

High on agenda

Country accelerating efforts to develop the industrial internet

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Revered poet's ancient cottage ready for visitors

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Threads of the past

Silk remains symbol of China's history, culture and prosperity

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# CHINA DAILY

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## President to attend Universiade in Chengdu

By XU WEI  
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FISU  
WORLD  
UNIVERSITY  
GAMES  
SUMMER

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President Xi Jinping will attend the opening ceremony of the 31st summer edition of the FISU World University Games in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, and host visiting heads of state and government from six countries from Thursday to Friday, with expectations running high for the success of the gala event.

The Chinese president will hold a welcoming banquet and bilateral events for foreign leaders attending the opening ceremony and visiting China, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying announced on Monday.

The foreign leaders are Indone-

sian President Joko Widodo, Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Cheikh Ghazouani, Burundian President Evariste Ndayishimiye, Guyanese President Irfaan Ali, Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Garibashvili, and Fijian Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka. Chengdu will become the third city

on the Chinese mainland to host the biennial Summer Universiade, following Beijing in 2001 and Shenzhen in 2011.

Zhu Feng, dean of the School of International Studies at Nanjing University, said the Universiade will be a major opportunity to promote exchanges and understanding among young people from across the globe, an important factor for global peace and stability.

The Chengdu games, the first major sports event held by China since Beijing's optimization of COVID-19 policies in January, will give fresh impetus to global youth exchanges, he said.

He noted that the six foreign leaders attending the Chengdu event are

from developing nations in different regions of the world, which will make this year's Universiade an important occasion for high-level dialogue and exchanges in the developing world.

Some athletes have already expressed high expectations for the games, which are expected to run from Friday to Aug 8.

Lida Nanou, a student of applied mathematics at National Technical University of Athens and an archer, views her upcoming trip to Chengdu as an exciting experience.

"We have expectations. We will do our best as a team. It's great that the Universiades are back. We are going to meet athletes from all around the world. I find this experience very valuable in our journey as athletes," she told Xinhua News Agency.

## Recovery to get more support from policy

Political Bureau says nation's economy has enormous resilience and potential

By CAO DESHENG  
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China will step up macroeconomic policy support in the second half of the year to further boost the nation's economic recovery, focusing on expanding domestic demand, enhancing confidence and preventing risks, according to a Party leadership meeting on Monday.

The meeting of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, presided over by Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, analyzed the current economic situation and made arrangements for economic work in the second half of the year.

China's economy is facing new challenges, mainly arising from insufficient domestic demand, difficulties confronting some enterprises, risks and hidden dangers in key areas, as well as a grim and complex external environment, said a statement issued following the meeting.

However, it noted that the nation's economy has enormous resilience and potential, and the positive fundamentals for long-term development remain unchanged.

It is necessary to stick to a proactive fiscal policy and a prudent monetary policy, step up the implementation of tax and fee reduction, and give full play to the role of quantitative and structural monetary tools to support scientific and technological innovation, the real economy and the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, the meeting's participants said.

They emphasized that the exchange rate of the renminbi shall be kept generally stable at an appro-

appropriate and balanced level, and efforts should be made to invigorate the capital market and boost investors' confidence.

While calling for unleashing the fundamental role of consumption in driving economic growth, they said that consumption should be stimulated in major sectors, such as automobiles, electronic products and household goods, and service consumption in sports, entertainment, culture and tourism should be promoted.

The role of government investment should be better utilized, and the issuance and utilization of local government special bonds should be accelerated, the meeting decided.

The meeting's participants also underlined the need to map out policies and measures to promote private investment, and to take more measures to stabilize the fundamentals of international trade and foreign investment.

International flights should be increased, and stable and smooth operation of China-Europe freight trains should be ensured, they said.

They pointed out that it is necessary to vigorously promote the construction of a modern industrial system, accelerate the cultivation and development of strategic emerging industries, and create more pillar industries.

The deep integration of the digital economy with advanced manufacturing and modern services should be promoted, and the secure development of artificial intelligence should be facilitated, they said, adding that the healthy and sustained development of the internet-based platform economy should be promoted.

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## Fleeing their homeland



A man helps a child climb onto the back of a truck near a school in strife-torn Sudan on Sunday. The truck relocated people who fled conflict zones in Sudan to a refugee camp in Adre, Chad. ZOHRA BENSEMRA / REUTERS See story, page 15

## Kissinger's visit highlights need for more pragmatism

WORLD WATCH  
By Imran Khalid

Amid the diplomatic encounters and high-level dialogues between China and the United States, a moment for reflection has emerged regarding a global way forward, reminiscent of a historic juncture that shaped the course of international relations.

President Xi Jinping, in his meeting on Thursday with former US secretary of state Henry Kissinger, harkened back to a pivotal decision made more than five decades ago by Chairman Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai, then US president Richard Nixon and Kissinger. This

decision to normalize China-US ties was not only courageous but also transformative, reshaping the world order in unforeseen ways.

This historic resolve, initiated at the same Villa No 5 of Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing where Xi and Kissinger met on Thursday, marked the beginning of a normalization process that would shape the course of bilateral relations.

President Xi warmly acknowledged the 100-year-old former diplomat's role as a longtime, cherished friend of the Chinese people, lauding his historic contri-

butions in fostering the growth of China-US ties and nurturing the bond of friendship between their peoples. Over the years, Kissinger has been instrumental in fostering meaningful and reciprocal interactions between the two nations.

"The Chinese people value friendship, and they never forget their old friend, nor your historic contributions to promoting the growth of China-US relations and enhancing friendship between the two peoples," Xi said during the meeting, citing Kissinger's more than 100 visits to China.

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## DANCE CLASSES CATCH ON AS FITNESS CRAZE

Gyms increase number of sessions, styles to meet demand

By YANG FEIYUE  
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When Feng Siran is not working his regular job, he's dancing for a living.

The 26-year-old from Beijing is juggling two careers — one as an e-commerce operations manager, the other as a dance instructor at a gym in Haidian district. As a result, his life is run like clockwork. He wakes at six in the morning and orders an Americano

coffee to be delivered before heading to the gym to give his first dance class 90 minutes later.

"I consider it a warm-up for the day," Feng said. At the gym, music blares from a stereo and Feng, tall and limber, instantly becomes the center of attention. He nimbly moves his body to the beat while

giving his students instructions and interacting with them.

Feng mainly teaches jazz party, a dance genre he considers relatively easy, but which has movements that improve posture and burn off calories. "I enjoy the class, especially when I see the smiles on their faces and get positive feedback," he said.

After the 50-minute morning session he heads to his job as an e-commerce operations manager.

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## NBA star Anderson now a Chinese citizen, to play for national team

By SUN XIAOCHEN  
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It's official! There will be a Chinese player again in the NBA lineup in the next season.

With his naturalization process completed, US-born basketball player Kyle Anderson is now a Chinese citizen who is eligible to represent his adopted country on the international stage.

The Chinese Basketball Association confirmed the much-anticipated news on its official Weibo account on Monday morning, about 24 hours after Anderson, now known as "Li Kaier" in China, landed in Shanghai to wrap up the legal process.

"With the effort and support of all parties involved, Li Kaier has obtained his Chinese citizenship and has met CBA president Yao Ming," the association said in the statement.

"We appreciate all the help and support, especially from Li Kaier's family, for making this happen. Thanks for the attention and concern from fans and media," said the statement, posted with a group photo of a smiling Anderson, his mother Suzanne and CBA chief Yao Ming.

Born in New Jersey and drafted as a first-round pick by the San Antonio Spurs in 2014, Anderson averaged 9.4 points, 5.3 rebounds and 4.9 assists in 69 games in the 2022-23 season for Minnesota Timberwolves

as a playmaking forward in his ninth NBA season.

Anderson became an eligible candidate for CBA's overseas talent search due to his family lineage. His mother's grandfather was Chinese.

The versatile forward has amassed a huge fan following in China, which is the NBA's biggest overseas market, ever since the CBA confirmed its intentions to bring him onboard in April.

"Hello, fans in China, this is Li Kaier. I am so happy to announce that I will be representing China in the World Cup," Anderson said in a video posted on his Weibo account on Monday.

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A group photo released on Monday shows NBA player Kyle Anderson (right) and his mother, Suzanne Anderson, posing with Chinese Basketball Association chief Yao Ming. CHINESE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION

**INSIDE**  
NATO push paused, but not abandoned  
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## PAGE TWO

## Dance: Popular pastime offers exercise, joy



From page 1

He manages to squeeze in another dance session during his two-hour lunch break, and ends his day with two back-to-back night classes.

"It's dancing that makes me disciplined and good at managing my time," Feng said.

**Movers, shakers**

In recent years, gyms have picked up on the rising public demand for dance as a form of exercise, and are rolling out a range of different classes and recruiting more professional dance instructors.

Yan Hao, who is in charge of dance class operations at the Hilefit gymnasium chain, said the number of people attending dance classes has been continuously increasing. For example, the dance class enrollment rate in May 2023 was 6 percent higher than in November 2022.

"The demographic is getting younger, with the majority of members being young women," Yan said. "The classes often reach full capacity, and it has been a frequent phenomenon for people to rush to enroll, sometimes resulting in classes being fully booked within seconds," Yan added.

At the moment, dance classes comprise more than 20 percent of all group classes at Hilefit, said Zhou Denghong, who is in charge of the group classes.

Dance genres featuring freestyle K-pop, street, and jazz elements have been developed to help novice dancers. "They cater to the needs of customers who love dancing, but have zero foundation," Zhou said.

K-pop dance classes are popular with female clients who love the all-male and all-female pop idol groups from South Korea, Zhou said.

The gym also offers a dance that combines zumba and body jam styles. "It targets customers who lean toward fun exercise through dancing, and makes up more than 15 percent of all classes," Zhou said.

**All in step**

Compared with many other popular pastimes, dance classes have a strong social aspect. Members share common interests in music, dance moves and filming their activities, Yan noted.

Hilefit has organized at least 10 large-scale public events that offer dance sessions, including one at a sports carnival in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, in June. "Dance classes were in demand and were mostly fully booked shortly after they were made available during the carnival," Yan said.

Dance sessions held during the carnival were broadcast online and

attracted over 800,000 views on the short-video platform Douyin alone.

"We received requests from users expressing their desire for more dance classes afterward," Yan said, adding that more traditional gym trainers have started to learn how to become dance instructors to meet the rising demand for classes.

"It's exciting that an increasing number of male dance teachers have emerged in our system," Yan said.

Hilefit said it will continue to upgrade its dance classes, and introduce new ones to satisfy its customers' needs.

"We welcome professional and outstanding dance course brands and research and development teams to contact us for in-depth cooperation," Yan said.

**Young at heart**

Li Qian, co-founder of the dance genre known as pop dance, is now working with multiple fitness chains including Hilefit and Keepland, as well as some primary and middle schools, to offer the dance in more than 30 cities nationwide.

"Most of our members said the classes help them blow off steam and cheer up," Li said.

She is surprised that many men and middle-aged and senior people have joined the pop dance classes.

Li believes most people can easily learn the dance moves and feel like a "superstar" while burning off enough calories to stay in shape. She believes this combination of factors is why the dance is growing in popularity.

"Pop dance covers diverse styles and updates every three months to incorporate the latest trendy music and dancing elements," Li said, adding that all the moves they include in the lessons are based on class members' preferences.

The full measure of the public's enthusiasm for the dance genre was witnessed at recent dance promotional events at Peking University and open space plazas in Beijing, Li said. "The tickets sold out within seconds after they were released," she said.

Many of the pop dance trainers are part-time. Li said she also encourages them to create their own style based on the essential dance moves and added they should enjoy being innovative.

Jiang Weichen, 35, became a full-time pop dance instructor in 2021 after quitting his medical equipment business.

He studied and trained in dance at college, but didn't choose it as a career.

His business wasn't doing well

when he started dancing again at the gym. "It rekindled my passion for dance, which brought positive energy back into my life," said Jiang, who lives in Beijing and works at gyms in Changping and Chaoyang districts.

Many of his dance students have become his friends.

"They surprised me by bringing cakes to the class on my birthday, and seeing them enjoy my class has given me confidence to carry on with my new course in life," he said.

Jiang gives two to three classes a day and almost all of them are fully booked.

"I want to become a coach for trainers in the future, and I believe there's huge potential in the business, as people are paying more attention to fitness," he said.

Feng, from the Haidian gym, says he makes time every week to take four to five advanced dance training sessions for himself. "I'm still a novice in the business. Many of my teachers have danced for more than a decade," Feng said.

"I will keep exploring different dance genres and express myself through multiple platforms and hopefully evolve into a warrior on the dance floor," he said.

**Chrysalis change**

Brimming with self-confidence, Feng says he is a far cry from the person he was four years ago when he started to learn dance shortly after he graduated.

He said after work he had nothing to do, so he would lie on his bed and scroll through "mindless" social media.

But at some point he remembered his childhood dream of learning how



to dance and decided to give it a try.

"I had never danced before, but I always knew I wanted to dance because it would allow me to express myself," he said.

He first signed up for lessons at G-Steps, a franchised street dance training facility in Beijing.

"My four limbs were rigid and I could not catch up with the trainer's instructions," he recalled.

As he carried on, he began to enjoy the beauty of the art form, building up his dancing strength while interacting with people who shared his interest.

"I felt empowered and motivated when other students would sit on the ground and watch me dance," Feng recalled.

The student-teacher role was reversed, and in April 2022 he started giving dance classes at multiple gyms, including Hilefit and Super Monkey.

"I could feel members' passion for dancing classes, and afterward many of them would approach me and tell me the dance moves look really nice," Feng said.

As he enthusiastically pursued his interest, significant changes happened to the way he looked at himself as he transformed into a dancer.

"I could barely look at myself in the mirror at the beginning," Feng said. "But now I can't keep my eyes off the mirror. I can delve deeper into each move and work out all the nuanced details," he said.

*How I found my feet, both physically and mentally*

Five months ago, I would have rather died than wave my hands or wiggle my butt to music in public.

In fact, I was silently complaining about back-to-back dancing classes at my gym that restricted the space for my more traditional "manly" workouts — body pump, body combat, love strength and core scaler. OK, maybe love strength is questionable.

As a regular gym-goer, I felt indignant, especially as I was starting to reap the benefits of my chosen classes as my physical strength and stamina improved through barbell lifts and martial arts moves.

I also used to be a follower of old-school aerobics fitness, and hit the treadmill twice a week. However, I was unsure whether I was toning up or getting fatter and used this uncertainty as an excuse to end the "monotonous" running.

Earlier this year, I shifted to group workout classes as a way of easing back into exercise after being infected with COVID-19. The combination of moves with lighter fitness equipment done to the beat of music not only made exercise more fun, but got me back into shape in a very short time.

I was happy, but happiness is relative.

When the strange names of "double dance", "zumba", "pop dance", "body jam" and "jazz party" appeared on the electronic display screen near the entrance of the gym class, I had a sinking feeling my happy workouts were over.

As I lifted weights on my own and observed the dancers contorting their bodies, feelings of resentment and disdain washed over me.

On the surface, dance classes don't seem male friendly, as women make up 70 percent or more of the participants. As someone who hadn't danced since he was a teenager, I assumed the classes would not be physically intense enough for me. But, deep down, I knew that assumption was tinged with insecurity about trying something new.

After two months of being shy about trying the dance classes I took the plunge.

Just as I was about to leave after the end of my love-strength class, the female instructor encouraged us to stay on and take her double-dance session, which she said was the easiest of all the

Yang Feiyue  
Reporter's log

gym dances.

For a guy with two left feet it was a challenge, but I decided to give it a try.

The instructor left to change into a looser jacket and returned with her hair unpinned and hanging down. I was flabbergasted, not by the difficulty of the moves, but by the different person the teacher had turned into.

As promised, the moves were not difficult. I could follow most of them, albeit with some awkwardness.

But the coach seemed to be able to execute each and every action with precision and vigor, which gave her an aura.

The visual impact on me was strong, perhaps because it was the first time I had seen a dance coach up close.

Her strong presence was something I hadn't seen in my other group classes or instructors.

I managed to get through the session, sweating a lot and enjoying the vibrant music. As I picked up new dance moves and became more proficient I felt a sense of accomplishment.

I realized that for me, dance was a pain-free form of aerobic exercise. I didn't have to grit my teeth fighting the boredom of running or spend days recovering from an intense workout program like body combat. Dancing was a more relaxing way to get my daily aerobic workout.

As I have become comfortable with the dance class, I've been emboldened to explore other genres, like pop dance.

The instructors and participants seem to have a glow of confidence when they are in action.

They are all happy as they express themselves by synchronizing their movements with the music and interacting with each other.

The joy is infectious. When I feel like doing nothing, a dance session usually perks me up. Most importantly, it helps me discard irrational and irrelevant thoughts and emotions and live in the moment, which is a feeling that is out of this world.

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Left: Students enjoy a dance class in Hangzhou. Right: Li Qian (center), co-founder of the dance genre known as pop dance, works with multiple fitness chains. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



## TOP NEWS

## Shelter for wildfire evacuees



Tourists shelter in a stadium on Sunday after they were evacuated following a wildfire on the Greek island of Rhodes. Wildfires continued to rage on Rhodes on Sunday, forcing more evacuations. As a precautionary measure, 19,000 people were evacuated from the fire-affected areas, making it the largest evacuation operation ever carried out during a fire in Greece, according to the police. ARGIRIS MANTIKOS / REUTERS

## Senior diplomat: Build open, inclusive cyberspace

Participants in meeting agree to enhance voice of developing nations

By MO JINGXI  
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Senior Chinese diplomat Wang Yi called on Monday for building an open and inclusive cyberspace, saying that the issue of cybersecurity has become a common challenge for developing countries.

He also said that cyberspace should not be a "new battlefield" with "digital iron curtains".

Wang, director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, made the remarks while attending a meeting with friends of BRICS in Johannesburg, the capital of South Africa.

South Africa is this year's chair of BRICS, the grouping of emerging

economies that also includes Brazil, Russia, India and China.

Wang, together with national security advisers and high representatives from the four other BRICS economies, as well as other countries including Belarus, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Burundi, the United Arab Emirates, Kazakhstan and Cuba, had in-depth discussions on cybersecurity during the meeting.

Participants agreed to join hands to reform the global governance system on cyberspace and to enhance the representation and voice of developing countries.

Noting that cybersecurity is an important cornerstone of national security, Wang said it is necessary for developing countries to

enhance strategic communication, define the direction of cooperation and safeguard common interests in this regard.

Countries must uphold fairness and justice, oppose technological hegemony and cyber hegemony of any form, and allow all parties to contribute and benefit in an open and inclusive cyberspace, he said.

Wang said that true multilateralism must be practiced in order to build a fair and equitable cyberspace. This means supporting the United Nations to play a core role in the global governance of cyberspace and fully considering the reasonable concerns of developing countries, he said.

The senior diplomat said that each country's independent choice

of a cybersecurity development path and its management should be respected.

