

Press Meeting Notes: 9 February 2018



Source: <https://america.cgtn.com/2018/01/11/concern-grows-as-influenza-patients-crowd-hospitals-across-china>

Mainland China

Outbreaks of influenza have raised concerns over China's low vaccination rate

According to China's health authorities, there has accumulated more influenza cases this winter than any other previous years. Paediatrics departments across the country are overwhelmed with the high number of patients and some were even forced to close due to the shortage of doctors. To make the situation worse, the epidemic in China is more severe than ever before due to cross-infection and the prevalence of certain virus types. According to the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, this year's influenza is a mixture of type A viruses, such as H1N1, H3N2, and the type B virus Yamagata which "has caused a lack of immunity against the strain and made many people vulnerable" (*Straits Times*, 10 Jan 2018). Although type B Yamagata is nothing new, it is the first time that it has affected the country on such a large scale. Given that no mutation of viruses is found, while vaccination could effectively prevent infection, the vaccination rate is low in China, with only 2% of the population having been vaccinated. And despite the government has supplied 26 million vaccinations to the public this year, there are six million left after the vaccination period. According to the medical authorities in Binhai County, Jiangsu, the low vaccination rate among children is the result of parents' lack of understanding of vaccination and concerns over its potential negative effects. And surprisingly, according to the same source, children of rural household *hukou* are more likely to be vaccinated than their urban counterparts, because their parents – likely to be low-income and low-educated – are more willing to listen to doctors' advice.

// 中国疾控中心及多地疾控中心的黄婷、范军星等在四川、河南抽样选取 9673 人进行调查发现，不愿意接种流感疫苗的有 4381 人。在这些人群中，三成以上是因为“担心疫苗质量和安全性”；26.5%是“对流感疫苗不太了解”；认为“接种疫苗不能降低得流感的可能性”的占 17.8%；而“流感是小病，不需要接种疫苗”的占 5.0%。[...] 在江苏省滨海县，2016 年托幼儿童流感疫苗接种率仅为 12.87%——该县疾控中心梅茂冬发现孩子们未接种原因主要是家长担心疫苗不良反应，其次为不了解流感疫苗、感觉孩子身体好不需要接种。出人意料的是，私立幼儿园儿童接种率高于公立幼儿园，农村户籍高于城镇户籍，流动儿童高于本地儿童，家庭月收入越高接种率越低。“农村户籍的父母，虽然收入不高，但更倾向于听从医生建议给孩子接种流感疫苗这样的二类疫苗。而城镇户籍儿童的父母虽然接受过良好教育，但对流感疫苗认识存在误区，导致儿童疫苗接种率较低。”梅茂冬认为，家长对流感疫苗的认知水平，直接影响到孩子的接种率。// Source: *The Paper*, 29 January 2018, http://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1973209

// Hospitals have reported record numbers of flu patients this winter, especially paediatrics departments. The General Hospital of Tianjin Medical University has been receiving 1,000 to 2,000 sick children every day, while doctors at Beijing Children's Hospital saw 10,000 on its busiest day. **China has 118,000 paediatricians and is in need of 200,000 more, according to data from the National Health and Family Planning Commission. The current ratio is 0.53 doctors to every 1,000 children.** According to the City Express report, the Chinese Medicine Association said **the workload for a paediatrician is 1.68 times that of a physician for adult patients, yet their income is substantially lower.** // Source: *Straits Times*, 10 January 2018, <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/flu-outbreak-doctor-shortage-force-childrens-clinic-in-china-to-close>

China issued its first Arctic Policy vowing to actively participate in Arctic affairs

On 26 January, China, for the first time, released a white paper on the Arctic, entitled *China's Arctic Policy* (中国的北极政策). Claiming itself to be “an important stakeholder in Arctic affairs” and a “Near-Arctic State”, the Policy specifies that China seeks to expand the Belt and Road initiative by linking with other Arctic states through the “Polar Silk Road”. Calling for the promotion of maritime safety, stability, and commercial activity, the Policy has outlined four aspects of China’s role in the Arctic affairs. First, developing maritime shipping routes involving Canada, Russia, and countries in Northern Europe. Second, exploring natural resources as well as strengthening sustainable energy (e.g. wind and geothermal power) cooperation with other Arctic states. Third, utilizing fisheries and developing seafood industries. Fourth, developing Arctic tourism. Pledging to work with intergovernmental organizations such as the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) since the country became an observer member of the Arctic Council in 2013, critics suggest that the Policy reflects China’s growing interest in “seeking a more comprehensive approach to engaging the region beyond scientific diplomacy” (*The Diplomat*, 29 January 2018).

