

# What's happening in Southeast and East Asia

In  
The  
News.

14th of September 2021

## Raducanu: US Open champion celebrated in China for her heritage

*Social media users in China are celebrating British tennis star Emma Raducanu – not just for her historic US Open win, but her Chinese heritage.*

Raducanu was born in Canada to a Romanian father and Chinese mother, before moving to London aged two.

Many on Chinese site Weibo praised the 18-year-old, calling her a "Dongbei girl" – a reference to her mother's ancestral home. A video of her thanking her fans in Mandarin also went viral. "She speaks just like a 'Dong Bei (north-east Chinese) girl'. How amazing!" a Weibo comment read.

Raducanu has previously spoken openly about her mixed heritage in previous interviews, something Chinese netizens have taken pride in.

In interviews, Raducanu has paid tribute to her mum and that side of the family. "They are so mentally resilient – it's like nothing can bring them down. I would say I take a big part of my inspiration from her. My mum has worked very hard," she said, adding that she learned about discipline and respect for other people from her.

The teenager, who visits her mother's ancestral home of Shenyang during the holidays, has also said that she loves nothing more than binge-watching Taiwanese television shows. On Saturday, Raducanu beat Canadian teen Leylah Fernandez in straight-sets at the US Open to become the first British woman in 44 years to win a Grand Slam final.



Source: BBC News Asia

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## Malaysian mothers win High Court battle against 'sexist' citizenship law

*Malaysia is one of 25 countries that do not give mothers and fathers equal rights under the country's citizenship law*

Malaysia's constitution gives fathers the automatic right to confer citizenship to their children born abroad, but it does not mention mothers.

Several Malaysian mothers won a legal battle on Thursday for the right to pass their nationality to their children born abroad, a landmark court decision hailed by activists as a giant step toward gender equality.



Six Malaysian women and the family support group Family Frontiers filed a legal suit in December 2020 against the decades-old law they called discriminatory. The government argued the court had no jurisdiction to hear the issue of citizenship.

Family Frontiers said in a statement that the Kuala Lumpur High Court ruled that Malaysian women have the same automatic rights as Malaysian men to pass their citizenship to their overseas-born children. "Malaysian mothers have faced family separation, along with obstacles to accessing residency, education, health care and social services for their children. Today's ruling is a monumental step in the direction of gender equality," Family Frontiers said.

Source: Associated Press

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## Hong Kong's Indonesian workers fear data security, fake vaccination record scandals will fuel distrust at the border

*As forged job certificates spread, workers hoping to enter Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan are concerned about distrust in the vaccination programme*

The e-HAC app exposed the data of 1.3 million users, while President Joko Widodo's job record was also leaked, amid calls for better data protection laws.

Concerns are growing among Indonesian migrant workers that their Covid-19 vaccine certificates will not be accepted by some destinations due to a lack of trust in the country's immunisation programme.



With Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan now allowing entry to domestic helpers vaccinated in Indonesia, recent scandals over data security and forged vaccine certificates in the Southeast Asian nation could potentially hamper the placement of migrant workers already suffering from months of pandemic-induced border closures.

“[The proliferation] of fake vaccine certificates in Indonesia would cause distrust towards Indonesian migrant workers’ [proof of vaccination]. This is [our] concern,” said Eni Lestari, spokeswoman for the Asian Migrants Coordinating Body in Hong Kong.

Source: South China Morning Post



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## Bangkok to reopen without quarantine for vaccinated tourists in October

*Thailand plans to reopen Bangkok to fully vaccinated visitors in October, officials said on Friday (Sept 10), as the kingdom seeks to salvage a tourism industry hammered by the pandemic.*

Tourism made up a fifth of Thailand's national income in 2019, but severe travel curbs imposed to fight Covid-19 saw the usual flood of foreign visitors dwindle to almost nothing, contributing to the economy's worst performance in more than 20 years.

The kingdom is pressing ahead with plans to reopen despite a deadly third wave of infections, driven by the Delta variant.



The Tourism Authority of Thailand said that from Oct 1, fully vaccinated foreign travellers will be able to visit Bangkok and four other provinces without undergoing two weeks' hotel quarantine. Instead, the five areas - also including Chiang Mai, Chon Buri, Phetchaburi and Prachuap Khiri Khan provinces - are expected to follow a "sandbox" model of the type piloted since July in the holiday island of Phuket.

Under the sandbox scheme, tourists have to stay within a certain area for seven days after arrival and take Covid-19 tests. Later in October, 21 more destinations will be added to the list, including Chiang Rai, Sukhothai and popular seaside getaway Rayong. But Thailand's third and deadliest Covid-19 wave has not yet fully subsided, and the tourism agency warned that plans could change.

Source: AFP

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## Filipino beauty queens: a new weapon in war on communism

*As part of operation 'Magdalena Mission' they are using their social media clout to lure young ladies away from the temptations of armed revolution. But critics say sinister motives lurk behind the pretty smiles*

For millions of young girls living in poverty in the Philippines, becoming a beauty queen is the rags-to-riches fantasy of choice when it comes to plotting a way out of the shanties. They dream of becoming the next Catriona Gray or Pia Wurtzbach, much like their brothers might dream of becoming the next Manny Pacquiao.

Budding beauty queens must do more than simply look good in a swimsuit. Indeed, in today's Philippines, some beauty queens are being used as weapons against the world's longest running communist insurgency.

Since 1970s, government forces have been fighting the Communist Party of the Philippines and New People's Army (NPA). The Philippine army, in a hotly disputed claim, has suggested recently that the NPA is on the brink of collapse from mass surrenders. Now the government is tapping women entertainment personalities to starve it of female support.

Its anti-communist task force is recruiting beauty queens alongside female media stars in a propaganda called "Magdalena Mission" which is aimed in promoting peace and development in the country and stopping atrocities perpetrated by the communists.



Source: South China Morning Post