

New COVID wave in China could last for three months



China's current wave of COVID-19 cases, following the recent easing of pandemic restrictions, is seeing a "rapid surge" and the country can expect to see a return to normalcy only after the spring of next year, top epidemiologist and government advisor Zhong Nanshan said. Following Wednesday's easing of pandemic restrictions, including a stop to mass testing, lockdowns and other measures under the earlier "zero-COVID" policy, Chinese cities are seeing a rapid spread of cases.

A rise in new cases has already begun to manifest in urban centers such as Chongqing, Beijing, and Guangzhou. Now experts are waiting to see just how serious China's outbreak will be, and whether the country can cleanly extricate itself from the epidemic ahead.

NASA's Orion capsule splashes down in Pacific after lunar mission



NASA's Orion space capsule splashed down safely in the Pacific on Sunday, completing the Artemis-1 mission — a more than 25-day journey around the moon. After hurtling through the earth's atmosphere at a speed of 40,000 kmph, the uncrewed capsule floated down to the water with the help of three parachutes.

Japanese start-up launches historic moon mission with help of SpaceX



A Japanese start-up's spacecraft was launched to the moon on Sunday in the country's first-ever lunar mission and the first of its kind by a private company. The launch was carried out by Elon Musk's SpaceX at Cape Canaveral in the U.S. State of Florida after two postponements for additional pre-flight checks. The spacecraft, produced by Tokyo-based startup ispace and carrying a United Arab Emirate-built rover, blasted off aboard a Falcon 9 rocket.

So far only the US, Russia and China have managed to put a robot on the lunar surface.

Gangs Control about 60% of Haiti's Capital, says UN humanitarian chief



Ulrika Richardson, UN humanitarian chief in Haiti has said that close to 60 percent of the capital is dominated by gangs whose violence and sexual attacks have caused thousands to flee their homes. she said that gangs are using "very terrifying levels of sexual violence as a weapon" to instill fear and punishment.

She said that nearly 20,000 people have left the capital Port-au-Prince facing "catastrophic famine-like conditions" as a cholera outbreak spreads throughout Haiti.

Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu takes oath as CM of Himachal Pradesh



Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu has taken oath as the 15th Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, days after the Congress edged the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) out of power in the Assembly election. Mukesh Agnihotri, the Leader of the Opposition in the outgoing Assembly, was also sworn in. He is the new Deputy Chief Minister.

Sukhwinder, a four-time MLA from the Nadaun constituency in Himachal Pradesh and the head of the Congress's election committee in the state.

Record 1,081 commercial pilot licences issued so far this year



Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued 1,081 commercial pilot licences in 2022, which is the highest for any year in the last one decade. The record issuance of Commercial Pilot Licences (CPLs) also comes at a time when the country's civil aviation sector is recovering at a fast pace after being hit by the coronavirus pandemic. So far 1,081 CPLs had been issued in 2022 till December 6 and the number was likely to cross 1,100 by year-end. This was also the highest for any year since 2011, as per the data. In 2014, the number of CPLs issued stood at 896, while the count was at 862 in 2021.

Modi opens Phase 1 of Mopa International Airport in Goa



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated the first phase of the greenfield international airport at Mopa in north Goa. He said the airport would be named Manohar International Airport after former Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar. The Mopa airport is the second international airport in Goa, which is operated as a city enclave from the naval air station INS Hansa.

IMF, World Bank chiefs urge China to accelerate and do more to ease the debt burdens on developing economies, discuss debt transparency



IMF Chief Kristalina Georgieva has urged China to accelerate and finalize the debt treatments for Zambia and Sri Lanka, which would allow for disbursements from the IMF and multilateral development banks while World Bank chief David Malpass said Beijing needs to do more to ease the debt burdens on developing economies. Sri Lanka has entered into a preliminary agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for an extended fund facility of 2.9 billion dollars to be disbursed over a period of four years, subject to a successful debt restructure programme and structural reforms. Much depends on whether or not China agrees to restructure Sri Lanka's 7.4-billion-dollar outstanding debt to it. Zambia is trying to complete the restructuring of nearly \$15 billion of external debt early next year and is "in active engagement" with China, its largest bilateral creditor.