// Raising public awareness of the Arctic was mentioned both in the paper and at this week’s press conference. Although China’s involvement in the region can be traced back to almost a century ago, the Arctic for most of the Chinese public is still a remote novelty.

Indeed, publicity has been increasing in the past few years to educate the country about the significance of the Far North. [...] **The environment and climate change in the Arctic, and how Beijing has been contributing accordingly, was discussed throughout the white paper, and can be regarded part of a broader picture of Chinese foreign policy as “a responsible major country” to tackle global warming.** Notably, in 1997, China ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and in 2015, China was a major participant at the watershed climate summit in Paris, and conveyed its support for international cooperation to address climate change issues. China’s Arctic policy will be a major test of that commitment. **In the short term, the release of the White Paper confirms that China’s Arctic policy has begun to both mature and diversify behind scientific diplomacy, and also serves to stress that the region has grown in importance as the Belt and Road process accelerates and that China is determined to be counted as a major Arctic player.** // Source: *The Diplomat*, 29 January 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/china-stakes-its-claim-to-the-arctic/>

// 中国参与北极事务由来已久，与北极的跨区域和全球性问题息息相关。白皮书指出，中国在地缘上是“近北极国家”，是陆上最接近北极圈的国家之一。北极的自然状况及其变化对中国的气候系统和生态环境有着直接的影响，关系到中国在农业、林业、渔业、海洋等领域的经济利益。早在 1925 年中国就加入了《斯匹次卑尔根群岛条约》，开始参与北极事务。自上世纪 90 年代以来，中国在北极事务广度、深度的参与方面均提速，已成为北极活动大国。2004 年，中国建成“中国北极黄河站”。截至 2017 年年底，中国在北极地区已成功开展了 8 次北冰洋科学考察和 14 个年度的黄河站站基科学考察。经过多年努力，中国在北极地区逐步建立起海洋、冰雪、大气、生物、地质等多学科观测体系。如今中国的北极活动重点是北极科研、北极保护和北极合作，已拓展至全球治理、区域合作、多边和双边机制等，涵盖科学研究、生态环境、气候变化、经济开发和人文交流等北极事务的众多领域。全球变暖使北极航道有望成为国际贸易的重要运输干线，中国企业开始积极探索北极航道的商业利用。// Source: *人民日报海外版*, 29 January 2018, <http://opinion.people.com.cn/n1/2018/0129/c1003-29791476.html>

// 據 CBC 報導，卡爾加里大學副教授哈伯特（Robert Huebert）說：「我有點震驚」。從白皮書內容來看，他認為，在尊重加拿大和美國等北極國家的主權，和在國際法爭端中為自己獲得利益之間，中共為自己留有餘地。這份白皮書不斷重申尊重國際法，哈伯特和拉瓦爾大學教授弗雷德里克·拉賽爾（Frédéric Lasserre）認為，這是中共試圖闡明對北極國家主權限制的一種表達方式。例如，美國把西北航道視為「國際海峽」，而加拿大將其視為「內部水域」——這種語義上的差異可能意味著航道如何管理和誰有權使用它。拉賽爾教授是《中國北極野心及其對加拿大意味這什麼》一書的合著者，這本書恰巧也在週五發表。「北極國家（主權）和國際法，我們不知道中共把哪個放在前面」拉塞爾說，「這就是中共想在北極做什麼的模糊性，相當麻煩。」哈伯特則說，中共對主權和航道問題特別感興趣，認為北極航運的增長和維持是「北極核心利益」。// Source: *Epoch Times*, 29 January 2018, <http://www.epochtimes.com/b5/18/1/28/n10095444.htm>