Any attempt to exploit cyberspace for "color revolutions" must be firmly rejected, he said.

Wang also underlined the importance of sharing the dividends of digital economy and ensuring the openness, security and stability of global industrial and supply chains in terms of information and communications.

Also on Monday, Wang held separate talks in Johannesburg with Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Nikolai Patrushev, secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation.

When meeting with Doval, Wang said that a major trend in the world today is the successive rise of developing countries including China and India and called for the two countries to deepen mutual trust and focus on cooperation to bring ties back to healthy and stable development.

Whether the two countries support each other or exhaust each other due to suspicion will directly affect not only each other's development but also the world's future, Wang said.

## Measures expected to boost private investment

By OUYANG SHIJIA  
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China has unveiled a series of measures to stimulate the vitality of private investment and boost confidence, signaling the country's latest push to bolster the private sector and shore up the world's second-largest economy.

Analysts said the measures are part of a package of steps to boost support for the private sector, which is key to reviving China's economic recovery amid pressures from the real estate slump and weakening external demand.

Warning of challenges to the private sector, including lackluster demand, rising production costs and financing difficulties, they called for more steps to tackle issues faced by private enterprises, ease market access restrictions and further increase policy support to ensure returns on private investment.

The country will specify a group of key subsectors in which the private sector will be encouraged to participate and will optimize financing support for private investment projects,

according to the document released by the National Development and Reform Commission.

A meeting held on Monday by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee also stressed efforts to "effectively optimize the development environment for private enterprises".

Feng Jianlin, chief economist at Beijing FOST Economic Consulting Co, said the new document is part of support policies to better implement the top-level guideline released last week to promote the development of the private sector, adding that the NDRC will introduce additional support policies soon.

Citing key steps mapped by the document, Hong Yong, an associate research fellow at the e-commerce research institute of the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation, said that encouraging the private sector's participation in some key subsectors will offer

more opportunities for the private sector's involvement in key national projects, promote the development of relevant subsectors and prop up economic growth.

The document says the commission will select a group of subsectors from key sectors, including transportation, water conservation, clean energy, new infrastructure, advanced manufacturing and modern agriculture. The private sector will be encouraged to actively participate in those projects.

Zhou Maohua, an analyst at China Everbright Bank, said new measures will contribute to improving project construction efficiency and easing fiscal pressures in certain regions.

"With targeted measures to tackle difficulties faced by private investment, the detailed document will help boost confidence and stimulate the vitality of private investment, leading to a gradual recovery of the private sector," Zhou added.

The private sector, a key driving force behind China's economic ascent during the past decades, contributes more than 60 percent of gross domestic product, 70 percent of technological innovation and 80 percent of urban employment, official data show.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, fixed-asset investment by the private sector edged down 0.2 percent year-on-year in the first half of 2023, compared with a 0.1 percent decline in the first five months of the year.

Hong, the associate research fellow, called for more efforts to increase financial support for private enterprises, including setting up special financial institutions or funds to provide diversified financing channels. More efforts should also be made to further ease restrictions on market access, continuously optimize the market environment for fair competition and ensure a stable policy environment, Hong said.

Gao Jifan, chairman of Trina Solar Co, a leading Chinese photovoltaics company, said policy measures such as optimizing the business environment and increasing policy support for the private sector will help promote the high-quality and sustained development of private enterprises.

## Recovery: Need for deepening reform stressed

From page 1

The meeting also emphasized the need to continue to deepen reform and opening-up, improve the core competitiveness of State-owned enterprises, and optimize the environment for the development of private enterprises.

It is necessary to effectively prevent and resolve risks in key areas, and adjust and optimize policies for the real estate sector at an appropriate time to promote the stable and healthy growth of the real estate market, said the meeting's participants.

They urged effectively preventing and resolving local government debt risks, and formulating and implementing a package of debt-reduction measures. Financial supervision should be strengthened, they said.

In terms of people's livelihoods, the meeting emphasized promoting employment and greater efforts to expand the middle-income group.

Achievements made in poverty reduction should be consolidated and expanded, and the rural revitalization strategy should be comprehensively advanced, the meeting decided.

To do the economic work well in the second half of the year, the CPC Central Committee held a symposium with non-CPC personalities on Friday to seek their opinions and suggestions.

## Basketball: Anderson to join team for training

From page 1

"I am really proud and honored to wear the Team China jersey. ... I will check and update my Weibo often. Thank you everyone! Much love!"

Now legally a Chinese, Anderson's eligibility to represent Team China remains subject to final approval by basketball's international governing body FIBA. According to rules, each national team can include only one naturalized player in its 12-man roster in any official international game.

The 6-foot-9-inch (2.06-meter) power forward is expected to significantly boost Team China's prospect at the 2023 FIBA World Cup, where the highest-ranked Asian team will directly qualify for next year's Paris Olympics.

After failing to qualify for the

Tokyo Olympics in 2021, due to a poor 2019 World Cup campaign at home, the Chinese men's squad cannot afford to miss out on the sport's biggest stage for two editions in a row, thus pushing the CBA leadership to search for talent overseas, despite the fact that naturalization of athletes remains a controversial topic in China's sporting community.

Before Anderson, a glittering cast of athletes boasting Chinese heritage have opted to suit up for China internationally, including Olympic champion freestyle skier Gu Ailing, Canadian-born ice hockey player Brandon Yip, aka Ye Jinguang, and, most recently, Hungarian-born short-track speed skating brothers Shaolin Sandor Liu and Shaoyang Liu.

If all goes according to plan,

Anderson will soon fly to Slovenia to join the Chinese men's team at its European training camp.

Team China's head coach Aleksandar Djordjevic, who met Anderson in Shanghai on June 28, said he expected a big contribution from the NBA star.

"I hope that we will finish that," Djordjevic said earlier this month before Team China left for Europe. "He is a very valuable player and a very valuable person who has a lot of desire to be (with us). All of us appreciate that."

Team China will start its 2023 World Cup campaign in Manila on Aug 26 with a match against its first Group B opponent Serbia at the Arana Coliseum in the Philippines capital, with two more games against South Sudan and Puerto Rico slotted after that.

## Welcome to Xinjiang



A dancer from South Africa interacts with a performer from the Xinjiang Art Theater after a South African dance troupe arrived on Sunday at Urumqi Diwopu International Airport in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. The troupe is participating in the 6th China Xinjiang International Dance Festival, which has attracted more than 1,000 artists from Asia, Europe and Africa. The festival started on Thursday and runs through Aug 5. ZOU HONG / CHINA DAILY

## Visit: Managing potential risks through communication called for

From page 1

Although it seems sad that the world's largest economy needs a centenarian sitting on a prominent stage to relieve tension, Kissinger carried out his mission and has encouraged the administration of US President Joe Biden to avoid a confrontational stance toward Beijing.

Kissinger also met with Defense Minister Li Shangfu, who is still sanctioned by the US, and senior diplomat Wang Yi, director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China Central Committee. Kissinger's informal visit also coincided with an official delegation led by John Kerry, Biden's top climate envoy, to Beijing.

Kissinger has consistently emphasized the imperative of effectively

managing the potential risks of a conflict between China and the US through dialogue and communication. Last month, in an interview with The Economist, Kissinger revealed his alarm at the escalating technological and economic rivalry between China and the US. "We're in the classic pre-World War I situation where neither side has much margin of political concession and in which any disturbance of the equilibrium can lead to catastrophic consequences," he said.

Similarly, in another media interview, Kissinger said that to prevent conflict with China, "the US needs to refrain from being heedlessly adversarial and pursue dialogue instead". Recognizing the gravity of the situation, he has shown an aversion to the intensifying competition between the two nations and stressed the need for careful consid-

eration and strategic foresight.

Kissinger's apprehension underscores the significance of managing this delicate dynamic to ensure stability and cooperation in the global arena. His diplomatic approach is rooted in a pragmatic realism, eschewing ideological biases and placing a premium on equilibrium, which seems in dire need in US politics toward China and Russia.

With a keen awareness of history's lessons, Kissinger champions a path that prioritizes peaceful resolutions and mutual understanding. Unfortunately, the personal trip by Kissinger, which was preceded by official visits by Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, is being viewed with a different lens in Washington.

Although the recent high-profile visits reflect a mutual desire for contacts and communication

between China and the US, mere communication alone cannot repair the rift, amid the fragility of current Sino-US relations. The Biden administration's pivot from "decoupling" to "de-risking" is an encouraging shift, yet certain actions, such as the reported plans for further restrictions on US investments in China, raise concerns.

The Biden administration now stands at a critical crossroads and would do well if it could draw inspiration from Kissinger's approach to diplomacy. Additionally, Washington's continuous pressure on China's core interests, like the Taiwan question, remains a sticking point. To revitalize the bilateral relationship, substantial and sustained efforts are needed from both sides.

The US must move beyond the

illusion that it can exert strategic and economic pressure on China while expecting cooperation on its own terms. Mutual trust must be built upon concrete actions, translating goodwill into tangible deeds.

Xi's call to Kissinger for both countries to make profound choices speaks to the pivotal nature of this moment. The decisions made by China and the US will ripple beyond their borders, having an impact on the global landscape. The world watches with keen interest, hoping that both countries will navigate this crucial phase wisely to find a renewed push for cooperation and understanding.

The author is an international affairs commentator and freelancer based in Karachi, Pakistan. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

## CHINA

## Du Fu's cottage prepares for visitors as games near



By HUANG ZHILING in Chengdu  
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In anticipation of the Chengdu FISU World University Games, which starts on Friday, the Chengdu Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum in Sichuan province has been holding an orchid exhibition.

During the show, which began on March 3 and will run through Oct 30, more than 1,000 pots of orchids will be on display, according to Chen Tao, an information officer at the museum.

In traditional Chinese culture, orchids are known as one of the "Four Gentlemen", together with the plum, bamboo and chrysanthemum, denoting people of integrity and being the spiritual sustenance of generations of literati.

Visitors to the museum believe that it is very appropriate to hold an orchid exhibition there because Du, who cared about the well-being of the people, was a man of integrity.

Du (712-770) is one of China's most revered poets. He lived during the time in which the Tang Dynasty (618-907), one of China's most illustrious dynasties, had begun to decline. A war waged by two rebel generals from 755 to 763 ravaged many parts of the country.

Du, a native of Gongxian county in Henan province, reached Chengdu in 759 to take refuge from the war. The following year, he built a cottage by the Flower Bathing Brook with financial aid from his friend Yan Wu (726-765), who was a poet as well as a leading official in Sichuan.

Since then, the cottage has been China's most famous literary pilgrimage destination, said a BBC English documentary that premiered on April 6, 2020.

The documentary, *Du Fu: China's Greatest Poet*, hails him as China's Shakespeare because of his influence on Chinese literature.

While living in the cottage for

nearly four years, Du penned 240 of his 1,455 extant poems. Contemporary Chinese poet Feng Zhi thus said: "When people mention Du Fu, they may ignore his place of birth and death, but they can never forget his cottage in Chengdu."

The 20-hectare Du Fu Thatched Cottage Museum has a cottage that opened to visitors in 1997 in line with the poet's description in his works.

Famous local architect and painter Liu Weibing said the cottage resembles *linpan*, the traditional thatched-roofed houses of Sichuan farmers set amid bamboo forests and next to streams. Such dwellings have existed in the area for about 4,700 years.

Mi Li, a college professor based in the United States, had not returned to his hometown Chengdu for four years mainly because of COVID-19.

Coming home in late June, he made a special trip to the museum twice during his eight-day stay in Chengdu and had his wedding photos taken there.

For literature lovers, visiting the museum to see Du's complete works of 1,455 poems engraved on stone tablets is a must.

With an investment of 150 million yuan (\$21 million), the Chengdu city government embarked on an ambitious plan to erect tablets with all of Du's poems in the museum and develop the adjacent 32-hectare Flower Bathing Brook Park. The project started in 2015 and was completed in 2018, setting Du's legacy in stone.

The tablets collect Du's works from the many varied stages of his life, according to museum curator Liu Hong.

Starting in his youth, they track his journey from the Tang capital of Chang'an (present-day Xi'an, Shaanxi province), the musings he recorded in his prime and those from his short stint as a middle-aged vagrant in Gansu province.

Also included are the poems he penned over nearly four years in his cottage in Chengdu, the two years he spent in today's Fengjie, Chongqing, from 766 to 768, and his final years in Hunan province before his death in 770.

## Tibetan mine embraces green development path

By DAQIONG  
and PALDEN NYIMA in Lhasa

A chromium mining area in Lhokha, Tibet autonomous region, has taken the path of green development in recent years to restore its natural environment.

Known on the plateau for its chromium output, Chusum county is home to the Norbusa mining area of the local branch of China Baowu Tibet Mining Co. It is the largest chromium-producing area in China.

Chromium is widely used to harden and polish steel and to create stainless steel.

The company was added to the national green mining list in 2020 thanks to its achievements in following a green path.

In recent years, the company has invested more than 50 million yuan (\$7 million) to renovate more than 63 hectares of mined areas.

Li Jun, deputy general manager of the sub-branch of the company in Lhokha, said most of those areas have been renovated and properly filled, using more than 1.3 million cubic meters of fill to cover disturbed areas.

"We can see grass growing in the restored areas now, and we planted more than 2,000 trees in the spring with the help of more than 120 workers," Li said.

Beyond restoring the damaged land to its original condition, the company is also following a green development path in technological innovation and the use of resources.

"Previously, we mainly used wood to shore up mine shafts. Mining was carried out solely by manpower, and waste rock could only be discharged outside, which is neither environmentally friendly nor safe," said Kelsang Dawa, another deputy general manager of the company in Lhokha.

"With new mining methods, waste rock is crushed and used as backfill. By using new digging machines, we no longer need to use wood shoring," he said. He noted that with the

“Adhering to a green development path to create a garden-style, waste-free mining area is our goal.”

Li Jun, deputy general manager of the sub-branch of the China Baowu Tibet Mining Co in Lhokha

reduction of displaced waste rock, mining efficiency and safety have significantly improved.

After 2020, the mining company began to adopt more advanced mining methods, a waste rock filling station is being used to fill the underground mined-out hollows with a cement-like slurry made of the waste rock, greatly reducing the storage of mining waste on the surface.

"It has helped to reduce the impact of mining on the surrounding ecological environment, and it is vital in preventing geological disasters such as surface subsidence and mudslides," said Kelsang Dawa.

In 2022, the amount of waste rock generated by the company's mining site was approximately 90,000 metric tons.

"Through environmentally friendly backfilling, not only was all the waste rock generated in 2022 digested, but also 17,000 tons of waste rock stored from previous years was utilized, achieving waste reuse," he said.

Next, the company plans to build a residential community for workers. It will have lawns, drainage systems, a sports field and a parking lot.

"Adhering to a green development path to create a garden-style, waste-free mining area is our goal," Li Jun said.

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## Pillow talk

Visitors admire an ancient pillow in the shape of a child lying on his stomach during an exhibition at Hebei Museum in Shijiazhuang, Hebei province, on Sunday. Featuring more than 200 pillows, the exhibition showcases the history and cultural significance of the art of pillow making in ancient China.  
ZHAI YUJIA / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

## Home set for French-born panda

Bear credited with strengthening ties between two peoples

By YAN DONGJIE  
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Yuan Meng, a 6-year-old male giant panda born in France, is scheduled to arrive at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding in Sichuan province on Tuesday, his first trip to the motherland. China and France will work together to ensure the panda's safe journey.

According to the international giant panda cooperation agreement, pandas born overseas should be sent to China between ages 2 and 4, before they become sexually mature between ages 4 and 6. It is believed that sending them to China, where the species is native, will provide them with optimal conditions to give birth to a new generation of cubs.

Yuan Meng was meant to come to China earlier, but his trip was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yuan Meng was born in France on Aug 4, 2017. He was the first giant panda to be born in the country. His name, which means "dreams come true", was jointly selected by China and France and represents the wishes for an enduring friendship between the two nations.

His parents are Yuan Zai and Huan Huan, who were sent to the Beauval Zoo in France from China in 2012. Yuan Meng also has twin sisters named Huan Lili and Yuan Dudu, who were born in 2021.

Giant pandas have gained the love of millions of French people. Upon learning that Yuan Meng would leave France, many French people expressed hopes that his stay would be extended.

Brigitte Macron, the first lady of France, is the patron of Sino-French panda cooperation. During the naming ceremony, she expressed her gratitude for China's willingness to entrust the precious animals to France. This kind of cooperation is

## Timeline of Sino-French cooperation on pandas

In 1869, French naturalist and missionary Armand David introduced pandas, a unique species of bear that had been living in China for 8 million years, to the Western world, causing a huge sensation.

In 1973, the president of France proposed to then-prime minister Zhou Enlai to donate pandas to France. In December that year, two pandas named Li Li and Yan Yan from Baoxing, Ya'an city, Sichuan province, settled in Parc Zoologique de Paris.

In November 2000, the mayor of Aix-les-Bains, Andre Darraidou, led a delegation to Baoxing to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of Armand David. During this visit, Baoxing county and Aix-les-Bains signed an agreement to become sister cities.

In November 2002, Ya'an and Aix-les-Bains signed a friendship city agreement, bringing together two cities separated by 10,000 kilometers and three oceans.

In 2012, the Chinese Association of Zoological Gardens and Beauval Zoo in France launched a 10-year international cooperative research project on giant pandas. The pandas Huan Huan and Yuan Zai came from the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding to Beauval Wildlife Park, opening a new chapter in Sino-French cooperation on giant pandas. In 2022, the two sides extended their cooperation for another five years to 2027.

In August 2017, Huan Huan and Yuan Zai welcomed cub Yuan Meng,

the first panda to be born in France. In August 2021, Huan Huan successfully gave birth to twin female cubs named Huan Lili and Yuan Dudu.

By June 2023, China had established scientific research cooperation relationships with 22 zoos from 19 countries, with a total of 64 pandas and their offspring residing overseas.

Yuan Meng, who was unable to come to China as scheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will travel to the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding on July 25. This marks the substantial achievement of the collaborative efforts between China and France under the giant panda cooperation research agreement.

YAN DONGJIE



Members of the public and journalists gather at Beauval Zoo in central France to bid farewell to panda Yuan Meng on Monday. It will travel to China on Tuesday. CHEN WEIHUA / CHINA DAILY

an effective form of people-to-people dialogue, and Yuan Meng's birth has helped strengthen ties between the two countries.

On May 17, she visited the zoo to bid farewell to Yuan Meng and took the opportunity to emphasize the importance of protecting endangered species.

For over 150 years, France and China have been studying the giant

panda together. In 1869, French naturalist and missionary Armand David introduced the unique species, which has been living in China for 8 million years, to the West. Since then, the giant panda has been winning hearts all over the world.

According to statistics by the National Forestry and Grassland Administration, from 1957 to 1982, China gifted 24 giant pandas to

nine countries. These pandas were welcomed by the people of those nations with great enthusiasm.

