



CHINA

Beijing rejects free Hong Kong elections

Communist Party to maintain control over nominations for chief executive of territory, ignoring calls for democratic reform

NATHAN VANDERKLIPPE BEIJING

China has rejected demands that it allow free elections for Hong Kong's most powerful political figure, opting instead for a system that allows a broad vote for candidates selected and approved by Beijing.

In a decision that underscores China's unwillingness to allow any challenge to the authority of

the Communist Party, Chinese officials on Sunday said Hong Kong voters could choose their own chief executive, but only through a system designed to allow Beijing to have its way. Candidates for the position, which wields significant influence over the territory of seven million – a significant number of them with Canadian citizenship – must be patriotic to China,

according to a resolution made public Sunday.

The decision comes as an emphatic rejection of pleas by pro-democracy activists, who have threatened to shut down Hong Kong if Beijing did not provide the right to openly nominate and vote for the territory's chief executive. The "Occupy Central" movement now says it will mobilize thousands of peo-

ple to city streets to protest in coming weeks, while youth leaders are calling for student strikes. Derided by critics as a "bridge democracy," the partially open election offered by China maintains a secretive system where candidates are nominated by a 1,200-person committee, the National People's Congress said Sunday. Beijing wields significant influ-

ence over that group, made up largely of figures drawn from the business community who are keen not to anger China. The decision also plainly rules out any figure who might challenge Chinese authority. "The chief executive shall be a person who loves the country and loves Hong Kong," the decision text says. China, Page 2



People switch on their phones as part of an 'Occupy Central' pro-democracy protest in Hong Kong's central financial district on Sunday. BOBBY YIP/REUTERS

EASTERN EUROPE

Putin seeks 'statehood' talks for contested areas of Ukraine

KATYA GOLUBKOVA MOSCOW
ALEKSANDAR VASOVIC
MARIUPOLE, UKRAINE

Russian President Vladimir Putin called on Sunday for immediate talks on the "statehood" of southern and eastern Ukraine, although his spokesman said this did not mean Moscow now endorsed rebel calls for independence for territory they have seized.

The Kremlin leader's remarks, two days after a public appearance in which he compared the Kiev government with Nazis and warned the West not to "mess with us," came as Europe and the United States prepared possible further sanctions to halt what they say is direct Russian military involvement in the war in

Ukraine. Germany aired suspicions that Moscow might be trying to create a land corridor to supply Crimea, which it annexed from Ukraine in March, while the four-month conflict moved onto the sea for the first time on Sunday. The separatists said they had fired on a Ukrainian vessel in the Azov Sea using land-based artillery, and a military spokesman in Kiev said a rescue operation was under way.

Ukrainian troops and local residents were reinforcing the port of Mariupol on Sunday, the next big city in the path of pro-Russian fighters who pushed back government forces along the Azov Sea this past week in an offensive on a new front. Ukraine, Page 5

TEACHERS' STRIKE

No back-to-work legislation, B.C. Education Minister says

ALEXANDRA POSADZKI
VANCOUVER

The first day of classes this fall has been cancelled for B.C. students, leaving parents scrambling with no end in sight to a strike by the province's teachers and Education Minister Peter Fassbender vowing he won't legislate the union back to work.

A day after mediator Vince Ready temporarily withdrew from stalled contract talks, Mr. Fassbender provided the first indication of how far apart the two sides remain, saying there is a gulf of more than \$300-million between them.

Meanwhile, parents attempting to sign up to receive a \$40-a-day subsidy for each child 12 and under from the B.C. government

were met with error messages Sunday. The education ministry said it is aware of the server outages and is working to resolve them.

Earlier in the day during a media conference, Mr. Fassbender said: "The cheques will be issued as soon as it is practical," adding he expects the money will start going out in early October.

However, the Ministry of Finance has said that "most payments will be processed within 30 days after the month that the labour disruption ends."

Mr. Fassbender Sunday accused the British Columbia Teachers' Federation of trying to force the government to table back-to-work legislation. Teachers, Page 4

EDUCATION

Safety experts urge schools to replace wired glass

SAHAR FATIMA

School boards are not responding quickly enough to replace a common but dangerous type of glass, industry experts say, warning that wired glass can lead to serious injuries.

The concerns come as the federal government is poised to revise wired safety glass standards, last updated in 1990. Wired glass – glass with a layer of meshed wire inside – is commonly used in doors and fire separations in schools and most other public buildings as it is fire resistant and, in some cases, required by building codes.