Around 120,000 Uyghur Muslims detained in political education camps in Xinjiang

According to foreign news sources such as *Radio Free Asia* and *CNN*, there are currently around 120,000 Uyghur Muslims detained in Kashgar prefecture of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Human rights advocates have suggested that detainees are required to undergo a re-education process such as learning Mandarin, singing revolutionary songs, praising the Communist Party, and studying the thoughts of President Xi Jinping. Maya Wang, a researcher for Human Rights Watch, has stated in a report published last year that the government does not set any time limits on the length of detention or provide any legal documents to the families of detainees. As fear permeated throughout the Uyghur community, Omer Kanat, chairman of the World Uyghur Congress, said, "In some villages, you can't see men on the streets anymore -- only women and children -- all the men have been sent to the camps." (*CNN*, 3 February 2018). Since the regional government has been led by Chen Quanguo, a Xi loyalist who was formerly the Communist Party Secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region, there appeared an intensifying crackdown against Uyghur Muslims who are perceived by the government as Islamic extremists, such as DNA collection, ubiquitous installation of surveillance cameras, the banning of long beards, veils, and home-schooling in 2017.

// Sources say that authorities often convert government buildings and schools into makeshift re-education camps to deal with overcrowding, and routinely shift detainees between locations—that include prisons—without informing their family members. In Bayin'gholin Mongol (Bayinguoleng Menggu) Autonomous Prefecture's Korla city—where sources told RFA recently that as many as 1,000 people have been admitted to the city's detention facilities over the course of a few days—a local government employee named Erkin Bawdun recently said that area re-education camps "are completely full." Bawdun said that a friend who spent time as an inmate at a local re-education camp told him he had seen officials from the center tell the police to "stop bringing people ... as it is already too full." **He described cells that had previously held eight people now accommodating 14 inmates, who "were not allowed pillows" and "had to lay on their sides because there was not enough room to lay flat," let alone space to turn over or stretch their legs.** Other acquaintances told Bawdun that they had seen "detainees walking barefoot," and that inmates were "not allowed clothes with buttons or metal zippers," belts, shoelaces, or "even underwear" in some cases, despite average low temperatures of around 15 degrees Fahrenheit (-10 degrees Celsius) at night in December. // Source: *Radio Free Asia*, 22 January 2018, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/detentions-01222018171657.html>

// 新疆約 12 萬名維吾爾族穆斯林傳出被中國當局投入「再教育營」，日前訪中的英國首相梅伊也對新疆人權表示關注。有外媒前往新疆一探究竟，採訪過程不斷被當局騷擾、監控。[...] 英國廣播公司 (BBC) 近日前往新疆採訪，有逃到土耳其的新疆維族人表示，聽聞留在新疆的妻子與母親被帶到拘留所、孩子下落不明。他寧願家人被槍斃，也不想他們被中國政府虐待至死。根據 BBC 拍攝的影片可發現，當局在商店門口設置安檢站，街上隨處可見武裝警力，在政府的監控之下，當地瀰漫恐懼的氣氛，民眾受訪時一律回答：「我什麼都不知道、我在這裡活得很好。」記者訪問過後，持著槍械的警察立刻趕到。當 BBC 記者試圖接近被指為是秘密拘留所的地方時，影音拍攝

立刻遭到阻止。不管他們到哪裡，一再受騷擾、監視、拘留、跟蹤。// Source: CNA, 3 February, <http://www.cna.com.tw/news/firstnews/201802030186-1.aspx>



Source: <https://www.inside.com.tw/2018/02/07/chinese-railway-police-use-600-glxss-smart-glasses-to-catch-7-fugitives-26-fake-id-holders>

Police began using facial-recognition glasses to identify criminals in Henan

Stationed in a railway station in Zhengzhou, Henan, police officers are the first in the country to use glasses with facial-recognition software – resembling Google Glass – to identify criminals during the Chinese New Year travel season. After scanning the faces of passengers, the glasses are then linked to a database of suspects through a software on mobile devices. As of 6 February, there were already seven hit-and-run and human trafficking fugitives as well as 26 cases of identity fraud identified. The glasses mark another milestone of China's ambition in the AI industry and increasing level of collaboration with tech companies, since the implementation of facial-recognition technologies for criminal investigation in Shanghai and Qingdao in recent years. According to a *South China Morning Post* article published in October 2017, China is in the process of developing a database that stores the information of its 1.3 billion citizens that is able to identify any individuals in three seconds.

