and west coasts on Wednesday morning, a source briefed on the matter told Reuters, as Beijing kept up military drills in protest against last week's visit to the island by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

A furious China has extended its largest-ever exercises around the self-ruled island it claims as its own beyond the originally scheduled four days. The drills last week included ballistic missile launches, some of which flew over the island's capital Taipei, and simulated sea and air attacks in the skies and seas surrounding Taiwan.

Video released by Chinese state broadcaster CCTV on Wednesday showed Chinese fighter jets scrambling and refueling while airborne, as well as navy ships on what it said were drills around Taiwan.

The Eastern Theatre Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army said the drills were focused on blockades and resupply logistics, "under a complex electromagnetic environment to refine joint containment and control capabilities," according to CCTV.

About 20 Chinese navy and Taiwan navy ships remained close to the median line of the Taiwan Strait, an unofficial buffer separating the two sides, as of Wednesday morning, a source briefed on the matter told Reuters.

Several other Chinese ships continued to conduct missions off Taiwan's eastern coast, according to the source, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

Taiwan's foreign minister said on Tuesday that China was using the military drills as a game-plan to prepare for an invasion of the self-ruled island.

"It is conducting large-scale military exercises and missile launches, as well as cyberattacks, disinformation, and economic coercion, in an attempt to weaken public morale in Taiwan," Joseph Wu said on Tuesday, without providing evidence or offering a timetable.

"After the drills conclude, China may try to routinize its action in an attempt to wreck the long-term status quo across the Taiwan Strait."

Ms. Pelosi, a long-time China critic and a political ally of President Joseph R. Biden, visited Taiwan last week on the highest-level visit to the island by an American official in decades, despite Chinese warnings. She said her visit showed unwavering US commitment to supporting Taiwan's democracy.

China says its relations with Taiwan are an internal matter and it reserves the right to bring the island under its control, by force if necessary. Taiwan rejects China's claims, saying only Taiwan's people can decide their future.

Washington was sticking to its assessment that China would not try to invade Taiwan for the next two years, a Pentagon official said on Monday.

Taiwan's Defense Ministry on Wednesday released a video showing its armed forces on exercises, saying its military is "at the ready keeping our country safe" and China had not stopped its "incursions" in areas near Taiwan.

Taiwan troops were guarding their posts "24-7" and have increased their alertness level, the ministry said, following the guidelines of "defending median line, defending territorial waters and defending sovereignty" to maintain the status quo. — **Reuters**

Torrential rain lessens in S.Korean capital amid heavy flood damage



A GENERAL VIEW of the submerged Han River Park by torrential rain in Seoul, South Korea, Aug. 10.

SEOUL — Torrential rains that have slammed South Korea's capital, Seoul, diminished on Wednesday after killing at least nine people and damaging about 2,800 homes and other buildings.

More rain was forecast for Wednesday, but less than the heavy downpours on Monday and Tuesday that submerged some streets and buildings, trapping people in flooded apartments and stranding cars.

At least five people had been killed in Seoul as of early Wednesday, as well as three in the neighboring Gyeonggi Province and one in Gangwon Province, according to the Central Disaster and Safety Countermeasures Headquarters.

At least 17 people have been injured, and seven are missing.

Flooding in some buildings around the glitzy Gangnam district continued on Tuesday, while subway stations and several roads there had been blocked.

Data showed at least 2,800 public and private facilities had been damaged across South Korea, and more than 1,100 households had been displaced. Most highways and subway lines had been cleared by Wednesday.

The accumulated rainfall in Seoul since midnight Monday stood at 525mm as of 7 a.m. Wednesday, according to the Korea Meteorological Administration (KMA), with more forecast. In neighboring Yangpyeong County, total rainfall hit 532.5 mm. — **Reuters**

Japan's Kishida shakes up his cabinet amid Unification Church furor

TOKYO — Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida reshuffled his cabinet on Wednesday, removing some ministers with links to the Unification Church in a bid to stem plunging support amid growing public outrage over the ruling party's ties to the controversial group.