In 1982, due to the deteriorating ecological environment and the drastic reduction in its giant panda population, China stopped gifting pandas to foreign countries in accordance with the spirit of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. Instead, it has engaged in cooperation and research on giant pandas with other countries.

As of June 2023, China has established scientific cooperation relationships with 22 zoos in 19 countries, with a total of 64 pandas and their offspring residing overseas.

In 2012, the Chinese Association of Zoological Gardens and the Beauval Zoo launched a 10-year international giant panda cooperation and research project, opening a new chapter in Sino-French giant panda cooperation. The agreement was later extended to 2027.



Online  
See more by scanning the code.

## Student's Hainan trip boosts cross-Strait exchange

By CHEN BOWEN in Haikou  
chenbowen@chinadaily.com.cn

Students from nine universities in Taiwan said they are looking forward to learning about Hainan province's social development, experiencing its local cultures and customs, and exchanging ideas with their peers as they participate in a summer camp this week.

Taiwan and Hainan, China's two major islands, are often called "sister islands", as they are not only geographically close, but their people have strong ties, their customs are similar and their cultures are connected, said Fu Zhiguan, president of the Hainan Taiwan Compatriots Association, at the opening ceremony of the camp held at Qiongtai Normal University on Sunday.

"While enjoying the beautiful natural scenery of Hainan and experiencing Chinese and Hainan culture in the following days, I hope that you will observe and grow to understand the province's socioeconomic development, and then share what you see

with your family and friends in Taiwan and bring them here," Fu said.

The students are participating in the 20th Youth Summer Camp in Hainan organized by the All-China Federation of Taiwan Compatriots, which will run through Saturday. The students will visit exhibition halls, key industrial parks, beautiful countryside and the tropical rainforest.

Lin Chen, vice-president of Qiongtai Normal University, said at the ceremony that he hoped that the youth from Taiwan would learn about the Hainan free trade port and become ambassadors of cross-Strait cultural exchanges. He also invited them to study, work and start businesses in Hainan, share the development of the free trade port with others back home and create a better future for both sides of the Strait.

Wang Bo-hao, a sophomore at Chihlee University of Technology in Taiwan, said that after talking with local students he found that he and his Hainan peers have some common concerns, including the pressure to succeed and their future

employment goals. He said he plans to share his experience in Hainan with his friends.

Tsai Tsung-i, who is studying for a master's in science and technology management at National Taiwan Normal University, said he has also enjoyed communicating with Hainan students.

"The warmth of the Hainan people is like its climate. Once you experience it, you will never forget it," he said. "I will take this chance to tour Hainan, communicate with local youth and learn about the mainland's rapid development of its digital economy and commerce."

Tsai, who is visiting the Chinese mainland for the first time, said he likes to watch Chinese costumes dramas and debate shows on TV, and he has learned about mainland foods and cultures by watching videos on online platforms such as Xiaohongshu and Douyin.

Tsai said he wants to visit Hainan's night markets and taste the province's famed Wenchang chicken.

Tsai Pei-chen, a junior majoring in

applied music at the Tainan National University of the Arts, visited Beijing and Shanghai years ago. This time, she is looking forward to interacting with teachers and students in Hainan to learn about the local education system and culture.

"Hainan has rich ethnic cultures. Taiwan also has minority groups, which we call aborigines, who originally lived in the mountains, have good singing voices and compose beautiful ballads. During this summer camp, I want to learn more about Hainan's ethnic dances and music, and strengthen my understanding of mutual cultures," she said.

Zhang Lei, a Taiwanese descendant who was born and raised in Hainan, hopes the exchanges between Taiwan and Hainan students help foster stronger ties between the islands.

"Youth is the future of the country, and the hope of both sides of the Strait. I hope that the youth take this opportunity to hold cultural discussions, communicate thoroughly with each other and establish a sincere friendship," she said.

## CHINA

## Writing takes subway cop on a new journey

Insightful posts about his daily life and activities have garnered an appreciative audience online. **Cao Yin** reports.

**W**hen Ma Tuo graduated from the criminal investigation faculty of the Beijing Police College 13 years ago, he wanted to be like Sherlock Holmes, solving murders and fighting violent crime.

However, to his great disappointment, the Beijing Public Security Bureau assigned him to its traffic management department and he became a police officer on the capital's subway system.

The day he was told he had to work on Subway Line 13, he locked himself at home and lay on the bed. He was depressed when he thought about the serial killings, robberies and kidnappings — all the things he had dreamed of at police school — that he would never tackle.

The next day, the Beijing native reluctantly made his way to the Xi'erqi Subway Station to start his new life underground.

Huilongguan Police Station, Ma's base, is mainly responsible for ensuring safety and solving problems in stations on the western section of Line 13, including Xi'erqi, Longze, Qinghe and Xizhimen.

Subway officers have to schedule their work to fit the line's timetable, so they have to arrive early and stay late every day.

In Beijing, where traffic is heavy and the underground rail network is complicated, Line 13 is a "lifeline" linking residential compounds in the north with the downtown.

Data released in February by the Beijing Municipal Commission of Transport show that there were 27 subway lines in the capital by the end of last year, with tracks stretching 807 kilometers. So far this year, the number of daily passenger trips has topped 12 million.

For Ma, these figures not only mean constantly renovated station halls and upgraded security equipment, but also a rush of commuters.

Sometimes, he wades into the crowd to stop quarrels among passengers or chases leaflet distributors on the trains, while at other times he ensures safety by stopping peddlers from blocking entrances or exits, and even prevents people from boarding trains if they have had too much to drink.

"It can be annoying to deal with such trivial things stop by stop, day after day," the 36-year-old said as he patrolled Qinghe Station on July 4.

"After working for more than six months, I was worried that my life would be like this, train after train, forever. That no matter what happened, I would always be stuck on the subway."

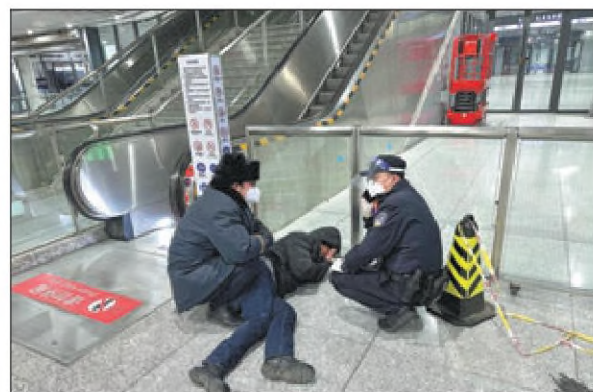
**First story**

However, a turning point came one day in 2016, when he discovered that some netizens were writing on Zhihu, a popular experience-sharing platform, about unforgettable people they had met. He realized that he was eager to try his hand, too.

"I thought I could write better than some other netizens because I meet so many different people in the subway," Ma said, adding that his original motive for writing was a desire for acclaim or maybe just a touch of vanity.

So, he posted a story online about an old woman who sold goods at an exit of Longze Station.

He called the 60-year-old peddler "Zhi Yun", noting her square face,



**Clockwise from top:** Passengers wait to board a subway train in Beijing this month. ZHU ZHENGQIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY Ma Tuo (left) and a subway worker patrol a station on Subway Line 13 in Beijing in July 2021. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY Ma (right) and a colleague help an inebriated passenger at a station on Subway Line 13 in October. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

small eyes and suntanned skin. Wearing a pink woolen hat and dressed in a cotton jacket that was too dirty to tell the color, she usually pushed a cart bearing a bubbling pot to sell boiled corn at the station.

To attract more business, she always blocked the exit, which was illegal and a security risk for passengers. "But considering she was old and it wasn't easy to make a living, we tolerated her most of the time instead of issuing fines," Ma said. "However, we gave her an inch, and she sometimes took a yard."

Recalling a "fight" with Zhi Yun, he wrote in the post: "One night, when I again asked her not to block the exit, she looked resentful, not finding excuses like before. She ignored me while I shouted at her. When I was trying to take her to the police station, she suddenly jumped up on the cart like an acrobat, spilling the pot. I was angry, but I couldn't do anything about her, because her pot didn't hurt anyone. I didn't want to talk to her anymore."

A short time later, the station was renovated, which forced many vendors, including Zhi Yun, to move to other places, Ma said. The next time he saw her was two years later.

"I got off a train at Xi'erqi Station one day. I was surprised to see a familiar figure on an overpass. It was Zhi Yun, running the same business and pushing the same cart and pot," Ma wrote in the post. "She was looking at me. Then she quickly ran through the stream of passengers toward me. I was a little nervous, because I didn't get along with her. God knows what she might do. I walked faster and faster, but she



Ma is photographed as he returns to his office after a platform patrol at a station last month. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

**“**Fighting hard, violent crime is a good police value, but it's also valuable to be integrated with these trivial things underground and help solve them quickly.”

**Ma Tuo**, police officer on Beijing's Subway Line 13

caught up with me via a shortcut I didn't know," he wrote. "Suddenly, she took out a stick of corn, smiled at me like a child and asked me to eat it. I was little tearful at that moment."

That first subway story gained Ma huge attention online. Some netizens showed understanding for the peddler who made her own living, commenting "Life is sweet, even if it is bitter sometimes," while some gave a thumbs-up to Ma's vivid descriptions of the woman, displaying the curios-

ty he used in his work. The comments cheered Ma up, and started a journey of sharing the interesting things that happened to him at work via the internet.

**A fresh perspective**

Writing made the subway police officer realize that a few trivial things that had bothered him before had become interesting. For example, he wrote a post about a drunk man he discovered lying on the steps outside

Longze Station one summer afternoon.

To prevent disruption to the other passengers, Ma took the man, who was holding a liquor bottle and wearing a cotton shirt covered in vomit, back to the station's police room. After leaving him asleep on a chair in the lobby with a cup of hot water, Ma became engrossed in other matters. When he returned a few hours later, the man had left without a word.

In a post, Ma wrote: "I was frustrated, as I felt like my work wasn't important to him. That it was all wishful thinking."

However, two days later, the man returned to the police station. Wearing the same shirt, which had been cleaned, he looked embarrassed. He first apologized for vomiting over Ma, and then offered to buy him a drink.

"Looking at him, I found I had underestimated my previous actions, and in that moment I also seemed to find my own worth," Ma wrote in a subsequent post.

He also wrote about a father in tears after finding his lost son in the subway, a love story about a middle-aged fruit vendor, an old man who started drinking after his wife died, and a white-collar worker standing on a subway overpass who neither wanted to work overtime nor go home to face family issues.

He also posted about a couple who were detained for cheating passengers out of money by lying, saying their wallets had been stolen and they needed to buy tickets in the subway. "From the stories, I saw many aspects of life, as well as different sides of the same person," Ma said.

**Difficult interaction**

A popular figure in Ma's posts was a worker responsible for maintaining order at Longze Station.

The man, surnamed Wei, who came to the station at about 55 years old, was the subject of frequent complaints by passengers and his peers because he was inflexible at work.

One day, Wei quarreled with a young passenger who was trying to get on the train while wearing roller skates. Wei would not allow him to take the train, saying it was too dangerous, but the passenger said there was no rule to prohibit it and he had no other shoes to change into.

Going through the subway rules in his mind and confirming that there was no such prohibition, Ma and another colleague helped support the passenger onto the train. He didn't leave the platform until he saw the young man standing firm in the train as the doors closed.

When Ma turned around to talk to Wei, the old worker looked unhappy and he even sulked for a while.

Later, Ma went away to study for a few months. When he returned, he was told that Wei had retired. When he heard the news, Ma breathed a sigh of relief, just like the other station staff members.

Ma said that he thought Wei would enjoy a peaceful retirement, but shortly afterward he learned that the stubborn man had died of an illness.

"Like some passengers, Wei only got on a train from this platform once and never came to the station again," Ma wrote, comparing the older man to people who pass on the subway system, but don't notice each other or care if they exist. "When he worked here, I thought he was rigidly dogmatic. When he was no longer here, I realized how great he was."

As usual, Ma posted the story online. Soon, a netizen's message caught his eye. It said: "Some people's views are behind the times, but they hold the bottom line. I would rather there are more people who take things seriously, even if it can be a little troublesome. I want my child to live in a world where someone seriously tells him that it is not safe to take a subway train while wearing roller skates."

**Regular thumbs-up**

So far, Ma has posted about 300 metro stories on the internet, gaining more than 400 million views.

He has 260,000 followers on Zhihu and has been given more than 1.45 million thumbs-up. On Sina Weibo, China's Twitter-like platform, he has 670,000 followers and has gained 750,000 thumbs-up.

While continuing to post online, Ma has also compiled his observations of the "underground world" and human life into a book, *10,000 Reasons to Love Life*, which was published earlier this year.

"On the one hand, recording and sharing the stories helps netizens to understand the work of the subway police, and on the other hand, it helps me see real life," Ma said.

"I hope more people will feel the power of life behind my posts at their lowest points."

Now, he receives many messages from netizens daily. Some talk about the interesting things they have seen during their commute, while others share their feelings of attraction to other people in the subway.

"Fighting hard, violent crime is a good police value, but it's also good to be integrated with these trivial things underground and help solve them quickly," Ma said.

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**Online**  
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**REPORTER'S LOG**

## Online posts help passengers understand the work of the network's officers



Cao Yin

Before I interviewed Ma Tuo, I never realized that there were police rooms in subway stations.

Instead, I thought that officers

would be rushed from a nearby police station in the event of any problems on the underground rail network.

Ma told me that two police officers are assigned to large or high-traffic stations, while smaller stations host one officer.

During rush hours, the officers patrol the stations, while the rest of

the time, they are on call in the police room.

"Having police rooms in subway stations ensures that officers can arrive at the scene as quickly as possible. Compared with quarrels or fights in communities, similar conflicts in the confined subway, especially during peak commuting periods, can escalate more quickly,

making passengers angrier or more emotional," Ma said.

"Therefore, solving trivial issues quickly is a must for officers in the subway, and the work can also ensure normal underground traffic and help save other passengers a lot of time."

Writing has always been Ma's hobby: when he was a student, he

liked fiction, but he said that at the time his writing was aimless. He recalled that as soon as he began recording the people he met and the incidents that happened to him at work, he knew that he had found his own way to write.

"Put simply, the subway constantly provides rich materials to write about, and the process of

writing makes me think more about my work and life," he said.

During my conversation with him, I thought of a well-known saying by the French writer, Romain Rolland, "There is only one heroism in the world: to see the world as it is and to love it."

That, it seems, is what Ma is doing through his writing.

## BUSINESS

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# Private firms seen as key to growth hopes

Efforts to help investors get better market access in emerging sectors

By CHENG YU in Beijing and HU MEIDONG in Fuzhou

China's latest efforts to boost private investment and the non-public sector will help entrepreneurs gain a firmer footing in key emerging sectors, which will further stimulate market vitality and drive economic recovery, said company executives and industry experts on Monday.

They made the comments as the National Development and Reform Commission unveiled a package of 17 measures to drive private investment, including offering financing support for private investment projects and further optimizing private-sector investment.

"Recent supportive policies are targeted and precise, which will further help remove barriers to market access. Such support will open more key projects to more private enterprises, and enable them to equally participate in competition and help form an innovative echelon in the country," said Su Meng, chairman and CEO of Beijing Percent Technology Group Co, a leading provider of data science applications.

Su pointed to digital government and public security projects as examples.

"The eligibility criteria for companies to take on such projects used to be relatively high and State-owned enterprises had some natural advantages. In contrast, private firms, which are usually younger than SOEs, found it hard to meet all the qualification requirements," he said.

"Such efforts will also promote both the private and public sectors to cooperate on multiple levels, including investing in joint ventures and joint laboratories. It will greatly accelerate technological breakthroughs and innovations for the country," he added.

Su said private enterprises are expected to have more opportunities to make innovations — just like the Chinese saying, "Let a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend."

The NDRC's latest measures include encouraging the private sector to actively participate in projects with huge market space and strong development prospects, while aligning with major national strategies and industry policies to promote high-quality development.

Key sectors include advanced manufacturing, transportation, water conservancy, clean energy, new infrastructure and modern agriculture.

Wang Qinghai, chairman of JCHX Mining Management, a Shanghai-listed mining services provider, said: "It indicates how capable traditional private businesses can transform themselves to participate in major projects and those that are part of key industrial and supply chains. Inspired by such efforts, we will persist with mine construction and contract mining as the basis of our core business development, and meanwhile transform to expand the industrial chain to equipment manufacturing, scientific and technological research and the development and trading of resources."

"Also, the company will employ more new technology as a lead to promote digitalization and intelligent systems in mine construction. We will strive to leverage leading scientific and technological innovations in mine construction, seek greater breakthroughs in core technologies, increase investment in basic research and actively participate in national-level industrial research to ensure more breakthroughs."

The measures come after China unveiled major guidance last week promoting the development of the private sector, which marked the country's accelerated push for private enterprise development amid rising economic recovery pressure.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, fixed-asset investment by the private sector edged down 0.2 percent year-on-year in the first half versus a 0.1 percent decline in the first five months.

Zhang Yansheng, chief researcher at the China Center for International Economic Exchanges, said that in terms of fixed-asset investment last year, the growth of government-led infrastructure investment reached 9.4 percent, but the growth of private investment — led by real estate and manufacturing investment — was only 0.9 percent.

"Such a gap demonstrates low private investment expectations, which should be given high attention," Zhang said.

"Recent efforts to drive private-sector growth come from both the central authorities and local governments. With these efforts put into practice, the environment for the private economy will continue to improve and entrepreneurs will gain a firmer footing for future economic development," he added.

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## Briefly

### Shanxi produces 678m tons of raw coal

China's coal-rich province of Shanxi saw its raw coal output in the first half approach 680 million metric tons, local authorities said. The coal output in Shanxi, the country's largest coal-producing region, accounted for about 29.5 percent of the country's total during the January-June period, said the provincial statistics bureau. As the peak electricity consumption season nears, Shanxi has increased its coal production, with about 2 million tons of coal transported to locations across the country every day.

### CCB ups loan support for manufacturing

China Construction Bank, one of

the country's largest State-owned commercial banks, has enhanced financial support for the manufacturing sector. CCB said that by the end of June, its outstanding loans to the manufacturing sector exceeded 2.7 trillion yuan (\$377.85 billion), expanding 21.4 percent compared with a year earlier. The lender's outstanding medium- and long-term loans to the sector exceeded 1.36 trillion yuan at end-June, rising 36.23 percent year-on-year. To meet the financial needs of advanced manufacturing enterprises, strategic emerging industries and high-tech firms, the bank's outstanding loans to specialized and innovative firms increased 35 percent year-on-year to over 250 billion yuan.

XINHUA - CHINA DAILY



5G chips on display during an expo in Shanghai. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

# Internet economy on cusp of expansion

By MA SI [masi@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:masi@chinadaily.com.cn)

China's sprawling internet economy is entering a new stage of development, as the country takes strides toward building world-leading digital infrastructure and exploring various applications of cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence, experts said.

Shang Bing, president of the Internet Society of China, said accelerating the development of the digital economy represented by the internet has become a strategic choice to grasp the new round of scientific and technological revolution and new opportunities for industrial transformation.