// 據了解，這些中國鄭州警察配備的是 LLVISION（北京亮亮視野科技）所生產的 GLXSS 智慧眼鏡，採用 Cortex-A7 四核處理器，並配有 1GB RAM 和 16GB 儲存空間，要價約美金 600 元左右。這些眼鏡可以直接連接中國警察資料庫，並比對乘客的身份。自配置這些眼鏡以來，至少已比對出涉嫌拐賣人口、交通肇事逃逸等 7 名在逃嫌犯，與冒用他人身份證件的 26 名乘客。隨著影像識別技術日益發達，中國正在成為一個典型的「老大哥」全面監控國家，上海政府用它來識別交通違規，而在青島，臉部識別幫助警方在著名的啤酒節中逮捕了數十名犯罪嫌疑人。而中國科技公司也成了政府

的密切合作者，根據南華早報報導甚至在不久之後，中國官方就具有三秒鐘內識別中國全體 13 億人口的能力。 // Source: *Inside*, 7 February 2018, <https://www.inside.com.tw/2018/02/07/chinese-railway-police-use-600-glxs-smart-glasses-to-catch-7-fugitives-26-fake-id-holders>

// In a similar move, **train stations in major Chinese cities including Zhengzhou introduced a “face-swiping” check-in service during the lunar new year holiday in 2017.** Similar to e-passport services at airports, small kiosks at boarding areas use facial recognition technology to scan passengers and their travel documents in just a few seconds. **China has pursued an ambitious plan to develop its AI sector in recent years, with police departments across the country implementing facial recognition technology.** Shanghai has used it to identify and fine traffic violators, while in coastal Qingdao, facial recognition helped police arrest dozens of suspected criminals at the city’s famous beer festival. Tech companies have become close collaborators with government agencies. [...] **Critics are concerned that the mass banking of personal information could present privacy violations and security risks.** Many compare these technologies and their applications to plots in the sci-fi television series “Black Mirror” — but in China, such a future is already becoming a reality. // Source: *Sixth Tone*, 6 February 2018, <http://www.sixthtone.com/news/1001676/Face#>

China establishes ties with Vatican over a controversial agreement

Having met at least four times since 2016, Chinese and Vatican officials, according to media reports, seem to be reaching an agreement over the appointment of bishops in China where around 12 million Catholics reside. First broke ties with the Holy See in 1951, despite religious practices have been tolerated since the 1980s, Chinese Catholics nowadays can nevertheless only choose between state-sanctioned churches - accepted by China's Catholic Patriotic Association (CPA) but not recognized by Vatican's authority - or underground congregations. Under the new agreement that is "ready and could be signed in a few months" (*Reuters*, 2 February 2018), Vatican would appoint bishops chosen by, as well as legitimize the bishops who are currently appointed by, the Chinese government. While some saw the agreement as a historic breakthrough in China-Vatican diplomatic relation, many have been critical of the decision. Having previously discussed with Pope Francis over China's suppression of religious freedom (*SCMP*, 5 February 2018), Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kium of Hong Kong, a retired bishop who has been a pro-democracy activist outspoken on political freedom and human rights, has accused Vatican of selling out to Beijing.

// Zen made a sudden trip to the Vatican earlier this month in order to directly pass on a plea to the Pope over the situation of the underground bishops. In an open letter this week, he expressed his surprise at the latest moves by the Vatican, and even said the Holy See is “selling out the Catholic Church in China.” For that, he was subsequently rebuked by Greg Burke, the press office director of the Vatican. **The other thorn which has so far been left unaddressed is what to do about the existing Nunciature in Taiwan: Beijing does not allow anybody who wants full diplomatic relations with China to also recognize Taiwan—which would mean leaving the Taiwanese flock behind.** [...] “I do not want to criticize the Holy Father, but he does not understand what Communism in China means. And he doesn’t see that if we give up on the appointment of the bishops, or on full diplomatic recognition, the

