



## CHINA DENIES WHO'S INVESTIGATION INTO COVID-19 'LAB THEORY'

On June 10, 2022, China denied the World Health Organization's call for a deeper investigation into the COVID-19 'lab leak' theory. China maintained that while it welcomes any scientific investigation into the origins of COVID-19, it firmly rejects all forms of political manipulation. In this regard, China Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian asserted that the 'lab leak' theory is "a lie concocted by anti-China forces for political purposes, which has nothing to do with science." Rather, Zhao called for the World Health Organization to instead direct its investigation to U.S.-based laboratories, such as Fort Detrick and the University of North Carolina. It should be noted that both of these laboratories have been accused by China of developing COVID-19 as a bioweapon even though there is no evidence to suggest that this was the case.

Read more on:

- [The Economic Times, "China Declines WHO Covid 'Lab Leak' Theory, Calls It a 'Lie.'", 13 June 2022.](#)

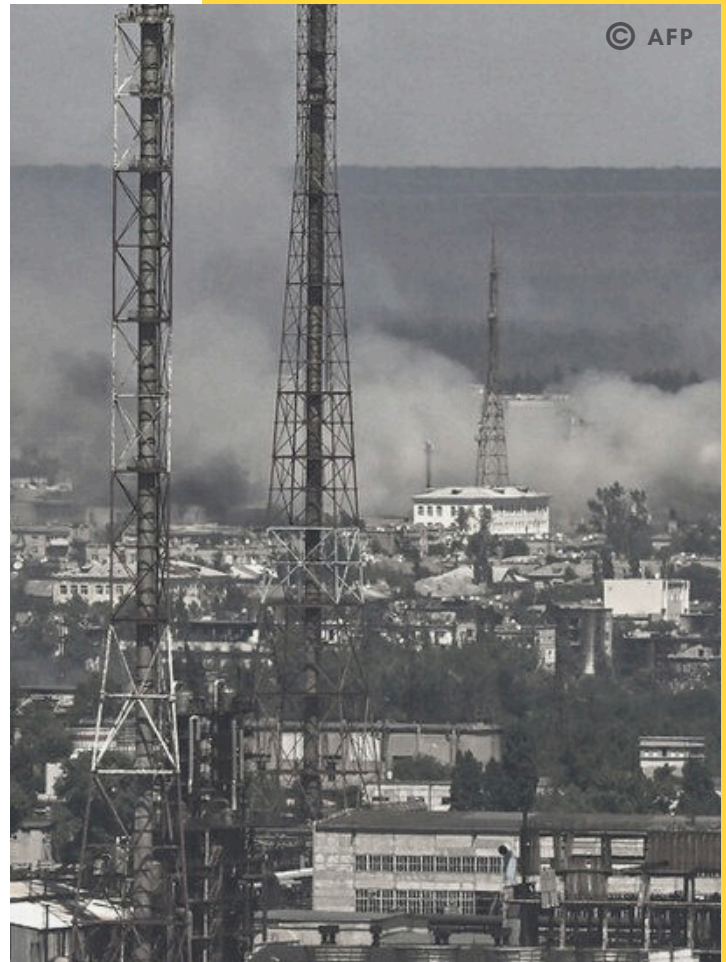
## A CHEMICAL PLANT IS HIT AS FIGHTING RAGES IN UKRAINE

Serhiy Haidai, Governor of Luhansk Oblast, told Ukrainian TV that Saturday's blaze started after a leak of tens of tonnes of oil from damaged radiators at the Azot plant, as reportedly there were as many as hundreds of civilians sheltering at the plant. Severodonetsk has become the focal point of Russia's efforts to advance in eastern Ukraine.

Russia's early attempts to capture major cities, including the capital Kyiv faltered and is now instead trying to capture the Luhansk and the Donetsk regions - a vast, mostly industrial area collectively known as Donbas. Seizing Severodonetsk and its twin city of Lysychansk would move Russia closer to its goal, as it would give them control over Luhansk.

