

Bird flu hits Taipei poultry market

A poultry market in Taipei was to be the source of an outbreak of the H5 subtype of avian influenza virus, the city's animal protection office said Monday.

The market culled 304 chickens and suspended operation for 24 hours so that the premises could be disinfected, after birds suspected to be carrying the virus were found in five batches of chickens transported to the market Sunday.

The birds were confirmed to have the virus Monday, although the exact strain has yet to be determined.

The infected birds were from four farms in Kaohsiung, Miaoli, Pingtung and Yunlin, the office added.

Commonwealth Society in Beijing hosts annual charity gala



CSB President Madam Rosanna Brathwaite delivers a speech during the gala.
[Photo courtesy of CSB]

The 24th Charity Gala of the Commonwealth Society in Beijing (CSB) was held

at the China World Hotel on May 6.

Some 600 guests were present, including ambassadors from South Africa, Indonesia, Cuba, Guyana, Grenada, Barbados, Cyprus etc., diplomats from both Commonwealth and non-Commonwealth countries, entrepreneurs, sponsors and other dignitaries.

The CSB Charity Gala is an annual fundraising event for supporting local charities.

Proceeds were raised through ticket sales, donations, raffles and silent auctions, among other activities. The money will be distributed to eligible charity organizations identified by the All China Women's Federation and the social volunteers' organization roundabout.

Participants were also treated to guest performances by renowned entertainers from the Americas & Caribbean, Europe, Asia, Africa and Pacific regions.

"We must open our eyes, our ears and our hearts and, in whatever way we can, dig deeper and answer the call of communities that are in need," said CSB President Madam Rosanna Brathwaite during the gala.

"Through our partnerships, we have been able to help women and children, promote education initiatives among the young, and continue to support persons who are advocating health and wellness in China," she added.

The CSB was founded in 1993 by female diplomats from the Commonwealth, all of whom have been diligently working for the strengthening of bonds between Commonwealth countries and China by engaging in various social welfare projects across the nation.

Statistics show that CSB donated over 3 million yuan (about US\$430,000) to several under-privileged communities in China between 2012 and 2016. The Society serves to specifically assist children, women and the elderly.

[Lawyer stands trial for inciting state power subversion](#)

Xie Yang, a lawyer in central China's Hunan Province, stood trial in a court in the provincial capital of Changsha on Monday.

Xie is accused of inciting subversion of state power and disrupting court order.

Over 40 people, including Xie's relatives and two defenders, legislators, political advisors, journalists from domestic and overseas media outlets and members of the public, attended the hearing.

Taiwan seizes another boat; sailors hurt

Mainland authorities called on Taiwan to thoroughly investigate the shooting of fishermen by the Taiwan coast guard over the weekend, to avoid similar incidents in the future.

A fishing boat from Guangdong Province was seized on Saturday morning by a Taiwan patrol boat in waters near Penghu county in southeastern Taiwan.

Two of its seven crew members were injured by rubber bullets fired from the patrol boat, Taiwan authorities said. They were sent to a hospital in Penghu for medical treatment, while the other five were detained.

An Fengshan, spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, called on the Taiwan side late on Saturday to respect the fact that fishermen from both sides of the Taiwan Straits have long been fishing in the area.

“Similar cases in which Taiwan has seized a mainland fishing boat have occurred frequently in recent times,” An said. “We have highlighted respect for the rights of mainland fishermen several times, but another incident occurred on Saturday morning.”

Taiwan should stop seizing fishing boats without sound reason for doing so, he said.

“We requested the Taiwan side take the case seriously, release the fishermen and the boat as soon as possible and prevent the recurrence of similar cases in the future.”

In March, another spokesman from the office, Ma Xiaoguang, commented on reports that Taiwan authorities had detained 20 mainland fishermen and their boat on charges of illegally trespassing in waters around the Dongsha Islands.

At that time, the office said, “Taiwan should respect fishermen from both sides of the Straits, including those from Hong Kong and Macao, stop its improper treatment of fishermen and protect their lives and property.”

Ma voiced opposition to acts that undermine the basis of cross-Straits talks and hinder the development of cross-Straits ties.

The mainland has offered travel conveniences to Taiwan residents for several years.

At the end of 2016, the Civil Aviation Administration of China started upgrading self-service systems at mainland airports, in a move to make buying tickets and checking-in easier for Taiwan travelers.

More than 1,700 self-service facilities are planned across the country by the end of this year, the administration said.

[China to boost development of online media](#)



Students use iPad during a class at a middle school in Nanjing. [File Photo]

China will boost the development of online media by encouraging eligible websites to go public and create new mainstream media institutions and groups during the 2016-2020 period, according to a government blueprint made public Sunday.

Issued by the general offices of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, the outline for the 13th five-year program (2016-2020) on cultural development and reform vowed to gradually set up a modern communication system by 2020.

As a major project to “build public opinion fronts” online, efforts will be made to improve the communication abilities of major news websites and online radio and TV stations and develop a system for communication on the mobile

internet.”

“Eligible websites will be encouraged to go public,” it said.

Authorities will give support to mainstream media institutions in developing their websites and new media. It will step up efforts to guide and standardize investment in the internet cultural sector with both state and private funds.

Meanwhile, existing laws and regulations on news and publishing will be extended to cover the management of online media, according to the document.

“The licensing mechanism on sources of online news should be improved, while management over news gathering and reproduction qualifications should also be strengthened,” it said.

The outline also vowed to set up a sound system for online copyright.

Aiming to ensure a good order for communication, the government will intensify management over search engines, instant messaging tools and news Apps and clarify operators’ responsibilities for the content disseminated via microblog or WeChat, it said.

It also promised severe punishment for online rumors, harmful information, news extortion, as well as fake news, fake media institutions and fake journalists.