Church and its faithful would be giving up the only bargaining power they ever had.” // Source: *Quartz*, 2 February 2018, <https://qz.com/1196556/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-vaticans-monumental-u-turn-on-china/>

// 恢復同中國天主教的聯繫，令中國天主教的信仰生活正規化，這是教皇方濟各(Pope Francis)的優先事項。談判工作在 18 個多月前就已開始，但是人們相信，在中國的主教由誰來任命這個微妙的問題上，談判已經停滯不前。北京已任命了七位遭羅馬反對的主教，與此同時，大約有三、四十名得到羅馬祝福的地下主教在沒有得到中國政府批准的情況下運作教會。[...] 比利時的陳聰銘博士說，梵蒂岡如此急切的一個原因在於，與中國的其他宗教相比，該教在中國的增長較為緩慢。從 1949 年到今天，新教徒已經從 100 萬增長到了至少 5000 萬，但天主教徒的數量大體上是跟著人口增長而增加，同一時期教徒從 300 萬增長到了今天的最多 1200 萬，這部分是因為在中國天主教會的分裂。 // Source: *New York Times*, 30 January 2018, <https://cn.nytimes.com/world/20180130/china-catholics-vatican/zh-hant/>

2018 marks the 40th anniversary of Chinese economic reform; significant changes observed in the working population

Marking the 40th anniversary of China's economic reform, as President Xi Jinping said in his 2018 New Year's speech that the opening-up policy was the only way to realize the Chinese Dream, journalists and scholars have started to reflect on the transformation in the countries' industries since 1978. According to Li Peilin, a professor of sociologist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the composition of China's working population has undergone major changes in the last 40 years. Compared to 1978 when 790 million out of the 960 million people worked as agricultural workers, the number of service workers (330 million) has now exceeded both the manual (220 million) and agricultural workers (282 million), constituting 43% of China's working population. And the number of professional and skilled workforce has raised from 15 million in 1978 to 50 million in the present. Moreover, there observed a significant fall in the number of state-owned and collective-owned enterprises (75% and 25% of the total economic entities in 1978) to only 30 million and 4 million workers respectively in 2015.

//改革开放以后，私营企业主阶层从无到有，快速发展。根据国家工商行政管理总局的统计数据，截至 2015 年年底，全国共有私营企业 1908 万户，私营企业主(投资人)3560 万人，全国实有私营企业数量占企业总数的比重为 87.3%；注册资本(金)90.55 万亿元，占全国实有企业注册资本(金)的 53.8%；全国私营企业从业人员 1.64 亿人，雇工人数 1.28 亿人。[...] 我国的私营企业主目前呈现出以下几个特征：一是从产业分布来看，私营企业主绝大多数集中在商业服务业，这一领域私营企业的户数占全国私营企业总户数的 74%。二是从区域分布来看，近 60%的私营企业主集中在东部地区。三是从受教育程度和收入状况来看，私营企业主平均受教育程度并不高，远低于公务员群体和国有企业负责人群体，约 40%只受过高中及以下教育，受过大专教育的占 31.8%，但受过大学以上教育的也占 28.7%。四是从收入情况来看，呈现高度分化，绝大多数小私营企业个人收入并不高，2015 年的年收入的 median 是 12 万元，亿元资产以上大企业的业主年薪 median 为 40 万元。[...] 五是从私营企业主的来源和政治参与

看，私营企业主的 20%来自国家机关、国有企事业单位的“下海”人员，28%是中共党员，4.8%是民主党派，23.9%担任过人大代表和政协委员。[...] 新社会阶层和新社会群体，通常是指那些在改革开放以来社会阶级阶层结构发生深刻变化的背景下，不太容易被归类为传统的阶级阶层概念中的新阶层、新群体。// Source: 京报网, 29 January 2018, http://www.bjd.com.cn/sy/llzk/201801/29/t20180129_11079520.html