Read more on:

- [BBC News, "Ukraine war: Chemical plant hit as fighting rages in Severodonetsk", 12 June 2022](#)



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## YOUTH-INSPIRE PROTESTS ROCKS STRATEGICALLY LOCATED SRI LANKA

Dogged by corruption, economic mismanagement, near bankruptcy, and food and fuel shortages, Sri Lanka's powerful but embattled first family is clinging to power amidst mounting protests across the strategically located island nation. The country has been forced to borrow extensively from India and China to import essential goods and pay off foreign debt. Sri Lanka is seeking loans from both India and China to repay debt to those same countries. Since April 3, thousands of protestors have camped outside the president's office near a popular seaside promenade in the heart of the capital, Colombo, in a peaceful protest demanding that the first family step down from power. Tired of the Rajapaksa family dominating positions of power, the protestors rejected the appointment of a new cabinet on April 18 that included the president's brother as prime minister.

Read more on:

- [Feizal. S, "Youth-inspired protests rock strategically located Sri Lank", NEWS DECODER, 26 Apr 2022](#)

## ABUSING KIDS MADE 2 GEORGIA PRESCHOOL TEACHERS ARRESTED

Two Atlanta preschool teachers were charged with cruelty to the children, which was captured by the school's camera. The parent, whose child was sitting next to the victim, said she quickly rushed to the school after she got the information from her son, who had logged onto the school camera, and witnessed the physical contact between the two accused people against the children. The video showed a group of students sitting on the floor with two women in the classroom. A woman steps on a student's hand and then bumps her knee into another student in the back. Another woman sitting in front of the bumped child appears to yell and push the child's forehead with her finger. The parents felt shocked, disgusted, and betrayed after viewing the footage. "Our investigation is ongoing as we are taking this matter very seriously," said the school in the email.

Read more on:

- CNN, "2 Georgia preschool teachers arrested after allegedly being caught on camera abusing kids", 8 June 2022.



## INDIAN POLICE STEP UP TO STOP RELIGIOUS UNREST OVER ANTI-ISLAM REMARKS

Authorities in India have demolished the homes of several people accused of involvement in riots last week triggered by derogatory remarks made by ruling party figures about Islam's Prophet Mohammad. In Indian Kashmir, police arrested a youth for posting a video threatening to behead the ruling party's former spokeswoman, who had made some remarks. This video, which was circulated on YouTube, has been withdrawn by authorities. Muslims have taken to the streets across India in recent weeks to protest against the anti-Islamic comments by two members of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party. Clashes have broken out between Muslims and Hindus and, in some cases, between protesters and police in several areas. Police in Uttar Pradesh arrested more than 300 people in connection with the unrest.

Read more on:

- REUTERS, "Indian officials step up arrests, demolish houses to stop unrest over anti-Islam remarks", 12 June 2022.

## CHINA SAYS 'LET'S SEE' ON U.N. ACTION OVER A NUCLEAR TEST.

China's U.N. envoy said on Thursday that Beijing does not want to see North Korea carry out a new nuclear test, which is partly why China vetoed a U.S.-led bid to impose new U.N. sanctions on Pyongyang over renewed ballistic missile launches. But Ambassador Zhang Jun warned against making presumptions on how Beijing might react at the United Nations if North Korea goes ahead with its first nuclear test since 2017.

Washington has warned such a test could happen at "any time" and it would again push for more U.N. sanctions. "Let's see what will happen, but I think we should not prejudge what will happen with a nuclear test," Zhang told Reuters, two weeks after China and Russia vetoed imposing more U.N. Security Council sanctions on North Korea.

Read more on:

- [REUTERS](#), "After Veto North Korea, China says Let's See UN Action over Nuclear Test", 9 June 2022.



## RUSSIA'S WAR PROMPTS A REGIONAL RUSH TO BECOME EU CANDIDATES

Russia's invasion of Ukraine prompted the three former Soviet republics to submit emergency applications in the first weeks of the war. Ukraine's prospects look promising, and so do Moldova's. But Georgia was slapped with a scathing European Parliament resolution on Thursday, described by one MEP as the last "wake-up call" to the government in Tbilisi. Ukraine has led the way in arguing that joining the EU has become a geopolitical necessity, although the three states are known as the Association Trio for their co-operation with the EU on everything from political reforms to free trade. In the run-up to the EU's decision, Brussels think-tank the Centre for European Studies published reports on Ukraine and Moldova's applications. It said Ukraine faced an existential crisis, while Moldova was "next at risk" from Russian aggression. It recommends that the EU should extend candidate status to both countries.

Read more on:

- [Rayhan D.](#), "Russia's war prompts regional rush to become EU candidates", [BBC News](#), 11 June 2022.