Mr. Kishida, in office since last October, announced his new government team in a shake-up that came earlier than analysts had expected.

While key personnel like foreign minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and finance chief Shunichi Suzuki held on to their posts, some high-profile ministers were removed, including Nobuo Kishi, the younger brother of slain former premier Shinzo Abe, replaced as defense minister by Yasukazu Hamada.

In the month since Mr. Abe was gunned down, a spotlight has been turned on the Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) long-standing ties to the Unification Church, with polls showing plunging approval ratings for Mr. Kishida with respondents citing a need to know just how close those ties might be.

Mr. Abe's suspected killer has said his mother was a Unification Church member bankrupted by donating to it, and blamed Mr. Abe for promoting it. — **Reuters**

SARS-related coronaviruses infect around 66,000 in SE Asia

SHANGHAI — About 66,000 people in Southeast Asia are infected each year with SARS-related coronaviruses, and nearly 500 million people live near habitats where bat hosts of those viruses are found, according to a study released on Wednesday.

The research, published by *Nature Communications*, said viral transmission from bats to humans may have been "substantially underestimated," adding that its mapping of bat species in the region could aid efforts to determine the origins of COVID-19.

The researchers focused on 26 species of bat known to host SARS-like coronaviruses in a region of 5.1 million square kilometers, stretching from China to Southeast and South Asia. They then incorporated data on antibody levels among people who have reported bat contact.

Southern China, northeastern Myanmar, Laos and northern Vietnam were identified as the regions with the highest diversity of bat species that host SARS-like coronaviruses (SARSr-CoVs).

"Our estimate that a median of 66,000 people are infected with SARSr-CoVs each year in Southeast Asia suggests that bat-to-human

SARSr-CoV spillover is common in the region, and is undetected by surveillance programs and clinical studies in the majority of cases," they said. "These data on the geography and scale of spillover can be used to target surveillance and prevention programs for potential future bat-CoV emergence," the paper said.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus strain.

The authors of the study include Peter Daszak, a member of the World Health Organization (WHO) team that was tasked with investigating the origins of the COVID-19 and visited Wuhan early last year, where the pandemic was first identified at the end of 2019.

The WHO said in June that the lack of data from China made it difficult to determine when and how the coronavirus first crossed over into the human population.

A study published by the journal *Science* at the end of July said live wildlife trade was still the best explanation for the origins of the pandemic, with two separate spillovers likely to have taken place at the Huanan Seafood Market, where many of the earliest cases were clustered. — **Reuters**

FULL STORY



Read the full story by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by typing the link <bit.ly/Japan081122>

Sugar, from SI/1

In February, the SRA issued SO No. 3, which authorized the importation of 200,000 MT of refined sugar.

"If you recall, after Typhoon Odette, the SRA already projected that we will be short in supply by August. Hence, the SRA issued SO No. 3. This volume was allocated exclusively for the industrial users at that time," Mr. Serafica said on Wednesday morning.

However, a court issued a temporary restraining order on the imports, after a case was filed by sugarcane planters led by the United Sugar Producers Federation.

"This caused the industrial users to scramble for sugar and buy whatever sugar they can to keep their factories running... this stalling of importation resulted in the tightness in supply such that even the sugar that was normally intended for the retail market was being used up by the industrials. Even the buffer stock was depleted," Mr. Serafica said.

The SRA chief noted some mills began operations early to beef up sugar stocks.

"Mills normally start between September to December but this time some mills opted to start this August to help alleviate the supply situation," he said.

'A BREATHER'

Sought for comment, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) President George T. Barcelon said sugar imports would provide a much-needed "breather" for food processing firms.

"The sugar shortage and high price issues are a recurring one over the years similar to rice," Mr. Barcelon said in a Viber message.

"The DA should institute a monitoring system to avoid inflationary impact. A system of balancing supply versus price so the local sugar farmers and mills would not be unduly impacted," he added.

The PCCI, the Philippine Food Exporters, and Philippine Exporters Confederation urged the government to look into "the crippling supply of sugar that is expected to hurt both the local food processors and manufacturers and the consumers in general."