// This year marks the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up, which created China's economic miracle, said Party officials and economists. In his 2018 New Year's message, President Xi Jinping said the reform and opening-up policy is the only way for modern China to make progress in its development and to realize the Chinese Dream. **"With the 40th anniversary of the reform and opening-up policy as a turning point, we shall cut paths through mountains and build bridges across rivers, overcome all difficulties and carry reform through to the end," Xi said.** Su said the reforms since the 18th CPC National Congress have exceeded expectations. **He noted a major breakthrough was to cast reform policies in legislation to implement the rule of law. "China now stresses that reform policies should be translated into laws before they are implemented nationwide. The pace of reform might slow, but the steps will be steadier," Su said.** // Source: 中国新闻网, 3 January 2018, <http://www.ecns.cn/business/2018/01-03/286715.shtml>



Source: <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2018/01/22/monday-air-pollution-hong-kong-five-times-worse-beijing/>

Hong Kong

Research found that socioeconomically disadvantaged people are more exposed to unhealthy air than the wealthy

By analysing the data from all 412 district council constituencies across Hong Kong, a recent study published in the journal *Environmental Science and Policy* has provided new quantitative evidence of the city's environmental injustice. According to Professor Victor Li On-kwok – one of the authors and director of the Hong Kong University-University of Cambridge Clean Energy and Environment Research Platform, the findings has confirmed a statistically significant correlation “between average concentrations of fine suspended particulate matter, or PM2.5, and a social deprivation index” (SCMP, 30 January 2018). The index is derived from the variables configured by the Census and Statistics Department including low education, low income, non-home ownership, non-professional occupation. While the World Health Organisation has set the safe limit for average PM2.5 concentrations to 25 micrograms per cubic metre, districts ranked high in social deprivation such as Kwun Tong, Wong Tai Sin, Sham Shui Po, and Yuen Long have recorded averaged PM2.5 concentrations from 68 to 84 micrograms. Referencing the study, the Clean Air Network, a non-governmental organization that focuses on the issue of air pollution in Hong Kong, has urged the government to tackle traffic congestion which is considered the primary source of air pollution in the city.

// 港大劍橋清潔能源與環境研究平台總監李安國表示，惡劣空氣質素會損害個人健康，能引起如癌症、中風、哮喘或心臟病等疾病，故建議政府在污染嚴重且貧窮地區提供金錢補償，用作建立行人專用區、植樹等之用。李安國指，目前各選區空氣污染情況會 2 小時更新一次，並會顯示 PM2.5、PM10（可吸入懸浮粒子）、二氧化氮、臭氧及二氧化硫濃度，準確度平均達 86%，預計一、兩年後可開放平台供市民參考，但研究數據尚未完善，例如欠缺高樓大廈分布數據，望政府能免費或低價開放有關數據。他又指，下一階段會建立以大數據為本智能及個人化空氣污染監測和健康管理，預計 5 年後市民可透過手機程式，預測各選區空氣污染程度、提供個人化路徑建議，計算行走不同路線會吸入的空氣污染物濃度等。// HK01, 29 January 2018, <https://www.hk01.com/%E6%B8%AF%E8%81%9E/154127/%E7%AA%AE%E4%BA%BA%E5%90%B8%E5%A1%B5-%E6%B8%AF%E5%A4%A7-%E5%8A%8D%E6%A9%8B%E7%A0%94%E7%A9%B6%E6%8F%AD%E5%85%83%E6%9C%97%E5%A4%A9%E6%BE%A4-%E5%A4%A9%E9%80%B8%E9%82%A8%E5%85%A8%E6%B8%AF%E6%9C%80%E7%AA%AE%E6%B1%A1%E6%9F%93%E6%9C%80%E5%9A%B4%E9%87%8D>

// Being poor is literally bad for your health. That's according to a new air pollution study by the University of Hong Kong. The poorer and more rundown the neighbourhoods, the worse the air gets. But of course, Hong Kong people already know that. The study helps quantify the problem, which its researchers call “environmental injustice”. [...] **The very existence of the super-rich in developed economies is a sure sign that those health and social problems are worse for the less privileged.** Low taxes and the super-rich – that's Hong Kong for you. **With a record high Gini coefficient of 0.539, our richest 10 per cent of households earn 44**

times more than the poorest 10 per cent. The HKU study addresses one aspect of this social failure. But it would be predictive – or not – if more local empirical studies could target other social and health matrices. Chances are they would agree with the conclusions of similar overseas research. // *South China Morning Post*, 2 February 2018, <http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/2131660/perils-being-poor-rich-society>