According to a report released by the Internet Society of China, the number of internet users in China exceeds 1 billion, and that of 5G users exceeds 650 million, both ranking first in the world.

Meanwhile, China's network architecture continues to be optimized, with network quality reaching or even surpassing the level of developed countries in Europe, the report said.

The country is also at the forefront of the world in quantum communication and AI, and filed nearly 3.2 trillion patent applications in the field of information and communi-

cation in 2022, which accounts for 37 percent of the total global applications in that sector, the report stated.

What is more, China's total computing power reached 180 EFLOPS by the end of last year, ranking second in the world after the United States.

EFLOPS is a unit of the speed of computer systems, equal to one quintillion floating-point operations a second.

Xie Cun, head of the information and communication development department of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, said the ministry will introduce new policies to promote the high-quality development of computing power infrastructure, further strengthen top-level design and enhance the comprehensive supply capacity of computing power.

The policy proposal follows expectations that China's computing power industry will usher in new development opportunities for major Chinese tech companies that have rolled out ChatGPT-like AI chatbots, which have higher requirements for computing power in the process of AI large language model training.

Large language models, or LLMs, are computer algorithms fed with huge amounts of textual data for use in a variety of tasks, ranging from

natural language processing to machine translation. They are the key technologies behind ChatGPT-like products.

Data from the Internet Society of China showed that China has developed more than 80 LLMs, or rivals of ChatGPT, which are driving the application of AI in more sectors.

The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology is focusing on the development needs of computing power. It said more efforts will be made in enhancing independent innovation capabilities in areas like computing architecture and computing algorithms, and in strengthening the research and development of key products like AI chips and computer servers.

Zhang Yunming, vice-minister of industry and information technology, said that in the era of digital economy, computing power has become critical in all fields of production and life, like water and electricity, and is injecting new momentum into the digital transformation of all walks of life.

According to estimates by the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology, sales revenue of China's core computing power industry reached 1.8 trillion yuan (\$251 billion) in 2022. Every 1 yuan invested in computing power will drive economic growth of 3 to 4 yuan in GDP.

# Scout flying on robust travel demand

By ZHU WENQIAN [zhuwenqian@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:zhuwenqian@chinadaily.com.cn)

Scout, the low-cost arm of Singapore Airlines Group, said it is fully confident in the growth potential of China's air travel market, boosted by the country's robust demand for traveling abroad. The budget carrier plans to further expand its network and increase flight frequencies in China.

The low-cost airline is a foreign carrier that has resumed most of its flights to China since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before the pandemic, Scout operated direct flights connecting Singapore and 19 Chinese mainland cities, standing as the carrier that operated the highest number of flights connecting the two countries. Now, it has resumed flights to 17 Chinese mainland cities, accounting for 20 percent of its global network.

After China resumed quarantine-free international travel in January, its outbound travel market is on track to a steady recovery. In January, Scout transported about 2,500 passengers weekly from Chinese mainland cities to Singapore. Currently, the number exceeds 18,000 passengers weekly, the airline said.

"We have seen a steady growth of the passenger load on round-trip flights connecting China and Singapore," said Lee Yong Sin, general manager of Scout China and vice-president of sales at Scout.

"During the May Day holiday this year, passenger load topped 90 percent. In June, the number exceeded



A Scout widebody B787 aircraft flies from Singapore to Tianjin. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

pre-pandemic levels in 2019. Based on such positive data, we have further raised our expectations of passengers," Lee said.

For Scout, most of its passengers have been business travelers, students and families traveling with children. Family trips are on the rise, as parents make full use of the summer holiday to bring their children to Singapore.

Among every five travelers of Scout, there is one Generation Z consumer — those born between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s. An apparent change since the pandemic is that more Chinese passengers are traveling independently by Scout, instead of traveling with groups, it said.

Currently, Scout operates daily flights that connect Singapore with Tianjin and 10 weekly flights connecting Singapore with Nanjing, Jiangsu province. Passenger demand for flights between Singapore and Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, and Qingdao, Shandong province, has rebounded to pre-pandemic levels.

In China, Scout has carried out closer cooperation with online travel agencies such as Trip.com Group, Qunar and Fliggy. It is considering using social media platforms, such as Xiaohongshu or short-video app Douyin, to further increase its exposure and interact with more young consumers.

Scout took to the skies in 2012

and merged with TigerAir Singapore in 2017, retaining the Scout brand. Now, it has a fleet size of over 50 aircraft, including widebody B787 and single-aisle A320 family aircraft. The average age of its fleet is around six years. Next year, it plans to introduce nine E190-E2 aircraft from Brazilian aircraft maker Embraer.

For the financial year 2022-23, Scout reported record revenue and profit, buoyed by record passenger loads. The airline's operating profit reached a record S\$148 million (\$11.3 million) for the full year ending March 31, reversing three straight years of losses.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) recently announced an expected strengthening of airline industry profitability in an upgrade of its outlook for 2023. The global airline industry's net profits are expected to reach \$9.8 billion, and some 4.35 billion people are expected to travel this year, which is closing in on the 4.54 billion who flew in 2019, according to a forecast by IATA.

"Airlines' financial performance in 2023 is beating expectations. Stronger profitability is supported by several positive developments. China lifted COVID-19 restrictions earlier than anticipated. Jet fuel prices, although still high, have moderated over the first half of the year," said Willie Walsh, IATA's director general.

# Green vessel delivered to Swiss shipper

By ZHENG CAIXIONG in Guangzhou [zhengcaixiong@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:zhengcaixiong@chinadaily.com.cn)

An environmentally friendly container transport vessel — MSC NOA ARIEILA — was delivered for use in Nansha district of Guangzhou, Guangdong province, on Monday, demonstrating China's shipbuilding strength and technology.

The ship, jointly built by Guangzhou Shipyard International Co Ltd and China Shipbuilding Trading Co Ltd, is 366 meters long and 51 meters wide, GSI said in a statement on Monday.

With a full load of 16,616 twenty-foot equivalent units, it is the largest container transport vessel built in the southern Chinese region, it said.

The vessel, with a molded depth of 30.2 meters, is designed to have a draft of 14.5 meters.

It is the first of eight container vessels GSI and China Shipbuilding are building for Mediterranean Shipping Co SA, the world's largest container shipping company headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Located at the mouth of the Pearl River, GSI, a subsidiary of China State Shipbuilding Corp, is a Shanghai Stock Exchange-listed company. It is also one of the major shipbuilding bases in the country.

GSI successively overcame technical difficulties in building the vessel, including cutting and welding of crack resistant steels and automatic welding of crack resistant steel robots, under the guidance of a large container ship expert group from CSSC, according to the statement.

Contracts for construction of the large container vessels were signed in March 2021.

Continuous technological innovation has led to the development of super-large container ships in terms of environmental protection, the statement said.

MSC NOA ARIEILA is equipped with advanced desulfurization and denitrification systems.

The first six vessels will have reserved liquefied natural gas power function, while the remaining will use LNG dual-fuel propulsion system, meeting the latest environmental emission standards, it said.

The vessel also saves energy and is highly efficient, with all technical indicators meeting world standards, it said.

Yang Wei, project manager of the vessel, said it has a shaft generator with a power of 4,000 kilowatts.

"When the ship is sailing normally, the shaft generator is connected to the grid with one main generator, which can meet the electricity demand of the whole ship," said Yang.

"And through the previous navigation tests, the superiority of the performance of the vessel's shaft generator has been fully demonstrated and has been recognized by the ship owner," he said.

The vessel is also equipped with a world-leading air drag reduction system.

When the vessel is sailing, the air compression system on board injects compressed air into the bottom of the vessel, forming a layer of air at the bottom, reducing direct contact between seawater and the hull, which can greatly reduce the resistance of seawater.

When the air drag reduction system is operational, a huge ship filled with more than 16,000 TEUs will be lifted by the air membrane like a hovercraft to minimize the resistance of seawater to the vessel, which is also key to its excellent environmental performance.

## BUSINESSFOCUS

# Apple supplier Foxconn stays put in Henan

Plants on mainland offer generous bonuses to attract talented workers

By FAN FEIFEI  
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Zhang Mingxin, 25, recently found a new job as a product quality inspector at Foxconn Technology Group's plant in Zhengzhou, capital of Central China's Henan province, where about 50 percent of the world's iPhones are made.

About two years ago, Zhang took a part-time job for more than one month during his summer vacation on Foxconn's Zhengzhou assembly line.

"My basic monthly salary is now 2,200 yuan (\$305.3) and I (will) receive a 7,500 yuan bonus for staff who previously worked at Foxconn for over one month and returned," Zhang said.

The unemployment rate among young people aged 16 to 24 has remained high this year amid downward economic pressure. Zhang said young job seekers are struggling to find satisfying work this year, and it is very timely that Foxconn launched such a bonus package for returnees.

He said the Zhengzhou plant's benefits package is attractive, as he can enjoy daily living subsidies, affordable meals in the employees' canteen and accommodation for just 150 yuan each month.

Known as the world's largest contract manufacturer in electronics, Foxconn has ramped up hiring in Zhengzhou by offering a bonus plan, as the world's largest iPhone factory prepares for the production of new iPhone models that are expected to launch in September.

In addition to the one-time 7,500 yuan bonus for returning employees, Foxconn's Zhengzhou plant is offering experienced workers who have had more than two stints at Foxconn a bonus of 8,000 yuan, according to a job recruitment advertisement published by the Zhengzhou campus.

It is the highest bonus offered by the factory since production was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic last November.

Foxconn, also known as Hon Hai Precision Industry Co, is a major supplier of Apple Inc. The company's Zhengzhou plant is the largest manufacturing base for Apple's iPhone, and has more than 90 production lines and over 300,000 workers.

In addition, Foxconn's plant in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, is offering a bonus of up to 6,980 yuan for new employees, according to recruitment posts on its Shenzhen campus.

The bonus packages for workers in Zhengzhou and Shenzhen underscored Foxconn's commitment to

continue assembling iPhones on the Chinese mainland, said Pan Helin, co-director of the Digital Economy and Financial Innovation Research Center at Zhejiang University's International Business School.

Pan said the hiring spree at Foxconn comes amid promising signs that China will remain a key manufacturing base for Apple, while emphasizing that China is playing an irreplaceable role in global industrial and supply chains, and the biggest advantage of China's manufacturing lies in its complete industrial chain system.

Liu Young-way, chairman and CEO of Foxconn, denied that Apple planned to move its supply chains out of the Chinese mainland, amid growing concerns that Apple is diversifying its supply chains by investing in other countries and regions, and may relocate factories to India.

Liu made the remarks at the 14th Annual Meeting of the New Champions, also known as the Summer Davos Forum, which concluded on June 29 in Tianjin.

Liu said the new energy vehicle sector will be the next key segment for Foxconn.

"We call it the '3+3 strategy': electric vehicles, digital health and robotics, which are three emerging industries underpinned by three future core technologies, namely artificial intelligence, semiconductors and future communications," he said.

Since the beginning of this year, Liu has made several trips to Foxconn factories in Zhengzhou and Chengdu, Sichuan province. In May, Liu visited Chengdu and told workers at its plant there that the company has no plans to leave the city and that its plant, which employs over 100,000 people, remains an important production base.

Foxconn unveiled its new business headquarters in Zhengzhou in April, which covers emerging business segments such as EVs, batteries and robotics, and the company will continue to increase investment in building new production lines and factories.

Its new business headquarters also issued a recruitment notice in June, with plans to hire more than 69 positions in fields including EVs and batteries.

Roger Sheng, vice-president of research at US market research company Gartner, said Foxconn is diversifying its business layout and marching into new fields in a bid to wean itself off a heavy reliance on churning out mobile phones amid sluggish sales in the global smartphone market.



Top: Foxconn employees work on a production line in Zhengzhou, Henan province, in January. CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Above: Robots carry out intelligent automated production at Foxconn's lighthouse factory in Zhengzhou. LI CHAOQING / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

A report released by market research firm Canalis said global smartphone shipments fell 13 percent year-on-year to 269.8 million units in the first quarter. Samsung reclaimed its pole position and shipped 60.3 million units, accounting for 22 percent of the global market share, while Apple came in second with 58.0 million shipments, taking a 21 percent share, Canalis said.

"Foxconn has accumulated rich experience in intelligent manufacturing and the production of precision electronic components, which will help it gain a competitive edge in manufacturing electric vehicles," Sheng said, adding that Foxconn's advanced manufacturing abilities in phones could be applied to the EV segment.

However, Sheng said the company still faces intense competition from domestic EV makers, such as NIO and BYD, and traditional automakers, which are doubling down on efforts to launch new models of vehicles and expand production capacity.

Foxconn rolled out its first three EV prototypes in 2021, underscoring its ambitious plans to diversify away from its role of making consumer

electronics for Apple and other tech firms. The company has set a target of providing components or services for 10 percent of the world's EVs between 2025 and 2027.

Zhang Xiang, a researcher at the Jiangxi New Energy Technology Institute, said: "As the growth in the global smartphone industry is slowing, Foxconn hopes to seek new business growth points by making forays into the burgeoning EV market. If not, its market valuation will drop simultaneously."

However, there is still a long way to go for Foxconn to successfully replicate its original equipment manufacturer experience in information and communication fields in the automotive industry, given that the manufacturing of vehicles is much more complicated than smartphones.

China's NEV sales surged 44.1 percent year-on-year to nearly 3.75 million units in the first half, said the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers. NEV sales in June stood at 806,000 units, up 35.2 percent from a year ago. The output of NEVs in the country totaled nearly 3.79 million units in the first six months, expanding

China has become the world's largest manufacturing base, and Asia has the potential to build a regional manufacturing system."

Liu Young-way, chairman and CEO of Foxconn

est manufacturing base, and Asia has the potential to build a regional manufacturing system."

Furthermore, although the level of automation at Foxconn's factories is high, the number of workers has also increased slightly, driven by the expansion of production volume, Liu said.

China has attached great importance to manufacturing and emphasized the need to accelerate the modernization of the industrial system, with the real economy as its key pillar.

The country has maintained its position as the world's largest manufacturing hub for 13 straight years, accounting for nearly 30 percent of global manufacturing output in 2022, according to the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

Greater efforts are needed to promote technological innovation and increase capital input in research and development so as to accelerate the transformation and upgrading of traditional manufacturing, said Li Dongsheng, founder and chairman of consumer electronics maker TCL Technology Group Corp.

"China's manufacturers should transition from exporting products to exporting industrial capacities, ramping up localized operations abroad and speeding up their layouts in overseas markets, so as to cope with changes in the global economic landscape and rising trade protectionism," Li said.

"To reinforce the competitiveness of China's manufacturing sector globally, it is important to beef up R&D investment in frontier technologies and forward-looking fields, and accelerate the in-depth integration of digital technologies with various industries," said Chen Duan, director of the Central University of Finance and Economics' digital economy integration innovation development center.

Shi Baoyin in Zhengzhou contributed to this story.

## IoT, lighthouse factories high on growth agenda

By FAN FEIFEI

China's accelerated efforts to develop the industrial internet and build more lighthouse factories will inject new vitality into the country's industrial economy, enhance the competitiveness of manufacturing on the global stage and empower high-quality development of the digital economy, experts said.

Zhou Yunjie, chairman and CEO of Chinese home appliance giant Haier Group, said the industrial internet has become a new engine driving the growth of the digital economy, and will play a bigger role in deepening digital transformation in manufacturing, operational management and marketing services.

Zhou said manufacturing is the foundation of a country, and the high-quality development of China's manufacturing sector has entered the fast lane, buoyed by digital technologies like cloud computing, big data, the internet of things and blockchain.

"As the country is making efforts to build itself into a manufacturing powerhouse, more efforts are need-

ed to promote innovative application of the industrial internet and fully unleash the value of massive data resources, which are key to advancing new industrialization," he said.

Haier has invested heavily in the industrial internet to develop COSMOPlat, which is designed for companies to customize products quickly by collecting and analyzing data from consumers, suppliers and factories, while boosting productivity and cutting costs.

Powered by COSMOPlat, six factories owned by Haier have been included in the Global Lighthouse Network, an initiative launched by the World Economic Forum in collaboration with market consultancy McKinsey in 2018.

For instance, the company's washing machine factory in Tianjin, which has been selected as a lighthouse factory, has improved productivity by about 30 percent and reduced energy consumption by 35 percent through the integration of 5G, IoT, automation and advanced analysis technology.

A total of 132 factories worldwide are now engaged in the Global

Lighthouse Network, which refers to the community of leading manufacturers applying advanced technologies to speed up and spread the smart adoption of Industrial 4.0 technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, cloud computing and big data to their industries worldwide.

Boasting high efficiency, intelligence and sustainability, lighthouse factories represent the highest level of global intelligent manufacturing. Currently, there are 50 such factories in China, the highest number among any country, which make up more than one-third of the global total.

Digital transformation in manufacturing has become an irreversible global trend, and Foxconn takes the industrial transformation trend as a new opportunity to further enhance its manufacturing capabilities, said Brand Cheng, CEO of Foxconn Industrial Internet, the Shanghai-listed unit of Apple's key supplier Foxconn.

FI, which currently has six lighthouse factories, said it will continue to increase investment and accelerate its presence in the high-end

intelligent manufacturing segment.

The industrial internet, a new type of manufacturing automation that combines advanced machines, internet-connected sensors and big data analysis, is expected to boost productivity and reduce costs in industrial production.

The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology said the country has nurtured over 240 industrial internet platforms that have strong regional and industry influence, with more than 81 million units of industrial equipment connected to the platforms, which have served 250,000 enterprises covering over 40 key sectors.

Revenue from China's core industries related to the industrial internet reached more than 1.2 trillion yuan (\$166.5 billion) in 2022, up 15.5 percent year-on-year, said the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology.

"The application of digital technologies has been expanded from the consumption to the production field. In particular, new industrial forms such as the industrial internet are taking shape, which has become a new growth driving engine of the



Technicians inspect an intelligent production line in Huzhou, Zhejiang province, in March. WANG SHUCHENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

digital economy and has shown remarkable development potential," said Liu Xiangdong, a researcher with the China Center for International Economic Exchanges.

Liu said the booming industrial internet will see surging demand for accuracy in data acquisition, transmission speed, storage space, computing capacities and intelligent application, which will drive the development of big data and cloud computing infrastructure and foster a batch of industrial

internet companies that are globally competitive.

The industrial internet should be established on the basis of traditional industries and information and communication technology, said Ni Guangnan, an academician at the Chinese Academy of Engineering, adding that more efforts should be made to facilitate the development of the industrial internet, which will boost the long-term international competitiveness of China's manufacturing sector.

# LIVING HERITAGE



Hong Guizhen, an inheritor of *hangtuo* craftsmanship, shows students the weaving technique.



Shao Guofei, daughter of Hong Guizhen, carries on her family's traditional craft of *hangtuo* weaving.



Zhou Shuangxi, a national-level inheritor of *yunjin* craftsmanship.