Russia remains India's top oil supplier in November



Russia has, for the second month in a row, remained India's top oil supplier in November, surpassing traditional sellers Iraq and Saudi Arabia, according to data from energy cargo tracker Vortexa. Russia, which made up for just 0.2% of all oil imported by India in the year to March 31, 2022, supplied 9,09,403 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil to India in November. It now makes up for more than a fifth of India's oil supplies. According to Vortexa, India imported 8,61,461 bpd of oil from Iraq in November and 5,70,922 bpd from Saudi Arabia. The U.S. was India's fourth largest supplier at 4,05,525 bpd.

NDTV to give two board seats to Adani group firm



NDTV has offered billionaire Gautam Adani's group two seats on its board of directors for the pre-open offer, 29.18% shareholding, the ports-to-energy conglomerate had acquired in the broadcaster, according to a stock exchange filing. The group acquired a 29.18% stake in NDTV by buying a company backed by the television network's founders, Radhika Roy and Prannoy Roy.

FIFA World Cup: Argentina, Croatia, France & Morocco teams qualified for semi-finals



In the FIFA World Cup, with the quarter-finals concluded, Argentina, Croatia, France and Morocco are the four teams which have qualified for the semi-finals of the marquee tournament. Argentina is now all set to face off against Croatia in the first semi-finals on 14th December 2022. In the second semi-finals, France will be up against Morocco at Al-Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, Qatar on 15th December 2022. The final will be played on 18th December.

Australia beats West Indies by 419 runs, wins Test series 2-0



Australia dismissed West Indies for just 77 on Sunday to win the day-night second Test in Adelaide by 419 runs and seal the series 2-0. West Indies resumed day four on 38-4 and was all out in the first session, with Mitchell Starc and Michael Neser doing the damage to end a lopsided campaign. Australia won the first Test in Perth by 164 runs.

Indian women's hockey team beat Chile 3-1 in FIH Nations Cup in Valencia, Spain



In Hockey, the Indian hockey team started its Women's FIH Nations Cup 2022 campaign with a 3-1 win over Chile in their first match of Pool B in Valencia, Spain. India will now face world No. 11 and Asian champions Japan at the same venue followed by their last pool match against South Africa on Dec 14.

Women's Cricket: India defeat Australia in Super Over by four runs



In Women's Cricket, India defeated Australia in the Super Over by four runs in a nail-biting encounter at the Dr. DY Patil Sports Academy, Mumbai. Women in Blue level five-match series 1-1 after second T20 International. India scored 20 runs in the Super Over, while the Australian batters could only manage 16 runs. Chasing a target of 188 runs set by Australia, India made 187 runs for the loss of five wickets in the stipulated 20 overs. For hosts, Smriti Mandhana was the top scorer with a blistering knock of 79 runs.

Akhil wins drivers' crown, Godspeed takes team title



Akhil Rabindra won the drivers' title in the inaugural Indian Racing League (IRL) which concluded at the Hyderabad Street Circuit on Sunday. Neel Jani finished second. Godspeed Kochi topped the team charts followed by Hyderabad Blackbirds.

World Tour Finals: Axelsen and Yamaguchi emerge king and queen



Men's World No. 1 Viktor Axelsen claimed his eighth badminton title in 2022, drubbing Indonesian ace Anthony Ginting 21-13, 21-14 at the World Tour Finals. Reigning World champion Akane Yamaguchi of Japan defeated Taiwan's Tai Tzu Ying 21-18, 22-20 to claim the women's singles crown.

Former India sprint champion Kenneth Powell passes away



Former National sprint champion, Olympian and Asian Games medallist Kenneth Powell passed away. He was 82. Popularly known as ‘Gentleman Sprinter’, a tribute to his pleasant demeanour, soft-spoken nature and glowing smile, Powell participated in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics in 100m and 4x100m relay.

Hyderabad gears up to host Formula E in February 2023, FIA official inspects street circuit



Hyderabad is all set to host Formula E next year and the race circuit has impressed a Federation Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA) official who was on a two-day visit in the city for an inspection at the street racing circuit. Before leaving, the FIA official witnessed the season finale of the Indian Racing League (IRL) ended on Sunday.

Season nine of the Formula E World Championship will see 11 teams and 22 drivers racing the new Gen3 cars that are designed and optimised specifically for street racing as Hyderabad will host Round 4 of the total 17 races.