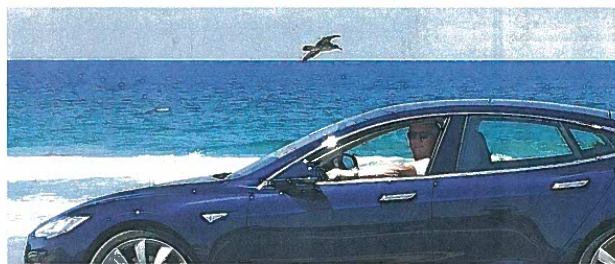
But engineering and glass experts say despite its ability to withstand heat, wired glass is weaker on impact than regular glass and shouldn't be used in high-traffic areas because safer fire-resistant alternatives are available. Glass, Page 11

AUTOMOBILES

Electrifying experience

The Globe's Peter Cheney takes an electric Tesla for a 2,800-km test drive

FOLIO, PAGES 6-7



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EDUCATION

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Glass, Page 11

FROM PAGE 1

Glass: Former student seeks \$5-million for injury suffered at Ontario high school

“The government’s review of the standards takes place as Sean Lloyd, a former Burlington high school student, is suing the Halton Catholic District School Board for \$5-million after he pushed through a wired glass panel while attempting to open a door last year and sliced open a large chunk of his arm. “I felt like I was going to faint because I lost a lot of blood,” said Mr. Lloyd, who was 18 at the time of the incident at Assumption Catholic Secondary School. “It was pretty scarring.”

He said he still has problems weighing his right arm and can’t lift weights with it. Mr. Lloyd’s lawyer, Michael Smi-tuch, said since media reports of the case came out, he’s heard from nearly a dozen other individuals who say they suffered similar injuries from wired glass in schools.

“It’s just not the case when someone says that there aren’t any other options. There are,” Mr. Smi-tuch said. “Either school boards just don’t want to spend the money or for some other rea-

“It’s like walking around seeing knives sticking out of the wall,” said Mr. Botman, who recently

launched Canadians for Safe Glass, an initiative to raise awareness about the potential dangers of wired glass.

Mr. Botman volunteered to sit on the Canadian General Standards Board committee revising standards for three different types of glass, beginning with wired glass. The Public Works and Government Services department is only now revisiting the standard “to respond to needs identified by manufacturers, glass users and regulators such as Health Canada and the National Research Council,” spokeswoman Annie Joannette said in an e-mail.

A draft of the new standard will be ready for public review late this year, she said. It will be completed in 2015. In the United States, a series of building code changes starting in 2009 banned using wired glass in “hazardous” locations, such as doors, unless it was reinforced with a heat-resistant film. Mr. Botman said Canada’s new standard will likely take a similar approach and require a sticker on any plastic film to prove it’s heat-resistant.

“As somebody who walks my kids to school every day and I see this stuff everywhere, it just drives me up the wall that all these Canadian kids are getting injured,” he said. “The Americans are smart enough to do something about it but we still have not.”

embedded in glass, it would be much stronger. That is a wrong impression,” Dr. Wang said. The wire and glass expand and contract at different rates under a change in temperature, leaving potential gaps, or “micro-cracks,” when the glass is processed. “After that, any small force on the glass will create a huge stress or force at the crack tip,” Dr. Wang said.

Schools should lead the charge to replace or strengthen their wired glass to keep students safe, said Rob Botman, general manager of Glassopolis, which for years has sold alternatives such as ceramic glass or wired glass reinforced with a heat-resistant plastic film. The Ontario School Boards’ Insurance Exchange, which insures school boards, advises on its website, “Wired glass can cause horrible injuries.”

Between 1987 to 2000, 107 claims against Ontario schools for glass injuries added up to more than \$3-million. “It’s like walking around seeing knives sticking out of the wall,” said Mr. Botman, who recently

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“If the schools themselves do not get off their arses and make some of these changes, they may be forced into it,” Mr. Botman said.

The Toronto District School Board is exploring options for doors and windows where building and fire codes don’t require the use of wired glass.

“If there’s a safer way to do things then we’ll obviously look at doing that,” spokesman Ryan Bird said. “With close to 600 schools and thousands upon thousands of doors, we’d have to obviously look at the cost.”

No cost estimates exist yet as the plans are too preliminary. Mr. Botman said wired glass costs about half the price of ceramic glass, but a film reinforcement is a cheaper alternative.

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