Before weaving, artisans transcribe and amplify the patterns to be woven onto a piece of grid paper.



The production of *yunjin* uses refined raw material including silk and gold foiled threads.



During production, weavers pass a shuttle over and under the alternating warps. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



The China National Silk Museum in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, hosts a costume festival in April.



Clothes made of *hangtuo* gauze, one of the most sought-after silk fabrics in the country.



Replica of a traditional landscape painting using *yunjin* technique.



The Nanjing Yunjin Research Institute develops a series of merchandise such as framed *yunjin* fabric pieces.



A brocade piece featuring auspicious patterns shown at the Nanjing Yunjin Museum. JIAN HUA / FOR CHINA DAILY



The butterfly brooch is one of the most popular merchandise at the Nanjing Yunjin Museum.

**T**he sun, the sun, like a golden shuttle; the moon, the moon, like a silver shuttle. They are handed to you, and also to me, to see who weaves the most beautiful life," goes a popular song from the last century named *The Golden and Silver Shuttles*.

It was common back then, but relatively rarely seen now, to use the loom shuttle to metaphorically describe the passage of time, and through numerous small workshops and skillful hands, the resources bestowed by nature were transformed into useful and exquisite items for daily life.

The production of silk involves the cultivation of mulberry trees and the breeding and care of silkworms, which produce cocoons from which silk filaments are unwound. It is one of the things that, even today, remains firmly archaic — continuing to exist in a time when patience was not a scarce resource.

People have been weaving silk, which is known as *si* in Chinese, into fabric for more than 5,000 years.

Once upon a time, when spring transitioned into summer, the Grand Canal, a vast waterway system connecting Beijing and Hangzhou in today's Zhejiang province, presented a bustling scene. Countless boats traversed the waterway, transporting exquisite fabrics. This precious cargo would take two months to reach the capital city, where they would be transformed into cool and lightweight robes, and worn as the favored attire of officials and nobility.

Silk has also played a significant role in Chinese interactions with the rest of the world. The Silk Road, a network of trade routes connecting the East with the West, was established during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220) and facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultural practices. Chinese silk was one of the main goods traded, traveling as far as Rome and becoming a symbol of wealth and status in many cultures along the route.

"Silk has a particularly profound historical background and cultural accumulation, and is an important symbol of

Chinese civilization. It has been an important carrier of Chinese culture since ancient times, and remains so today," says Wang Haitong, director of the China Silk Dijin Limited Company, a subsidiary corporation of the China Silk Corporation.

"Silk combines the beauty of art and technology," she says.

The sericulture and silk craftsmanship of China was listed in the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2009. In the 5,000-year-old silk culture of China, fabrics such as *ling*, *tuo*, *chou*, and *duan* represent the evolving techniques of textile production throughout different periods. Originating from silkworms and refined through looms, the varying weaving methods ultimately result in differences in shape and tactility.

The *tuo* weaving technique stands out, particularly for the demanding level of craftsmanship.

Characterized by its openwork patterns, *tuo* fabrics offer enhanced breathability. The technique originated sometime during the Spring and Autumn (770-476 BC) or Warring States (475-221 BC) periods, and gained popularity during the Song Dynasty (960-1279), mostly due to the attire required for official rituals and the impressive plain-woven silk textiles produced in Hangzhou, which are called *hangtuo*.

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**Editor's note:**  
There are 43 items inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage lists that not only bear witness to the past glories of Chinese civilization, but also continue to shine today. China Daily looks at the protection and inheritance of some of these cultural legacies. In this installment, we admire a much-coveted textile that threaded its way to every corner of the globe.

## The FABRIC of CHINESE CULTURE

Silk has always been interwoven with the nation's history, and the textiles that employ the fine material remain sought after the world over — arguably, none more so than *hangtuo* gauze, **Xu Haoyu** reports.

households involved in the entire production chain, running related businesses from sericulture to dyeing workshops, especially around the Genshanmen area in Hangzhou. As time passed, the loom used to produce *hangtuo* underwent several transformations, yet the production process still requires a large amount of meticulous hand craftsmanship.

In an era of mechanical production, inheriting a traditional craft is not easy, says Zhang Chunqing, 44, head of the Hangtuo Conservation Organization.

Before weaving *hangtuo* on the loom, there is almost a monthlong process of organizing the warp and weft threads.

"Similar to the practices of the Song Dynasty, we soak the silk in clear water and add a secret ancestral formula. It takes 25 to



Top: The Nanjing Yunjin Research Institute adopts *yunjin* technique in replicating cultural relics, including a garment that belonged to an empress from the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Above: Scarves and clothes made of *hangtuo* gauze, a type of silk fabric produced in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

28 days for the silk to be ready, and only then can we weave the fabric, resulting in a lightweight, cool, and comfortable gauze," explains Zhang.

Craftsmen must often immerse their hands in water, even in the cold winter, resulting in chapped and cracked skin on their hands. Most people cannot endure such discomfort, and many potential silk makers quit.

Due to the complexity of the process, the weaving technique of *hangtuo* was almost lost. Yet, inheritors like Zhang and his parents-in-law, Shao Guanzheng and Hong Guizhen, are striving to keep the craft alive.

In the 1980s, Shao and his wife, Hong, the fourth-generation representative inheritors of *hangtuo* craftsmanship, managed to restore and improve the manual



Operating the traditional wooden loom requires the collaboration of two artisans.

(1271-1911), the brocade weaving techniques reached their pinnacle.

The influence of the craft on Nanjing is evident. Many places in the city are named after silk manufacturing processes, and in China's literary classic *Dream of the Red Chamber*, written by Nanjing-born novelist Cao Xueqin, *yunjin* garments are frequently mentioned.

He drew up an agreement between the People's Republic of China in 1949, the country continued to place special emphasis on preserving and passing down the brocade weaving technique, establishing the Nanjing Yunjin Research Institute in 1957.

Earlier this century, the institute set up the Nanjing Yunjin Museum, as the only professional museum in China dedicated to the display of the brocade, including its history, weaving technique, culture and contemporary artworks.

And now, with the support of technology and research conducted by the institute, *yunjin* craftsmanship and teaching are increasingly efficient and effective. In 2009, the craftsmanship of Nanjing *yunjin* brocade was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Chen Cheng, a young artisan at the institute, introduces the three primary applications of the fabric in ancient times — royal attire, particularly the dragon robes worn by emperors; decoration, adorning walls and chairs at palaces; as well as at religious and ceremonial settings.

Its esteemed status and unique historical

loom technique through persistent practice. Originally, it took a skilled craftsman eight hours to hand-weave approximately 80 centimeters to 1 meter of gauze. After the family's improvement, around 8 meters can be woven in the same amount of time.

Shao, who was born in 1954 into a family of craftsmen in Hangzhou, grew up in a weaving workshop. Since his grandfather learned the weaving technique at the end of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the family has been practicing the craft for over 150 years.

The technique is considered "a means of subsistence, which cannot be stolen, cannot be burned, and will always keep us from starvation," Shao says.

His early memories were filled with scenes of nearby every household in the Genshanmen area producing *hangtuo*. His father would pull a cart filled with the fabric to the nearby canal dock to sell it. With the money he'd receive, he would buy some oil, salt, rice, meat, and other groceries.

Shao loved following his father to sell *hangtuo*, which allowed him to visit the city center and witness the bustling silk trade at the canal dock. His father would usually buy him a few candies, which were incredibly precious in an era of material scarcity.

This childhood memory, filled with warmth related to *hangtuo*, encouraged him to collect and preserve the remaining eight traditional wooden looms from that time. In 1984, he expanded his family's small workshop into the Fixing Silk Factory.

**Shuttling to the future**  
Zhang, originally from Beijing, used to study finance as his major and had never come into contact with *hangtuo* before moving to Hangzhou.

The first time he stepped into Shao's weaving factory, he found it quite hard to adapt to its harsh realities. The factory environment, due to the demands of *hangtuo* weaving, was dark, damp, and had a particular smell.

He found it hard to believe that such a delicate and ethereal fabric was produced in such an environment.

Later, when he heard Shao mentioning

that running a *hangtuo* business wasn't profitable and sometimes even ran at a loss, he suggested halting its production and switching to other more economically viable silk trades.

At that time, Shao didn't comment on Zhang's suggestion but proposed that he make him a set of *hangtuo* clothes, which completely blew Zhang's mind.

"The outfit was light and extremely breathable. I couldn't help but marvel at the existence of such an extraordinary fabric," Zhang recalls.

He never mentioned closing down the factory again. Instead, he followed Shao to the factory every day, humbly learning the various production processes of the gauze.

Over the past few years, Zhang has been dedicated to the protection and inheritance of *hangtuo* weaving technique.

"We have built a special loom that enables *hangtuo* to be introduced into schools. Children can get hands-on experience with weaving. This approach significantly strengthens their understanding of the technique in a more intuitive way."

Continuous innovation, including enriching the colors of the fabric, has been effective in helping to evolve *hangtuo* in recent times.

Zhang says: "Switching from the original monochrome to a variety of color styles, *hangtuo* has broadened its appeal. Recently, we have also been trying new things in terms of improvements to the technique. We hope to adapt to the different functional requirements for modern clothing, such as sun protection and wrinkle resistance, by changing the structure of the fibers."

What's more, in order to change the impression that *hangtuo* is a luxury beyond the reach for many, Zhang plans to introduce it into ordinary households through brand building, communication and product development.

"We will cooperate with companies from different fields and use modern media communication methods to enable everyone to see the charm of *hangtuo*," Zhang says.

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## Weaving its magic

By CHENG YUEZHU  
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Among China's myriad forms of silk products, one of them — *yunjin* — remained shrouded in mystery for more than a millennium. Historically reserved exclusively for imperial use, its intricate techniques were passed down from generation to generation within the family lineages of select artisans.

Ancient Chinese granted it a name reflecting its sublime nature, *yun* meaning clouds and *jin* meaning brocade. Just like clouds in the sky, the fabric has an iridescent sheen owing to its unique weaving technique and refined raw material.

With the dedication of generations of artisans, who sit at the gigantic weaving looms for hours on end, their fingers dancing among the intricate threads, the craftsmanship of *yunjin* brocade has been preserved, so that today, its beauty can still be appreciated in all its splendor.

Zhou Shuangxi, a national-level inheritor of the *yunjin* brocade weaving technique, is one of them.

Having devoted the past five decades to *yunjin* production, he has honed his expertise to the point where he can both replicate the antique imperial dragon robes in all their minutiae, and also skillfully represent other

art forms such as replicating the painting *Mona Lisa*.

However, Zhou recalls that before he entered the Nanjing Yunjin Research Institute in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, he had no idea what *yunjin* even was. Back in 1973, he graduated from a mining school, and was selected to become an apprentice of the craft at the institute, probably because it looked like he was "in good shape".

Zhou, along with around five other apprentices, faced a bleak picture at that time, with only several masters in their 70s and not even a loom at their disposal.

"The old masters eventually remembered that there was a loom stored away somewhere. When we opened the storehouse door, what I saw seemed like a pile of firewood. We assembled it into a loom 3 to 4 meters tall, and I finally saw for the first time what a traditional *yunjin* loom looked like," Zhou recalls.

The teachers were masters of the craft, and they taught the apprentices the traditional methods, from handling the fragile threads to using mnemonic rhymes to help them acquire the technique.

"It was difficult, but in a different way from mining. Mining requires heavy physical labor, but working with the soft and thin silk requires patience. My hands were

calloused from mining, so I used to soak my hands in warm water whenever I could, so that they could become softer and make it easier to reel the silk," he says.

Out of the six or so apprentices, Zhou is the only one who has persevered in the trade until this day. He participated in 1983 in the replication of an antique dragon robe unearthed from the Dingling Mausoleum in Beijing, and since then has continued to work on significant projects to replicate cultural relics.

"I am lucky to be in such a good era. All of my teachers were top-notch craftsmen and I was granted government funding to learn the technique. I now have the honor of being a representative inheritor," Zhou says.

**Craft center**

The origin of *yunjin* can be traced to the late Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420), when general Liu Yu defeated the Later Qin kingdom and brought the kingdom's craftsmen from Chang'an (the present day Xi'an in Shaanxi province) to the then capital Nanjing. The majority of these craftsmen were brocade artisans.

In 417, a governmental institution specially administering brocade production was set up in Nanjing, marking the advent of Nanjing *yunjin* brocade.

Nanjing is believed to be especially conducive for silk manufacturing, as it is commonly said that the water of the city's Qinhuai River is rich in tannic acid, a substance that facilitates the process of dyeing. In the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties

## LIFE



# MUSICAL SALUTE TO THE FIRST EMPEROR

Composer brings symphony 'home' to Xi'an for Chinese premiere, **Chen Nan** reports.

**T**an Dun has traveled to Xi'an, Shaanxi province, many times. The ancient city has long fascinated the composer for various reasons — the delicious food, the world-renowned Terracotta Warriors, and Qinqiang Opera, a type of traditional Chinese opera popular in Shaanxi.

This month, Tan returned to the city once more, this time with a special purpose.

Along with the Xi'an Symphony Orchestra, on July 15, he conducted his *Symphony of the First Emperor*, the first time that the work has ever been performed in China.

"Many Chinese symphony orchestras wanted to premiere the work in China but Xi'an is the perfect city for it," Tan, 65, told China Daily two days before the concert. "I came to Xi'an many years ago when I was preparing to compose the piece, and I was inspired by the city. It's like it has returned to its hometown."

The composer and conductor is, arguably, best known for the Oscar-winning score he composed for director Ang Lee's martial arts film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*.

*Symphony of the First Emperor* was based on the music from Tan's opera *The First Emperor*. In 2006, *The First Emperor* was premiered at the Metropolitan Opera House, which had commissioned the production in cooperation with the Los Angeles Opera. Directed by Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou and conducted by Tan, the opera is about Qinshihuang, the first ruler of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC), who united the country, began construction of the Great Wall, and issued orders for almost universal standardization of, among other things, weights, measures, the written language and the law.

The celebrated opera star Plácido Domingo played the lead role of Qinshihuang.

In the opera, Qinshihuang commissions a musician, Gao Jianli, to compose an anthem for his empire. When he discovers that his daughter has fallen in love with Gao, Qinshihuang, despite appreciating Gao's musical talent, becomes angry because he wants his daughter to marry a general for political reasons.



**Top and above:** Tan Dun takes the baton to lead the Xi'an Symphony Orchestra in performing his *Symphony of the First Emperor* in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, this month. It is the first time that the work has been performed in China. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

In 2017, when The Metropolitan Museum of Art put on a large exhibition, *Age of Empires: Chinese Art of the Qin and Han Dynasties* (221 BC-AD 220), the museum commissioned a new work from Tan based on the music from the opera, which became *Symphony of the First Emperor*.

"Basically, the version we perform in Xi'an is the same as the one for the exhibition of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. But since most of the musicians of the Xi'an Symphony Orchestra are from Xi'an, which gives them a special connection with the composition, the performance will be unique," says Tan, adding that the performance in Xi'an involves some special musical instruments created exclusively for the city — ceramic percussion instruments.

*Symphony of the First Emperor* features seven chapters, each named after different colors and *wu xing* (the five elements in ancient Chinese philosophy). For example, the first chapter is called Black and White (Yin-Yang Master), the second chapter is called Red (Emperor's Dance) and the fifth chapter is called Purple (Revenge).

Tan attributes the naming of the chapters to director Zhang, who was born in Xi'an.



"I came to Xi'an many years ago when I was preparing to compose the piece, and I was inspired by the city. It's like it has returned to its hometown."

**Tan Dun,**  
composer and conductor

Back in the 1990s, when Tan studied on a scholarship at Columbia University, New York, where he received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 1993, he was introduced to a Chinese movie by his wife. The movie, *The Emperor's Shadow*, which is about the friendship between Qinshihuang and Gao, as well as the love between Gao and Qinshihuang's daughter, Princess Yueyang, was directed by Zhou Xiaowen and the script was written by Lu Wei.

Chinese actor Jiang Wen played the role of Qinshihuang, actor Ge You played the role of Gao and actress Xu Qing portrayed the princess.

"I was intrigued by the ambitious story of Qinshihuang and his relationship with the musician, who has great talent and a pure passion for his art. When the Metropolitan Opera House commissioned me to write the opera, I soon proposed an idea based on that story," recalls Tan.

When Tan met the scriptwriter, he was surprised to find out that Lu Wei had not only carried out lots of research about Qinshihuang and the story between the emperor and Gao, but is also a music lover who travels around Shaanxi to collect folk music.

"Tan loves Qinqiang Opera, so do I. I love humming Qinqiang Opera pieces when I write scripts," says Lu Wei. "When I watched his opera, *The First Emperor*, some parts were very similar to the movie, but others were beyond my imagination."

One of the most memorable parts in the opera, as Lu Wei recalls, was having Peking Opera actor Wu Hsing-kuo playing the role of the Yin-Yang Master, a narrator, who outlines the story through a striking mixture of singing, dancing and acrobatics against a backdrop of Chinese drummers and a chorus. Wu's performances featured elements of Qinqiang Opera.

"For *Symphony of the First Emperor*, Tan creates an amazing balance between Western music and Chinese music. Though the music is abstract, he uses it to tell a very romantic story," Lu Wei says.

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## Completing bucket list item is the height of adventure

One item off my bucket list, but many more to go.

For the first time, I did something I had never attempted before: zip lining across a gorge. For adventure enthusiasts, this is no big deal. To me, it was a giant leap, having to overcome my fear of heights.

I managed to slay the so-called inner demons at the picturesque Longqing Gorge, at the Gucheng village of Beijing's Yanqing district, located some 80 kilometers from the capital.

A two-hour drive led us, a group of 11, to the gorge, as the mercury levels touched 40 C. Surprisingly, we didn't feel the heat, thanks to the thick vegetation and green cover all around.

The verdant mountain peaks and the olive green river flowing between

them presented a picture that was straight out of the movie *Lord of the Rings*. Mist was the only thing missing.

The challenge, for me, began after we bought our tickets and "entered the dragon" that led up to the jetty, from where we would take a boat and journey through the gorge.

I was all pumped up to go zip lining. As I neared the ticket counter, nervousness almost got the better of me. I scanned the QR code and paid a ticket fee of 60 yuan (\$8.36), which meant there was no turning back.

I trudged up the stairs toward the zip line deck along with my co-traveler, and she was the first to get ready. The cordial staff prepared her by fitting her with the proper gear, which involved attaching harness to the zip line through a rope attachment.

She was secured with lanyards and carabiners that were attached to the pulleys and trolleys, which would carry her down the zip line.

As she got ready to go, I got ready to film her descent. She raced off, reaching the other end in about 3 minutes.

My turn next. My heart began to pound. The staff, however, tried to reassure me, which seemed to have the desired, calming effect. I donned the gear as instructed, while allowing the staff to secure me to the line, and stood at the edge of the launchpad. I avoided looking down as that would've made my head spin.