Taiwan

Controversy over M503 route escalated tensions between Taiwan and mainland China

China's recent launch of new flights on the M503 route, which lies merely 7.4 kilometers from the air border between Taiwan and mainland China, has been met with protests by the Taiwanese government. Claiming that the route would help ease air traffic congestion, China did not conduct any prior consultation with Taiwan as the Chinese government's Taiwanese Affairs Bureau said that the route is limited to Chinese airspace and, hence, no agreement is necessary. Setting out to protect its air-defense identification zone, Taiwan has consequently refused to approve the additional 176 cross-strait flights operated by China Eastern and XiamenAir for the Lunar New Year holiday, affecting 30,000 China-based Taiwanese who plan to return home. The Department of Navigation and Aviation under Taiwan's Ministry of Transportation and Communications has confirmed that, if required, military aircrafts will be used to send Taiwanese home from Kinmen. According to a survey released by the Taiwan-based Cross-Strait Policy Association, "74.2 percent of respondents disapproved of mainland China's unilateral launch of the flight routes, while 85.7 percent supported the government's call for Beijing to commence talks so as to resolve the matter" (*Taiwan Today*, 1 February 2018), reflecting Taiwan citizens' hope that the dispute can be resolved through communication.

// 《中央社》報導，民進黨立法院黨團幹事長劉櫂豪告訴中央社記者，中國政府片面啟動 M503 是違反國際間的航線作業，也牽涉台灣的國防、民航安全，政府已經發表嚴厲譴責，希望中國政府能就航線問題理性溝通。劉櫂豪說，台灣政府如果面對這樣侵害主權的事還毫無作為，影響層面會更大，政府也已經做完全準備協助台商、相關人員回台。國民黨在這時候應該譴責中國政府粗暴的作為，而不是附和中國這樣威脅的動作。交通部則回應，兩家航空公司在兩岸未溝通前，使用對安全有威脅的 M503 航路，取消加班機對安全是加分。[...] 《經濟日報》報導，而國防部因應 M503 事件，已經奉命在 2 月 14~21 日，準備至少六架 C-130 運輸機待命疏運，約占全軍 C-130 總數的 1/3。國防部表示，一旦民航機的運量不足負荷湧入的人潮，機場人員會告知現場旅客，有軍方疏運專機，旅客可以自願方式選擇搭乘。C-130 是軍用運輸機，貨艙可搭載 92 人，但必須空出位置放行李，實際搭乘人數將會減少，要搭 C-130 的民眾，以具有我國籍者為限，單程票是新台幣 1,000 元。不過，這筆錢必須繳交國庫，空軍無法留用。// *The News Lens*, 5 February 2018, <https://www.thenewslens.com/article/89162>

// Open hard-fisted retaliation against Taiwan's freezing of the extra holiday flights would risk angering the island's public, pushing voters in turn to elect leaders who take a harder line toward Beijing than Tsai does. "The hard prong had already reached a point of

saturation,” says Lin Chong-pin, a retired strategic studies professor, referring to acts such as military maneuvers. “There’s no point in going further.” No need, either. **The freezing of holiday flights sort of backfired on its own. A Chinese government-linked association of Taiwanese business people, the Association of Taiwan Investment Enterprises on the Mainland on Saturday accused Taiwan's move of "trampling on the rights of Taiwanese business people," per this news report by a mainstream Taiwan newspaper.** Beijing’s deflection of the flight issue to the business association suggests it wants Taiwanese to blame their own government for any trouble getting home for the holiday, which starts February 16. If the estimated 1 million Taiwanese investors and their family members in China can’t get home smoothly for lack of extra flights, who would they blame, the pioneer of new air routes or the freezer of additional flights? Ditto for tourists in China wondering whether to travel in Taiwan for the same holiday. At least that's how China might frame things. **"It's Tsai's first act of retaliation, but given cross-Strait traffic, it hurts travelers more, rather than China," says Joanna Lei, chief executive officer of the Chunghua 21st Century think tank in Taiwan.** // Source: *Forbes*, 25 January 2018, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ralphjennings/2018/01/25/china-wins-the-battle-of-airlines-with-its-old-foe-taiwan/#d83f5362392c>