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CHINA RELAXES RULES FOR HONG KONGERS TO BUY MAINLAND PROPERTY

Under China's Greater Bay Area integration program, 16 new measures have been introduced to increase the economic integration of Hong Kong and Macau residents with the mainland. The new policies give non-locals equal rights to buy up to two properties in nine Guangdong cities tax free. Currently, a buyer without a residency permit must pay five years of property tax in advance. Residents of Hong Kong and Macau can also use the mainland's mobile electronic payment services, open mainland bank accounts, and enjoy simplified cross-boundary financial management. Additional measures allow professionals in the legal, construction and insurance sectors to practice on the mainland. (*Straits Times*, November 7, 2019)

CHINA SWITCHES ON THE WORLD'S LARGEST 5G NETWORK

China's three state-run telecom operators – China Mobile, China Telecom, and China Unicom –have launched next generation 5G services for the wireless technology in 50 cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. In Shanghai, 12,000 5G base stations now support 5G coverage across the city, with plans starting at 128 yuan (\$18) for 30 GB of data per month. The U.S. and South Korea launched 5G in select areas this year, but China's network is far larger — and is estimated to encompass 110 million 5G users, or about 7% of the country's population by the end of the year. By contrast, South Korea's 5G network, launched in April, reaches only 3% of that country's far smaller population. Huawei is leading China's 5G rollout. The company was awarded half of China Mobile's 5G networking contracts, with the rest split among rivals such as Ericsson, Nokia, and ZTE. Huawei has signed 60 commercial 5G contracts with carriers around the world, leading both Ericsson and Nokia. (CNN, November 1, 2019)

HUAWEI SUES FRENCH RESEARCHER FOR HIGHLIGHTING ITS GOVERNMENT TIES

Huawei is suing Valerie Niquet, a well-respected French researcher at the Foundation for Strategic Research, for pointing out that it has ties to China's government. The tech giant filed three defamation suits in Paris against Niquet over comments she made on French TV in February that China's government controls Huawei, including that "no one would have given a Soviet company the means to monitor all the communication in the Western world, and this is what we're doing with Huawei." The unprecedented lawsuits "concern only statements that Huawei is a company controlled by the Chinese State and the Chinese Communist Party, led by a former member of the 'counter-intelligence' and using its technological expertise in telecom networks to commit acts of espionage against the Western world." It is unclear whether the French prosecutor will launch a formal investigation. The suits come as Huawei bids to build 5G networks in European countries including Germany. This week, U.S. Permanent Representative to NATO Kay Bailey Hutchison told a conference in Paris that Huawei would "have" to hand over data "if asked by the government" in China. (Bloomberg, November 22, 2019)

U.S. CHARGES ANOTHER PRC NATIONAL WITH STEALING TRADE SECRETS

Xiang Haitao, 42, a PRC national who worked for Monsanto from 2008 to 2017, has been charged in St. Louis with stealing trade secrets for China, the U.S. Justice Department has said. U.S. officials stopped Xiang at the airport attempting to board a flight to China carrying proprietary farming software. "The indictment alleges another example of the Chinese government using Talent Plans to encourage employees to steal intellectual property from their U.S. employers," said Assistant Attorney General John Demers. China's "Thousand Talents Plan" to recruit Chinese scientific researchers began in 2008. "Xiang promoted himself to the Chinese government based on his experience at Monsanto. Within a year of being selected as a Talent Plan recruit, he quit his job, bought a one-way ticket to China, and was caught at the airport with a copy of the company's proprietary algorithm before he could spirit it away," Demers said. (Reuters, November 21, 2019)

CLONED DOGS JOIN THE BEIJING POLICE FORCE

The Beijing police force has welcomed its first six cloned dogs into the force at a ceremony held at the Police Dog Base of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Public Security. Researching how to pass down the genes of excellent police dogs is an important task at the base, which worked with firms to use DNA skin samples from two police dogs to create the six cloned dogs, whose DNA is over 99 percent the same. The clones were born on the base in August and at four months old performed the same tasks as six-month-old non-cloned police dogs in terms of memory, courage and aggression. The base will clone another batch of police dogs and has established a dog cell bank to fully preserve and utilize the DNA of top-notch police dogs. (Xinhua, November 21, 2019)