It was time to go. As instructed, I began the descent while turning my head both ways, trying to soak in the breathtaking view. I was just beginning to enjoy the ride when I realized the landing deck had arrived.

I wished I could have stayed up there longer.

My biggest regret was not carrying my mobile phone, which I handed to the staff. They kindly snapped some pictures of me, and I was glad they came out well.

With my fears having been conquered, I guess I need to raise the bar and take on a bigger challenge.

The gorge had other adventure activities available for tourists, including bungee jumping and jet skiing. It was bungee jumping that first caught my eye, another gravity-defying experience I want to tick off my bucket list.

As I strode up to the ticket counter, I was asked to go through some safety questions first. The information preached caution to those suffering from heart-related ailments and those with problems, such as dizziness. A weight range was also prescribed for those daring to attempt the jump.

While I conformed to all the physical conditions and suffer no health complications, what I lacked was the right mental condition needed to undertake the challenge. Therefore, I abandoned the thought of taking the plunge this time. I'll leave that challenge for my next visit.

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## COMMENT

## Editorials

## Anti-China Ford 'witch-hunt' indicates that some US lawmakers have totally lost the plot

Witch-hunting politicians in the United States seem bent on derailing Ford Motor Co's planned plant in partnership with Chinese battery company Contemporary Amperex Technology.

In a joint letter released on Friday, Jason Smith and Mike Gallagher, the Republican chairs of two House of Representatives committees, demanded that a probe be conducted into the \$3.5 billion deal the Detroit automaker signed with CATL in February to build a factory in Michigan to produce batteries for some of its electric vehicles. Republican Senator Marco Rubio has already introduced a bill that seeks to bar consumer tax credits for electric vehicles produced using CATL technology.

Those pointing an accusing finger at the Ford-CATL project are opposing for the sake of opposing. The politicizing of technological and economic issues has made them turn a blind eye to the benefits that the cooperation could yield for both sides.

For Ford, the decision to forge a partnership with the world's largest manufacturer of lithium batteries is purely out of business considerations. That the Michigan plant is a wholly owned Ford subsidiary rather than a joint venture with CATL is obviously meant to send the message that "Ford controls the plant", to dispel possible national security concerns, which are repeatedly cited by some in the US as an excuse to cut off China-US cooperation.

The plant, which is scheduled to open in 2026

and employ about 2,500 people, will license technology from CATL to produce new lithium iron phosphate, or LFP batteries, to replace the more costly nickel cobalt manganese batteries that Ford is currently using.

LFP batteries are also exceptionally durable and tolerate more frequent and faster charging, which will help increase Ford's EV production and profit margins. The facility, once completed, will have 40 GWh of battery capacity capable of powering around 400,000 Ford EVs, which are also expected to qualify for half of the up to \$7,500 federal tax incentives for consumers purchasing an EV as they meet local production requirements.

Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer has welcomed the project, saying it "will uplift local families, small businesses, and the entire community and help our state continue leading the future of mobility and electrification".

The US is already lagging behind in EV production, with its EVs accounting for only around 6 percent of total vehicle sales, as compared with China's which account for nearly one-third. Any attempts to derail the Ford-CATL battery project will only worsen the situation for the US and compromise President Joe Biden's emissions reduction goals.

The "scrutiny" of the project, which is good for Ford, good for US workers and good for the US, serves to show the ridiculous lengths some US lawmakers are prepared to go to in their efforts to politicize economic and trade issues.

## Odd way to show relations are 'inseparable'

Japan's restrictions on exports of advanced chip-manufacturing equipment, which took effect on Sunday, are obviously in line with the United States' efforts to stymie China's ability to develop high-end semiconductors. With the revision of a Japanese trade ministry ordinance under the foreign exchange law, Japan added 23 chipmaking items to the list that requires approval for exports.

Against that backdrop, China certainly has more reasons to take Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's claim on Saturday that Sino-Japanese relations are "inseparable" with a pinch of salt.

That it took less than four months for such restrictions that will have far-reaching influences on the "inseparable" ties to be transformed from initiative to action, despite the concerns of the to-be-affected Japanese companies and the strong opposition of the Chinese side, exposes the Kishida government's determination to say one thing in relation to China and do another.

The Kishida government's duplicity is self-evident in its insistence that the move is based on Japan's national interests, does not target any particular country and is independent of any other country's will.

Its exclusion of a total of 42 "friendly" and "reliable" countries and regions from the restrictions — all US allies — further highlights the "coercive" nature of the practice as a geopolitical tool Japan is providing the United States.

Although it is not blocking the exports completely, it technically subjects both the Japanese companies and their Chinese partners to the whim of the Japanese government. That gives the latter a leverage to weaponize the technology and its trade for political purposes.

China will undoubtedly bear the brunt of the move, as it is the largest importer of these restricted Japanese export items, digesting about 30 percent of them.

By helping the US consolidate its China-excluded "chip alliance", Japan will not only lose its share of the Chinese semiconductor market but also harm the future of its own chip industry. The purpose of the US' chip alliance is to re-establish its semiconductor hegemony. If Japan blindly supports the US in that regard, its interests will also be damaged along with those of China.

Japan's chip-related exports to China are nearly double those of the US. While major US chip companies and the country's Semiconductor Industry Association are actively lobbying Washington not to block their deals with China, the collective silence of the Japanese companies and guilds explains how much work the Kishida government has been doing to muffle their opposition.

It remains to be seen how the Kishida government will help these Japanese companies find an alternative that can compensate them for the loss of a market that is as sizable and reliable as China's.

## 'Chip war' spurs telling cry of alarm

Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger's warning that projects such as Intel's planned factory complex in Ohio will be much less necessary if the Joe Biden administration doesn't "pause" before implementing new restrictions on exports of chips to China is a telling cry of alarm.

Although US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said on Friday that the measures were targeted and "the vast majority of sales of chips designed by the United States to China has continued unabated", Gelsinger and the CEOs of Nvidia and Qualcomm have urged the administration to study the impact of restrictions as they are harming the US industry.

The Biden administration considers itself to be like a dragon guarding its treasure, with Sullivan claiming that the administration is "going to continue to look at very targeted, very specific restrictions on technology with national security and military applications and make judgments rigorously, carefully, methodically".

Yet during their discussions with Sullivan, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and other US officials last week, the CEOs of the US' three largest chip companies said that the restrictions had not achieved the intended outcome of slowing China's development of artificial intelligence. They pointed out that the availability and quality of the software China is using more than compensates for the hardware restrictions. Instead, the restrictions are hitting the bottom line of the US industry and put-

ting its tech leadership at risk.

Sales in China account for one-fifth of the total worldwide sales of Intel, more than 60 percent of Qualcomm's global sales and 22 percent of Nvidia's, with the revenue helping to fund the companies' R&D efforts.

Senior US officials have repeatedly stated that the US does not seek "decoupling", but focuses on so-called de-risking — Sullivan said that the aim is to build a small yard with a high fence. Yet in practice what the administration is doing is building an ad hoc fence around as big a yard as it can in a bid to de-sinicize key industry and supply chains, partly in the belief that this will bring "lost jobs" back to the US.

But as then Apple CEO Steve Jobs famously told US President Barack Obama a decade ago: "The jobs aren't coming back."

Asia Times published an article on July 12 that reinforced that point, stressing that "the globalization of production capacity and new technology development is accelerating away from the US".

Rather than being a vigilant hoarder of treasure, the Biden administration is staking a claim to fool's gold, as its actions targeting Chinese tech companies and promises that it will bring the chip industry back home have only served to make the US companies that are the industry leaders collateral damage and spurred the globalization of chip production.

Song Chen



## Opinion Line

## Freedom of speech no excuse to trigger clash of civilizations

Thousands of Iraqis protested in Baghdad on Saturday over the burning or desecration of the *Quran* in Sweden and Denmark. Similar protests have been reported from across the Islamic world.

On Friday, a man torched a book purported to be the *Quran* at a square across the Iraqi embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark. The action was livestreamed on Facebook, where one could see the book burning in a tin foil tray next to the Iraqi flag on the ground. This happened less than a month after a Christian refugee of Iraqi origin tore up and trampled on a copy of the *Quran* in front of a mosque in Stockholm on June 28.

Many Islamic nations have protested against Sweden and Denmark allowing the desecration of the *Quran* under the pretext of freedom of speech. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei even

said that those desecrating the *Quran* should face the "most severe punishment" and that by defending the perpetrators Sweden was gearing up for "war" against Muslims.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani ordered the expulsion of the Swedish ambassador and recalled the Iraqi charge d'affaires in Sweden, even warning to cut off diplomatic relations with Sweden if there were any more such burnings. Iraq has also revoked the license of Ericsson in Iraq, although the Swedish company said it is opposed to the burning of the *Quran*.

The desecration of the *Quran* has exacerbated the rift between the West and Islamic nations. It has also created uncertainties for Sweden's accession to NATO. Although, under pressure from the United States, Turkey agreed to let Sweden join NATO, it lies to be seen

how the Islamic nation reacts to the book burning in Sweden.

Although the Swedish government is opposed to the desecration, Swedish courts uphold the behavior on grounds of the freedom of speech. The West should know that different civilizations should respect each other.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin strongly condemned the desecration of the *Quran*, reiterating that China advocates mutual respect, inclusiveness and mutual learning among civilizations and opposes all forms of Islamophobia. China is ready to work with the international community to implement the Global Civilization Initiative, and jointly safeguard the diversity of world civilizations. Any "freedom of speech" should not serve as an excuse to incite a clash of civilizations.

— NIUTANQIN WECHAT ACCOUNT

## Love for poetry fuels expansion of culture industry

In the 168-minute-long *Chang An*, an animation movie that tells the story of Li Bai and Gao Shi, two famous poets of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), some 48 poems composed during the dynasty are displayed and/or read aloud, impressing audiences.

In China's history, the Tang Dynasty is rightfully associated with poems. Poems composed during the dynasty adorn Chinese language textbooks and are also reading materials for students. Poems such as *A tranquil night* by Li Bai are so famous that if any Chinese utters one line, such as "Looking up, I find the moon bright", another Chinese is sure to complete it by saying, "Bowing, in

homesickness I'm drowned."

It is this affinity for poetry among the Chinese that has helped the animation movie do well. No matter how many centuries pass, Chinese people's love for poetry will never fade.

With clips and trailers of the movie having gone viral on social networking sites, numerous scenic spots in Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi province, which was the capital of the Tang Dynasty, is seeing renewed interest with huge tourist inflow. Besides, sales of traditional Chinese clothing, or *hanfu*, with Tang characteristics and related cultural products have also gone up.

All these are good developments

for the spread of culture today, namely to make it commercially sustainable. It costs money, energy and time for people to market culture and only if there are appropriate returns can society continue to make contributions. Creating Tang dynasty themed parks, clothes and other cultural products helps quench the public's thirst for Tang poems, and the returns ensure a professional approach and better quality of products.

By Monday, the movie had garnered 1.1 billion yuan (\$152.69 million) at the box office, which is a good payoff for its producers. So long as the poem culture thrives, it can sustain an entire industry.

— ZHANG ZHOUXIANG, CHINA DAILY

## What They Say

## India uses 'security' as disguise for protectionism

According to Indian media reports, New Delhi has rejected the application by Megha-BYD to build a new energy vehicle and battery factory in Hyderabad, Telangana, with an investment of \$1 billion, citing "security" concerns.

Megha is an Indian engineering and infrastructure company headquartered in Hyderabad, and BYD is a Chinese NEV manufacturer headquartered in Shenzhen, Guangdong province.

Notably, BYD's investment plans in India do not involve acquisitions of Indian companies. The Indian government's claim of national security issues is clearly an excuse to block the project. Rather it is trying to avoid repeating the mobile phone scenario by vigorously promoting trade protectionism against Chinese companies. It seems that India would have made its own

mobile phone industry a world leader in the sector were it not for China.

In fact, India started politicizing economic and trade cooperation with China since the border skirmishes between the two countries in June 2020. The main tactics include raising tariffs, restricting investment and setting up non-trade barriers of various kinds exclusively for Chinese enterprises.

As a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said, the Chinese government always requires Chinese enterprises to conduct foreign cooperation on the basis of abiding by international rules and local laws and regulations, and the Indian government has the responsibility to safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of foreign investors, including Chinese enterprises, in accordance

with market principles.

As a matter of fact, China and India enjoy broad space for economic and trade cooperation. Investment by Chinese enterprises in India can help improve local infrastructure, create a large number of jobs and improve local residents' livelihoods. The Indian government should show more vision and broad-mindedness to prevent the border dispute from impacting the overall bilateral relations, especially its economic and trade cooperation with China.

New Delhi should abandon its trade protectionism and politicization of economic issues, act in the interests of Indian companies and people, and create a fair and transparent business environment for foreign investors, including Chinese companies.

— LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

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## COMMENT

Maya Majueran

## BRI boosts Sri Lanka's status as logistics hub

Sri Lanka's geographical location enables it to provide quick and efficient global and regional connectivity. More than 60,000 ships ply the route served by Sri Lanka annually, carrying two-thirds of the world's oil and half of the global container traffic.

Sri Lanka is located very close to all major ports in the Indian subcontinent, especially those of India, allowing it to provide fast and easy connectivity for the Indian subcontinent through its feeder network.

As such, the country possesses the essential geopolitical advantages to become a key logistics hub in the Indian Ocean. However, Sri Lanka will be able to capitalize on its advantages only if its ports can cater to the requirements of large container ships which shipping lines are adding to their fleet. It also needs to improve the quality of its logistics services, physical infrastructure, technology and new types of services.

Sri Lanka's economy, which contracted by 7.8 percent in 2022 due to a balance of payment crisis, is likely to further decline this year before gradually recovering in 2024.

The country secured a \$3 billion four-year bailout from the International Monetary Fund on March 20, which will help it to stabilize its economy and begin restructuring its debt. While Sri Lanka's

external bilateral debt accounts for 31 percent of its total debt, its debt to Western multilateral or multilateral development banks account for 27 percent and commercial (majority of them international sovereign bond) debt 42 percent of its total debt.

Amid all this, the US Federal Reserve's aggressive tightening policy has made the US dollar a much stronger currency, exporting inflation to other countries. As a result, the currencies of many countries have been weakening, pushing up the prices of imported goods, including food, fuel and medicine. Many developing countries with big debts have been particularly hard hit by the strengthening US dollar because their external debt stocks and debt service payments are mostly denominated in dollars, making it even harder for them to borrow in the open market to finance their budget deficits.

It is in such circumstances that the Export-Import Bank of China extended the debt payment in 2022 and 2023, and the Chinese side agreed to negotiate a medium- and long-term debt disposal plan with Sri Lanka in a friendly manner, and promised to do its best to promote Sri Lanka's debt sustainability.

Reiterating its position several times, the Chinese side has stressed that China and Sri Lanka are good brothers, good

partners and good friends. It has also said it is committed to maintaining friendly relations with Sri Lanka for mutual benefit and emphasized that it will continue to support Sri Lanka's socioeconomic development and provide humanitarian aid to the best of its ability.

Moreover, China has said it will promote pragmatic cooperation between the two countries and jointly implement the Global Development Initiative, and agreed to further strengthen cooperation with local and foreign companies and make more contributions to Sri Lanka's economic recovery by encouraging Chinese enterprises to invest in Sri Lanka and participate in high-quality cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative's framework to help Sri Lanka.

With China's help Sri Lanka's aspiration of becoming a major logistics hub in the region took a giant leap forward with the launch of a \$392 million South Asia Commercial and Logistics Hub in Colombo Port. The 5 million-square-foot logistics hub will be built in the center of Colombo Port and have a storage capacity of 530,000 cubic meters. The construction of the complex is expected to begin later this year, and the complex is expected to be completed by the end of 2025.

The SACLH will offer the full gamut of

logistics-related facilities and services such as less-than-container load, multi-country consolidation, container freight station, general warehousing and various other value-added services. Also, the project is expected to provide direct employment for at least 1,800 people and create 10,500 other jobs indirectly.

It will provide better logistics and warehousing facilities and services, enhancing the Colombo Port's competitive advantage and consequently strengthening its status as a logistics hub, by improving the port's services and introducing leading-edge technologies. It's direct foreign investment like this that Sri Lanka needs to boost its economic recovery.

There is no doubt the Chinese enterprises will improve operational and marketing skills, strengthen the market power and commercial relationships, enhance technological expertise and access to cheaper sources of finance, which are of paramount importance for attracting more traffic to Sri Lanka and turning it into an international logistics hub.

The author is director of Belt and Road Initiative Sri Lanka, an independent and pioneering Sri Lanka-led think tank. The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.



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## Chengdu a tale of a city with both leisure and diligence

**Editor's note:** Chengdu used to be famous for its hot and spicy food and leisurely lifestyle. While the Sichuan cuisine Chengdu offers remains as delectable as ever, the leisurely lifestyle has given way to a modern lifestyle as the city moves forward like an engine on the fast track of development.

Each city has its unique characteristics, and a special feature of Chengdu, capital of Sichuan province, is long believed to be its leisurely lifestyle.

A typical day for a Chengdu resident starts with chatting (locally called *bai longmenzhen*) over a pot of tea in a teahouse with friends. After a hot-pot lunch, the group is more likely to move to a mahjong room for the afternoon before having a hot, spicy dinner which could last well into the night.

Such a picture, I believe, is shared by many in China. And this is what perhaps has attracted thousands of youngsters to settle down in Chengdu. After all, few could refuse the temptation of a leisurely life when most of us are living under pressure of all kinds, from jobs and commuting, to meeting deadlines, to caring for the family and parents.

But most of those who shifted to Chengdu in search of a leisurely life soon found they were mistaken. My recent weeklong visit to the city convinced me that the city is not a place to relax but an engine on the fast track of development.

Taking a walk after checking in at my hotel, I soon found I had lost my way in a forest of tall office buildings, apartment complexes, parks, shopping malls, restaurants and even teahouses. I could not find any of Chengdu's landmarks that I was familiar with. Later, I was told that my hotel was in a newly developed area that did not exist when I last visited the city more than a decade ago.

**It is all fine with me if one calls Chengdu a city of leisure, or a city to build careers.**

Chengdu is now one of the most important cities in western China and is ranked fourth in terms of population (with nearly 21.3 million permanent residents) among all Chinese cities. Ten years ago, the city's population was a little more than 15 million.

Without a solid economic foundation and fast economic development, it would have been impossible for the city to support a population that has increased by 600,000 a year on average in the last decade. Despite the three-year COVID-19 pandemic, which had a negative effect on the local economy, the city's GDP has increased by 6.2 percent on average a year in the past five years.

From my hotel room window, I could see that the construction of a subway station is in its last stage with dozens of people working round the clock in different shifts. Noisy to me as it was, I tolerated it because I learned the workers were working hard to ensure the new subway line begins operations before the World University Students' Games scheduled for late July.