"While we recognize the need to protect our sugar producers and millers, we need to strike a balance and consider expanding our import requirement before the situation worsens, which could lead to higher inflation," the groups said in a statement.

Trade Undersecretary Ruth B. Castelo said in a Lagging Handa briefing on Wednesday that the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is ready to help the DA in enforcing and monitoring the suggested retail price (SRP) for sugar, which has yet to be released.

"Once the DA releases the SRP, the DTI can help in terms of monitoring since we are also checking in markets. We can include sugar," Ms. Castelo said. — **Kyle Aristophere T. Atienza, Luisa Maria C. Jocsan and Revyn Mikhael D. Ochove**

FDI, from SI/1

The country's GDP expanded by 7.4% in the second quarter, slower than the 12.1% a year ago and the 8.2% in the first quarter of 2022.

Quarter on quarter, household spending fell 2.7%, reflecting the impact of rising prices.

The share of capital formation, the investment component of the economy, eased to 20.5% in the second quarter from 83.7% last year.

"FDI contributed to this as the money that is invested is spent to create economic activity to form physical capital," Mr. Roces said.

BSP data showed non-residents' net investments in debt instruments of local affiliates jumped by 93% to \$544 million in May, from \$282 million a year ago.

Also, investments in equity and investment fund shares rose by 16% in May to \$197 million.

Non-residents' net investments in equity capital (other than reinvestment of earnings) grew by 47.8% to \$91 million from \$61 million in the same month last year. Equity capital placements up by 25.1% to \$104 million, while withdrawals dropped by 40.5% to \$13 million.

The equity placements were mainly from Japan, the United States, Singapore and the Netherlands, and invested mostly in manufacturing, real estate, information and communication, and transportation industries.

Reinvestment of earnings slipped by 2% to \$106 million year on year in May.

For the first five months of the year, total FDI net inflows

grew by 18.8% to \$4.2 billion from the \$3.5 billion net inflows posted in the same period last year.

Reinvestment of earnings inched up by 0.2% to \$435 million in the January to May period.

Meanwhile, investments in equity capital slumped by 31.3% to \$607 million in the five-month period, as placements declined by 34.2% to \$679 million. Equity withdrawals also dropped by 51.4% to \$72 million.

Net inflows of FDIs are expected to slow in the next few months, amid external headwinds.

"Compared with other emerging economies, the Philippine economy remains to be one of the fastest growing economies," China Banking Corp. Chief Economist Domini S. Velasquez said in a Viber message.

"External headwinds such as potential slowdown in advanced economies can eventually temper the rise of FDI, however, for the year, most of these economies are still growing above their potential output and businesses would have the capacity to invest in emerging economies such as the Philippines," she added.

Ms. Velasquez also said specific investment priorities should be laid out by the new administration.

"With mobility restrictions still down, FDI may still continue to play a role in propping up the recovery in the quarters ahead," Mr. Roces said.

The central bank sees FDI net inflows reaching \$11 billion this year. — **Keisha B. Ta-asan**

SLMC Bonifacio Global City MAB Corp.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE STOCKHOLDERS

To: The Stockholders

From: The Corporate Secretary

Please be notified that the Annual Stockholders' Meeting of **SLMC Bonifacio Global City MAB Corp.** (the "Corporation") will be held on **September 14, 2022, 12:00 noon through teleconference.** The access to the meeting and the relevant Definitive Information Statement, Management Report, Annual Report (SEC Form 17-A) will be distributed prior to the meeting through email.

Below is the Agenda of the Meeting.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Certification of Notice and Quorum
3. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual Stockholders' Meeting held on September 8, 2021
4. President's Report
5. Financial Report
6. Appraisals and performance report for the board and the criteria and procedure for assessment
7. Approval of the Audited Financial Statements for Year Ended December 31, 2021
8. Ratification of Acts of Management and Board of Directors
9. Amendment of Articles of Incorporation and ByLaws
10. Election of Directors
11. Appointment of External Auditor
12. Other Matters
13. Adjournment


CONRADO S. DAR SANTOS
Corporate Secretary