When I hailed a taxi to the airport, the driver asked me: "Which one are you heading to?" Though he complained that the new Tianfu International Airport was very far, he was apparently trying to show off that his city now has two airports. Determined to turn Chengdu into an important civil aviation hub, the city authorities have invested huge amounts of money to build a new airport while expanding the old one. Chengdu's airports' passenger handling capacity now ranks fourth in China, behind only Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

The ever-expanding city, its fast increasing population, the hard-working construction workers and hundreds of skyscrapers have convinced me that Chengdu is not a city of leisure. Instead, it is a city, like most other cities in China, which is losing no time in boosting development.

Having said that, I still believe a leisurely life is still the best "selling brand" for Chengdu as proved by numerous teahouses and mahjong rooms, which are rarely seen in other cities. Even in the new developed area where my hotel was located, neon lights were flashing ads inviting visitors to come and enjoy their stay in Chengdu.

Getting into teahouses and mahjong rooms, one soon finds that those who frequent the places are mostly gray-haired retired people. It is such people who are helping make Chengdu's leisure a good business and earning Chengdu the title of a city of leisure.

Chengdu residents like to juxtapose the two characters of the name of the city from Cheng-Du to "Du-Cheng". The latter means "all fine" or "everything is okay". It is all fine with me if one calls Chengdu a city of leisure, or a city to build careers.

Jiang Yiyi and Gao Ziyi

## Study tours should offer more 'learning' experience

Link on paper can only convey so much, true understanding requires putting knowledge into action." The popularity of study tours continues increasing during the summer vacation. Many parents are arranging for their children to go on educational trips, in order to break the relative monotony of classroom education. By providing them immersive real-life experiences, parents are seeking to broaden their children's horizons, enhance their knowledge, and help them integrate learning with exploration and enjoyment.

According to the summer travel data forecast from several online travel platforms, this summer is expected to witness a huge surge in demand, surpassing that of the same period in 2019. Among the emerging trends, "study tours" are new for the tourism industry, contributing significantly to its gradual recovery and improvement.

In 2021 the Ministry of Culture and Tourism released the "14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of Cultural Industries", which laid stress on the vigorous development of study tours. The plan is aimed at creating innovative study tour products that integrate cultural experiences, technological innovation, knowledge dissemination, entertainment, leisure and interactive parent-child activities.

According to available data, the number of participants in study tours reached 4.94 million in 2021, far exceeding the pre-pandemic figures. In 2022, the number crossed 6 million, an all-time high.

The concept of "combining learning with travel" has become a new consumer trend, with study tours becoming an emerging tourism model. Study tours promote the integration of "culture, tourism and education", a novel way to experience cultural tourism and engage in practical education by studying people's daily lives. Study tours also combine family education, school education and community education.

Compared to developed countries in Europe and the Americas, China's study tour market started relatively late, with a lower overall market penetration rate, indicating that there is still considerable untapped potential to expand the market.

According to the "China Study Tour Development Report 2022-23" published by the China Tourism Academy, since the joint release of the "Opinions on Promoting Study Tours for Primary

and Secondary School Students" by the Ministry of Education and 11 other departments in 2016, people's understanding of study tours has increased. The study tour demographic now includes preschool children, primary, middle and high school students, as well as adults and senior citizens, representing a broader developmental space.

With the combined impetus of favorable policies and the demand for quality education, the study tour market has grown rapidly in recent years. This year, study tourism has experienced even more robust growth, with more than 5,000 "study camps" and related enterprises across the country. To better develop study tours and avoid superficial experiences, tourism destinations can focus on the following aspects:

To begin with, it is essential to clearly define the positioning of the study tour

market and expand the supply chains of study tour products. To establish a distinct identity and highlight the core values of "research" and "learning", study tours should not only focus on providing immersive experiences but also prioritize educational aspects, integrating them through products and services. This approach will ensure study tours offer high-quality educational resources for students.

It is also crucial to continuously optimize the study tour product chains. This can be achieved by incorporating the latest educational concepts and technological advancements to create a complete industry chain encompassing base construction, itinerary design, qualified instructors, curriculum development, safety assurance and other essential elements. This comprehensive approach will drive high-quality development in the study tour sector.

Furthermore, there is a need to capitalize on the diverse resources of each region and cultivate study tours as a branded intellectual property. Local authorities should engage in comprehensive planning, and consider study tours to be a significant vehicle for cultural and educational enrichment.

They can delve deep into local intangible cultural heritage, the country's revolutionary culture, ethnic minority culture, and traditional Chinese culture,

among other distinctive cultural traits, to promote unique study tours. For instance, in June 2023, the Guizhou provincial cultural and tourism authorities announced six study tour routes centered on intangible cultural heritage.

Leveraging Guizhou's abundant intangible cultural heritage resources and tourist attractions, the province developed high-quality specialized courses to attract more young students to go on study tours in Guizhou.

This initiative aims to facilitate the effective transformation of intangible cultural heritage resources into cultural and tourism intellectual property, ultimately developing the "Study in Guizhou" study tour brand and driving the high-quality development of the tourism industry in the province.

Finally, to enhance the quality of study tour products and promote innovation among students, it is important to prioritize content innovation in study tours. So, local authorities should tailor the development of prominent educational study tour activities with strong regional characteristics. They should introduce innovative elements, such as incorporating technology education, implementing interdisciplinary projects, and creating a series of exemplary study tour bases. Additionally, they can design influential and high-quality study tour itineraries.

Like Guizhou, other provinces and regions can also leverage local events such as Guizhou's "Chinese Rural Football Super League" or "Village Super", which has become a race across the country, "Village Basketball" and the Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope installed in Guizhou, to showcase their unique natural resources and cater to the demands of study tour travelers.

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LI MIN / CHINA DAILY

## GLOBAL VIEWS

DARYL GUPPY

## Paused, but not abandoned

NATO's eastward push is demonstrative that the organization has become an instrument of US policy rather than a defensive alliance

From Vilnius, Lithuania, NATO cast its eyes eastward to Ukraine. For NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, there was a desire to look even further east beyond Ukraine. He, some NATO members and invited guests remain undeterred in their desire to bring NATO into Asia.

During a speech at Keio University this February, Stoltenberg noted that "this idea that we can say that China doesn't matter for NATO is wrong".

Following the Vilnius meeting, this group may assiduously nurture the growing eastward ambition to support the US desire to preserve US influence. Although deferred in Vilnius, pressure will be maintained to establish a NATO office in Tokyo as a hub for cooperation with Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea. Japan has already upgraded its representation to NATO by creating a new ambassador post.

The risk remains. NATO is being encouraged to become a broader instrument of US foreign policy applied outside of the European context.

NATO is one of the major military alliances, but in the Asia-Pacific region, it is superseded by AUKUS, the security grouping of Australia, the United Kingdom and the US, the renewal of US base agreements with the Philippines and the active encouragement of Japan's remilitarization. The US is also forging ad-hoc alliances in the mold of the "Coalition of the Willing", as deployed in the Middle East conflicts and elsewhere.

It appears the ambition to extend NATO to encompass what might be called a North Asia Treaty Organization has not abated. Stoltenberg suggested leaders in the ROK, Australia and Japan were clearly concerned that what is "happening in Europe today could happen in Asia tomorrow".

His views were not compelling enough to convince all in attendance at Vilnius that NATO expansion eastward beyond Ukraine was an immediate priority, although the invited guest countries from Asia did not step back from their desire to see NATO in



SONG CHEN / CHINA DAILY

Asia. Some analysts argue that NATO will formalize "Indo-Pacific Four", or IP4, as the new collective title for Australia, Japan, the ROK and New Zealand, its designated observer partners in Asia.

The clear objective of any eastward NATO expansion is to further assist the United States to contain China. However, any NATO push into Asia is a relatively minor part of the large-scale US activity in

the Asia-Pacific region.

It is estimated that the US currently maintains more than 800 military facilities outside of the US. Multiple US military facilities are located around the maritime borders of China. The facilities are claimed to be necessary to preserve the global-rules based order and protect freedom of navigation.

The European version of NATO might

aim to bring significant military or diplomatic advantages to efforts by the US to inhibit China's development progress. But it is the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, better known as the Quad, which is the security dialogue platform for Australia, India, Japan and the US, the trilateral US, Japan, Australia security dialogue and the emerging US, Japan, the ROK trilateral dialogue that challenge the stability of the

region in a complex way.

The attempt by the United Kingdom and the US to expand or export the NATO organizational model to Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the ROK is as significant as any direct European participation in the region. A NATO organizational model is a potential threat to regional peace and security because it further unifies US efforts to contain China by militaristic means.

Regional players such as the ROK, Japan and Australia are already building the capacity, with US backing, to sustain efforts to contain China. This is driving the militarization of the Asia-Pacific region, which has seen military spending increase to \$575 billion in 2022. And the A\$368 billion (\$249.5 billion) planned expenditure by Australia on AUKUS nuclear submarines will accelerate the militarization of this region. Asia and Oceania accounted for about 41 percent of global arms imports during 2018-22.

As Joseph Camilleri, emeritus professor at La Trobe University, says "the United States can no longer afford the high cost of mounting a long-term containment policy that holds any prospect of stemming China's rise. To bridge the deficit, it must turn to allies, old and new". He sees the globalization of NATO as part of a bigger story, a multi-layered US-led "Indo-Pacific strategy", whose clear aim is to contain China and preserve the US' regional and global dominance.

A decision to extend NATO further east into the Asia-Pacific region was deferred at the Vilnius summit but it remains on the NATO agenda as a symbolic endorsement of the US objective to halt China's development by every means possible.

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LI SHI

## Sharing 'cake' in fairer way

China must revamp its tax structure and adopt a better third distribution system to narrow its income inequality, which is widening because of insufficient redistribution policies

China has set the target of achieving common prosperity by the middle of this century. To meet the goal, the country needs to sustain the momentum of economic growth in order to make the "cake" bigger while reforming its income distribution system to share the "cake" in a fairer way.

China's economy expanded by 3 percent last year. In the fourth quarter of 2022, the growth rate dipped below 3 percent, but it rebounded to 4.5 percent in the first quarter of this year and registered 5.5 percent growth in the first half of this year. The country has set this year's growth target at around 5 percent, reflecting a cautious attitude toward short-term economic development.

Weak demand is a major hurdle for China's economic development. At the start of the century, the ratio of household consumption as a proportion of China's GDP declined dramatically from 43 percent in 2003 to 34 percent in 2010.

Although the figure increased in the following years, the consumption ratio hasn't recovered to the level at the start of the century. Over the past five years, it has hovered around 38 percent. This means that more efforts should be made to expand consumption.

On the one hand, the country ought to enlarge the middle-income group and narrow the income inequality by further enriching the lower-income groups. On the other hand, it is imperative to create sufficient jobs, and improve the social safety net to boost consumers' confidence.

China's income inequality remains huge, primarily as a result of insufficient distribution policies. Developed countries' Gini coefficient — a measurement of income inequality — after primary distribution is mostly above 0.4, or even higher than 0.5. The index for China was 0.47 in 2021.

In most developed countries, the figure can decrease between 20 percent and 40 percent to below 0.4 through adjustment measures such as taxation and transfer payments. However, China's Gini coefficient only drops by around 10 percent after income redistribution. Therefore, we



WANG XIAOYING / CHINA DAILY

believe China should double down on improving the redistribution system to reduce the income inequality.

There are two priorities in tax reform: one is to increase the share of direct taxes, and the other is to deepen the reform on personal income tax.

Direct taxes, including personal income tax and property tax, could

**A better third distribution system is necessary for stimulating the development of charity and narrowing income gap.**

reduce income inequality under a progressive taxation system, while indirect taxes, such as value-added tax, don't reduce — if not increase — the income inequality. The ratio of personal income tax in China's total tax revenue is relatively small — despite rising from 6.58 percent in 2019 to 8.1 percent in 2021 — which is not sufficient to reduce the

income inequality.

Apart from revamping the unreasonable tax structure, China also needs to reform the personal income tax to ensure income distribution is more equitable.

First, capital income should be taxed. Individuals with higher incomes will be subject to higher tax rates — whether their income comes from labor or capital income. At present, wage earners are the major contributors to the country's personal income tax revenues.

Second, personal income tax should be levied with family as a unit, covering the earnings derived from salary, business and property, with tax deductions offered for families with different needs to guarantee fair distribution.

Third, a mechanism should be built whereby the threshold of personal income tax, the taxable amount and tax rates are adjusted in line with price fluctuations, changes in residents' incomes and demographics, preferably on a yearly basis. In a nutshell, all these reforms are aimed at reducing income inequality.

Another pillar of a society's income distribution system is third distribution. To encourage "those who get rich first help their less well-off peers", China needs to foster a social atmosphere that encourages philanthropy and charity and roll out more supporting policies. Currently, the lack of an effective third distribution system has severely impeded the growth of China's charity causes, and failed to adjust income distribution.

A better third distribution system is necessary to stimulate the development of charity and narrow the income gap. It would also promote social harmony and stability by easing the hostility against the rich. To improve third distribution, the government should regard charity organizations as partners in providing better public services and give them stronger support.

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## WORLD

**Editor's note:** As the United States is beset by soaring homelessness, this page takes a closer look at this crippling issue in New York and Los Angeles, two of its largest cities.

By **BELINDA ROBINSON**  
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In a tale of two cities, New York and Los Angeles, the largest and second-largest cities in the United States, where the rich live alongside the less fortunate, homelessness has become a crippling issue that local governments are struggling to deal with.

The number of homeless people in New York has reached levels not seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s, said the Coalition for the Homeless based in New York, the country's oldest advocacy and direct service organization that helps the homeless.

A record 100,000 people are living in homeless shelters for the first time, city officials said on June 28, mainly after a huge influx of migrants from the southern border were mostly bused into the city from Republican states beginning in spring last year.

Jose, a migrant from Venezuela who asked to drop his last name for fear of his family's safety, arrived in New York in October. He has no official status, cannot work and has no place to live.

However, he is adamant that he cannot return to Venezuela where he was a truck driver, as gangs told him they would kill him, nonprofit National Public Radio reported in March.

About 52,000 migrants are among New York's homeless population, making them the largest group of unhoused people in the city's system. More than two-thirds have families and children with them, Deputy Mayor Anne Williams-Isom told a news conference last month.

To handle the crisis, Mayor Eric Adams said \$1.4 billion has already been spent to provide housing for migrants this year. The city expects to spend at least \$4.4 billion overall to address the issue by next year. He acknowledged that the funding is taking away from social services.

"I just think it's unfair — \$1.4 billion that could have gone into some of the priorities that we all share," he told *The New York Times* on June 29.

City Relief, a nonprofit founded in 1989, provides meals from a local mobile van at eight locations, including Chelsea, the Lower East Side and Chinatown, West 14th Street, South Bronx and Harlem in New York City as well as several more places in New Jersey. It relies on donations through its website and encourages people to volunteer.

Corey Hayes, creative director for the organization, told *China Daily*: "We have seen an uptick in the number of people needing help over the past 10 months. Part of that has been migrants, but also as the cost of rent in the city continues to skyrocket, more and more people are just not able to afford rent."

Many of the people who have newly arrived are living in 166 locations, including converted hotels, hospitals or one of 11 large relief centers across the city. It costs the city \$8 million a day.

On July 11, Adams announced two new Humanitarian Emergency Response and Relief centers that will cater to migrants, including 330 families with children seeking asylum.

"New York City continues to receive thousands of asylum-seekers each week, and we continue to do everything in our power to respond accordingly, but we are still in dire need of assistance from our state and federal partners," he said in a statement.

Adams, along with lawmakers, also announced a \$107 billion budget for the new fiscal year beginning on July 1. But it includes cuts to nonprofits that the Department of State uses to run its shelters. This was criticized by several organizations, including Homeless Services United, a nonprofit in New York.

Last month, the mayor used an executive order to eliminate a rule that had required homeless shelter residents to wait 90 days before they could get a "Family Homelessness & Eviction Prevention Supplement," or a rental assistance voucher funded by the city.

He also vetoed other bills aimed at expanding eligibility for the vouchers to people at risk of eviction and to alter the income requirement of people who wanted them.

However, his veto was overridden by the New York City Council on July 13. He estimated that all the bills could cost the city \$17 billion over the next five years, which he said was unsustainable.

The mayor has also faced criticism for supporting rent increases



Protesters carrying placards and a banner calling to end homelessness stand outside the City Hall during a rally in New York on May 24.  
RON ADAR VIA NEWSCOM

## US cities remain clueless as thousands go homeless

NYC, LA faced with fund crunch to tackle problem caused by migrant influx, layoffs

for 2 million people in rent-stabilized apartments, which advocates believe will affect those on a low income already struggling to pay rent and buy food.

"Often people will come to us just because the rent doesn't allow them enough money to eat," Hayes said. "The city has failed to invest in increased housing over the past number of years and wasn't ready for either situation."

Junior Phillips, 49, from Brooklyn, installs flooring in homes and businesses for a living. He has a full-time job and does part-time work to cope with the cost of rent and rising bills.

"At my main job, I work about 30 hours a week," Phillips told *China Daily*. "My other job is along the same lines. The thing is the money I make on the side is not extra money because living in New York is really very expensive. I just have enough to cope."

In addition to asylum-seekers, 80,000 non-immigrants are homeless in the Big Apple, which equates to 1 in 80 people not having a permanent home. Many would go hungry if it were not for the help of homeless outreach programs such as City Relief.

"Our main focuses are providing hot meals for people to make it through the day, and connections to local resources to help them create a future off the streets," Hayes said. "I've had many people tell me over the years that they would have died without our assistance."

### Mental health issues

At least 3,000 "vulnerable" homeless people in the city who suffer from mental health problems live on the streets and can often be seen living on subways.

The plight of this group, known and monitored by the city, came to the fore this year after Jordan Neely, a 30-year-old homeless man, was choked to death on May 1 on a train by Daniel Penny, a 24-year-old former US Marine.

Eyewitnesses said Neely had been shouting and complaining on the subway that he had no food. The Michael Jackson impersonator had been homeless for numerous years after his mother was killed by her boyfriend. He had been on drugs and was in trouble with the law after being arrested 42 times.

Last month, Penny was indicted on second-degree manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide. His case has divided opinion between some who think he is a hero and others who believe he "lynched" Neely, such as Yusef Salaam, a politician.



A resident of a homeless encampment in New York prepares to move his belongings as workers from the city prepare to clean up the area in a city sweep order on Sept 22. ANDREW LICHTENSTEIN VIA GETTY IMAGES



A man walks past a homeless encampment underneath a bridge in Los Angeles on Feb 9. JAE C. HONG / ASSOCIATED PRESS

### Mansion tax to help poor draws backlash

A tax on mansion sales in Los Angeles that aimed to raise millions of dollars to fight homelessness has been rebuffed by wealthy Angelenos.

The tax on homes of \$5 million and above was supposed to help those less fortunate. It was approved by ballot last year and launched on April 1. But the initiative, formally called United to House LA, will not raise what was expected.

It faced swift backlash and came under criticism from taxpayer rights groups who filed a lawsuit to stop the tax, despite the money being earmarked to help tenants, prevent evictions and provide affordable housing.

Realtors said some homes in Los Angeles are being priced just under \$5 million to avoid the mansion tax scheme all together. The Washington Post reported earlier this month.

Other cities, such as San Francisco and New York, have similar policies, but Los Angeles was the first to try and use the tax directly from the real estate sold by the rich to help the poor.

The homeless population in LA has grown by 32 percent from 2018 to 2020, according to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority.

BELINDA ROBINSON

“A lack of affordable housing is the primary driver of homelessness in LA, which is a result of decades of underinvestment in affordable housing and insufficient urban planning for the population growth ... in LA and California more broadly.”

**Benjamin Henwood**, professor of the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work at the University of Southern California

**100,000**

number of people living in homeless shelters in New York

**10%**

increase in the homelessness rate in Los Angeles last year

Hayes said: "It's so important that people remain compassionate (toward the homeless). As homelessness grows due to housing shortages, geopolitical crisis and climate change, we've found people become less tolerant toward those experiencing homelessness."

"They see more people on the street and have less compassion for their situation, feeling that the person must somehow be at fault."

Thousands of kilometers away on the West Coast, Los Angeles is known worldwide for its opulence, celebrities and sunshine. However, it has another side — the homeless. In some areas, along backstreets, hundreds of tents form makeshift cities where hundreds of people sleep.

Last month, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass said the city's preliminary figures showed that the number of homeless people living in a tent, car or temporary homes in Los Angeles County was 75,518 as of January, up from 69,144 the previous year.

"The challenge before us is vast, but we will continue to work with urgency to bring Angelenos inside," Bass said. "Lives depend on it."

Overall, homelessness has increased by 9 percent in LA County

and 10 percent in the city of Los Angeles last year.

This is despite hundreds of millions of dollars being spent on housing the homeless, said a report by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. It has not decreased the camps full of homeless people on the streets.

In January, volunteers carried out a count of the homeless. Compared with a similar count done in 2015, the number of unhoused people had increased by 80 percent in the city and 70 percent in the county.

Homelessness in Los Angeles is often spurred by people losing their jobs and not being able to pay their rent, like New York, a study by researchers at the University of California San Francisco found.

Benjamin Henwood, a professor of the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work at the University of Southern California, told *China Daily*, "A lack of affordable housing is the primary driver of homelessness in LA, which is a result of decades of underinvestment in affordable housing and insufficient urban planning for the population growth experienced in LA and California more broadly."

The areas in LA with the highest homeless population include South LA, Westside and Harbor areas, the *Los Angeles Times* reported last month. Unlike New York, the number of people in shelters was just 20,000 countywide, but the number of those living on the street out of shelters was more than 55,000.

The COVID-19 pandemic was challenging, but homelessness has been bad for more than 10 years and continues to soar, Henwood said.

### Upward trend

"In the immediate aftermath of COVID, we did not see a large increase in homelessness as evidenced by the 2022 homeless count," he said. "The 2023 estimate points to a resumption of a continuous upward trend over the past 10 years with the homelessness population doubling during that time."

"COVID-19 pandemic aid, including cash payments and an eviction moratorium, interrupted this trend, but growing income inequality and a housing market that can't accommodate low-wage earners (have) resulted in a resumption of this upward trend."

About 27,000 people living on the streets in Los Angeles have been there for more than a year, the count showed, and much like New York, many are suffering poor health, mental health woes and substance abuse. Around 25 percent of homeless people said they had severe mental illness, and 30 percent said substance abuse was an issue, officials said.

The racial makeup of those in homeless shelters was about 43 percent Latino, 31 percent black, 24 percent white and 2 percent Asian.

Many workers in other areas in California, such as Silicon Valley, could not put food on the table while paying rent after a loss of income amid the pandemic, according to local food banks. Tech companies, many of which have headquarters in the state, also had massive layoffs.

Diane Baker Hayward, a spokeswoman for Second Harvest of Silicon Valley in California, one of the largest food banks in the US, said the aftermath of the pandemic put a huge strain on families that had to turn to food banks.

Second Harvest serves people in San Jose, Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, including Silicon Valley and the San Francisco Peninsula.

"This high level of need was due in large part to the very high cost of housing in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties — what many refer to as Silicon Valley," Hayward told *China Daily*.

"When the pandemic hit, many people lost their jobs or had hours cut at work. Many of the people we are seeing now have never received food assistance before."

Mayor Bass said she and her team have moved 14,000 people off the streets in the first six months of this year. At least 30 percent, or 4,332, got permanent housing, and a further 10,049 went into interim housing from December to May.

However, Henwood believes that to solve the problem in the long run, "more needs to be done at every level of government."

"A recent report provided an estimate that the state of California needs to commit \$6.9 billion to affordable housing annually for the next 12 years to address homelessness when it currently only commits \$1.2 billion to affordable housing," he said.

## WORLD

## Israel approves key judicial reform clause as protests flare

JERUSALEM — Israel's government on Monday pushed through parliament a key clause of its controversial judicial reform package despite mass protests that have plagued the country for months.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his coalition allies approved the bill in a parliament vote boycotted by opposition lawmakers, some of whom shouted "shame, shame".

Critics say the judicial revamp could undermine the country's political system by removing checks and balances on the Israeli executive.

Netanyahu's coalition government argues that the proposed changes are needed to ensure a better balance of power.

The bill passed with 64 votes in the 120-seat chamber. It aims to limit the powers of the Supreme Court in striking down government decisions that the judges deem "unreasonable".

The reform package has triggered one of the biggest protest movements in Israel's history since it was unveiled by the government in January.

The Histadrut trade union confederation threatened a general strike in response to the parliamentary vote, urging the government to resume negotiations with the opposition.

"Any unilateral progress of the reform will have serious consequences," Histadrut chairman Arnon Bar-David said in a statement.

"Over the coming days, I will bring together the heads of the top institutions of the trade union confederation to prepare to declare a general strike if necessary," he added.



Israeli police officers attempt to remove protesters from a road leading to the parliament, during a rally against the government's judicial overhaul, in Jerusalem, on Monday. AMMAR AWAD / REUTERS

A walkout staged by Histadrut in March within hours prompted Netanyahu to halt the legislative process, paving the way for cross-party talks which ultimately collapsed.

While legislators met inside, protesters outside parliament booed, beat drums, blew horns and chanted "shame".

The vote took place hours after Netanyahu, 73, returned to the parliament only a day after undergoing

surgery to have a pacemaker fitted. Police outside the legislature used water cannons and mounted officers were deployed against a crowd of demonstrators.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog — who had tried but failed to broker a compromise after half a year of mass street protests — earlier warned that Israel faced a "national emergency".

Netanyahu has been urged by

Washington on the one side to reach a compromise with the opposition, while his coalition partners are pushing for legislation to go ahead with more judicial changes to follow.

In a statement to news site Axios late on Sunday, US President Joe Biden warned against pushing ahead with the legal changes that were sparking divisions.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

## Spain election fails to deliver clear leader

Stalemate seen as specter of right-wing party forming government fades away

By EARLE GALE in London  
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Voters in Spain will likely be heading back to polling stations later this year after Sunday's snap general election failed to deliver a clear winner.

Spain may be facing political gridlock and possibly a new election, but the national ballot of a far-right party aiming to get its hands on the levers of power was thwarted, The Associated Press reported.

The vote, called by Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez and his ruling Socialist Workers' Party, or PSOE, had been aimed at securing the left-wing party another term, against the backdrop of rapidly increasing support for right-wing opposition parties.

It followed extremely worrying results for the PSOE and its allies in local elections back in May, with Sanchez concluding that his best hope of winning another term rested in triggering a snap vote before his rivals gained enough support to win a full general election.

While the election did indeed come too soon for the right-wing parties, it came too late for Sanchez and his allies, who lost enough ground to ensure they too missed out on a parliamentary majority.

Sanchez put together Spain's first-ever coalition government, which took power in Jan 2020. Sanchez has been Spain's prime minister since 2018.

Even though Sanchez's Socialists finished second, they and their allied parties celebrated the outcome as a victory since their combined forces gained slightly more seats than the Popular Party and Vox. The bloc that would likely support Sanchez totaled 172 seats, while parties on the right had 170.

"This is a major victory for the left," Jason Xidias, a lecturer of political science at New York University's Madrid campus, told AP on Monday.

Ahead of the vote, polls had predicted a decisive victory for the opposition center-right Popular Party, or PP, and a much poorer performance for the PSOE.

The situation left both sides with enough room to claim a victory of sorts.

Alberto Nunez Feijoo, the PP's leader, secured more votes and seats than the PSOE but fell agonizingly short of a parliamentary majority. But he told supporters he will set about trying to build a coalition government.

"Spaniards know we have gone from being the second force to the party with the most votes," he said. "I hope this doesn't start a period of uncertainty in Spain."

Feijoo's PP secured 136 seats, which, when combined with the 33 seats won by their far-right allies, the anti-immigration, anti-feminist Vox party, was seven short of the 176 needed for an absolute majority.

The PSOE and its ally, the Sumar party, won a collective 153 seats but also have ambitions of appealing to smaller parties in Spain's multi-party Parliament and forming a coalition government.

But Sanchez admitted his primary goal was to deny power to right-wing parties.

"The reactionary bloc of regression, which set out a complete reversal of all the advances that we've achieved over the past four years, has failed," he told supporters.

## High turnout

The election took place amid a heat wave in southern Europe, with parts of Spain seeing day temperatures of 42 C, but, despite this, the turnout exceeded 70 percent of the 37 million eligible voters. Part of the reason was the 2.5 million postal votes cast, which far exceeded previous years.

Commentators said Sanchez, while failing to secure a majority, had been vindicated in calling the snap election because he was successful in denying the right a clear victory; at least in the short term.

One news website, El Espanol, said Sanchez now looks marginally more likely to be able to form a ruling coalition government.

A hung Parliament now seems the most likely outcome in the short term, with the deadlock likely to evolve into another general election being called in a few months, AP reported.

Agencies contributed to this story.

## Briefly

## KOREAN PENINSULA

## Second US submarine arrives in the ROK

A US nuclear-powered submarine arrived in the Republic of Korea on Monday, only days after the first US nuclear-armed submarine made port in the country in four decades. The USS *Annapolis* entered a naval base in the ROK's southern Jeju island, to load military supplies while on an unspecified operational mission, the ROK navy said. The USS *Kentucky*, a ballistic missile submarine, made port in the ROK last Tuesday. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched two ballistic missiles on Wednesday hours after the USS *Kentucky*'s visit, and fired several cruise missiles on Saturday, Reuters reported.

## CAMEROON

## 16 killed in building collapse: Firefighters

At least 16 people were killed and several more seriously injured on Sunday when a building collapsed in Cameroon's business hub Douala, Agence France-Presse quoted firefighters as saying. A 3-year-old girl was among the victims and another three children are in intensive care, hospital officials said. The four-story block collapsed onto another residential building around 1:30 am in the north of the city. Rescuers were searching through the wreckage for survivors. "The situation is under control and firefighters are working to ensure no one remains under the rubble," said Samuel Dieudonne Ivaha Diboua, governor of Littoral region, who visited the site of the collapse.

## UNITED STATES

## 400 mass shootings recorded by July 2023

Nine mass shootings occurred across the United States over the weekend, bringing the total to more than 400 this year, according to a national website that tracks firearm deaths and injuries. The nine mass shootings led to at least four deaths and 35 injuries as of Sunday, according to the latest data from the Gun Violence Archive, which defines a mass shooting as an event with at least four victims either injured or killed, not including the shooter. The website recorded 404 mass shootings as of Sunday since the start of 2023, which left at least 453 people dead, according to the data. The number of mass shootings was 9 percent up from a year earlier.

AGENCIES—XINHUA

## Ukraine drone attack on Moscow thwarted

By REN QI in Moscow  
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Russia said it had thwarted two Ukrainian drones' "terrorist attack" over Moscow in the early hours of Monday, with one crashing close to the defense ministry in the city center.

The strikes caused no serious damage or casualties, Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyanyin said on Telegram Monday.

The Russian Ministry of Defense blamed Ukraine, describing the strike as a "terrorist attack" by Kyiv and that the two drones were "suppressed" and crashed in Moscow.

According to Russia's state TASS news agency, one drone crashed in Komsomolsky Avenue, near the defense ministry, while another drone hit a high-rise business center on Likhacheva Avenue in Moscow.

Drone debris was found on Komsomolsky Avenue in Moscow on Monday morning, and traffic on the avenue from the center of Moscow toward the region has been blocked off, the Department of Transportation and Road Infrastructure Development of Moscow said.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said the

drone attack in the capital was an act of international terrorism.

Moscow and its environs lie around 500 kilometers from the Ukrainian border but have been hit by several drone attacks this year, with one hitting the Kremlin in May.

Earlier this month, Russia said it "destroyed or neutralized" five Ukrainian drones in what it described as a "terrorist" attack.

The Russian Ministry of Defense also accused Ukraine of having launched 17 drones toward Crimea overnight, referring to strikes on the peninsula as a "terrorist attack".

## Rail traffic suspended

Earlier on Monday, Crimea Governor Sergey Aksyonov said an ammunition depot and a house had been destroyed in the strikes. He also said road and rail traffic had been suspended in certain areas of the peninsula.

In a separate statement, the Ukrainian Army said Russian drones attacked Ukraine's port infrastructure on the Danube River overnight, targeting Ukrainian grain stocks.

The attack was carried out by Iranian-made Shahed drones and lasted for four hours, Ukraine's

Southern Operational Command posted on Facebook.

The statement added that three drones were destroyed by Ukrainian air defense forces, although "some got through," according to a separate statement by Serhiy Bratchuk, a spokesperson for the Odesa regional military administration.

In an article on the Kremlin's website, Moscow said it withdrew from a vital Black Sea grain deal intended to stabilize global food prices and bring relief to developing countries because it "failed" to ensure the delivery of grain.

"The continuation of the 'grain deal' — which did not justify its humanitarian purpose — has lost its meaning," Russian President Vladimir Putin said.

"Russia will continue its energetic efforts to provide supplies of grain, food products, fertilizers and other goods to Africa," Putin said in a statement published on the Kremlin's website.

"I want to give assurances that our country is capable of replacing the Ukrainian grain both on a commercial and free-of-charge basis."

Claiming that Russia's conditions for the extension had been ignored, Moscow last week quit the deal which had allowed Ukraine a year ago to export grain from its Black Sea ports, despite the conflict, to alleviate a global food crisis.

Writing ahead of the second Russia-Africa summit that will take place in St. Petersburg on Thursday and Friday, Putin said Russia expects a record harvest this year.

"I want to assure that our country is able to replace Ukrainian grain both commercially and free of charge, especially since we again expect a record harvest this year," Putin said.

Meanwhile, Russia's Investigative Committee said on Sunday it had launched a criminal probe into the killing of a Russian reporter.

Agencies contributed to this story.



A security services member checks a damaged building following a reported drone attack in Moscow on Monday. MAXIM SHEMETOV / REUTERS

## Airmanship excellence



Aircraft perform aerobatics during the El-Alamein Air Show 2023 in New Alamein City, Egypt, on Sunday. Aircraft from Egypt and the United Arab Emirates jointly staged the air show in Egypt's Mediterranean coastal city. AHMED GOMAA / XINHUA

## Sudan conflict drags into 100th day; civilian plane crash kills 9

KHARTOUM — Clashes flared in parts of Sudan on the 100th day of the civil conflict on Sunday as nine people, including four soldiers, were killed on Sunday when a civilian plane crashed due to "technical" reasons, the army said.

The fighting broke out on April 15 as the army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, vied for power. Since then, more than 3 million people have been uprooted, including more than 700,000 who have fled to neighboring countries.

According to the Health Ministry, 1,136 people have been killed,

though some believe the number might be higher.

Neither the army nor the RSF has been able to claim victory, with the RSF's domination on the ground in the capital Khartoum up against the army's air and artillery firepower.

Late on Sunday, the Sudanese army said the civilian Antonov plane crashed due to a technical failure at Port Sudan airport in the east.

The airport, located about 900 kilometers east of Khartoum, has been used as the country's main airport after Khartoum International Airport became out of service

because of armed clashes between the two parties.

Across the country, about one-third of the population already faced hunger even before the conflict began, said the United Nations' World Food Programme. Despite the security challenges, the agency says it has reached more than 1.4 million people with emergency food aid as needs intensify.

Infrastructure and government in the capital have fallen apart while fighting has spread westward and southward, Reuters reported.

Thousands who remain in the

capital, particularly in Khartoum North, are trapped without water since the local water station was damaged at the start of the conflict.

## Power out

Residents say there is only intermittent electricity and food has nearly run out.

In Nyala, one of the country's largest cities, clashes have continued since Thursday in residential areas, according to witnesses. At least 20 people have been killed, medical sources said. The United Nations says 5,000 families have been dis-

placed, and residents have reported looting of key facilities.

"Bullets are flying into homes. We are terrified and no one is protecting us," said 35-year-old Salah Abdallah.

While the two sides have shown openness toward mediation efforts led by regional and international actors, none has resulted in a sustained cease-fire.

Both sides have sent delegations to attempt to restart talks in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, that have yielded truces.

AGENCIES—XINHUA

## WORLDUS

## Nye: No need for US-China ties to be 'zero sum'

Ex-US defense official: Countries too big to invade or change each other

By ZHAO HUANXIN  
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Joseph Nye of Harvard University compared the agenda of world politics to a three-dimensional chess game: On the top board is the classic interstate military issues, then the middle layer of international economic relations, and on the bottom, transnational challenges like terrorism and climate change.

That was nearly 20 years ago, when he wrote in his 2004 book *Soft Power* that on the top board the United States has unipolarity; on the middle, the distribution of power is multipolar; but the bottom power is widely distributed, requiring the use of soft power assets for "favorable outcomes".

Nye last week used the same metaphor to shed light on the



Joseph Nye, dean emeritus of Harvard Kennedy School and former US assistant secretary of defense, speaks at a panel discussion on US-China relations during the Aspen Security Forum in Colorado, which ended on Friday. ZHAO HUANXIN / CHINA DAILY

complexity of the world's most important bilateral relations, saying that the US-China relationship is not a zero-sum game, and that focusing on the top board — military competition — could only make the two countries "worse off".

Nye, former US assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, updated

the notion in a panel discussion during the Aspen Security Forum on Thursday, when he was asked to comment on points on the China-US relationship that Chinese Ambassador to the US Xie Feng made at a fireside chat a day before.

The Chinese envoy said at the US national security and foreign policy conference that "we

should say good-bye to the zero-sum game" and to the Cold War mentality.

"But from an analytical point of view, I think he's right, that the US-China relationship doesn't have to be zero sum," Nye said.

The first reason is that the two countries are "too big" to be invaded or changed by each other.

"The only way we'd be an existential threat to each other was if we blundered into war, which is possible, then, in fact, you would go from non-zero sum to zero sum," said Nye, dean emeritus of the Harvard Kennedy School.

He said it would be "all too simple" to say the US-China challenge is a new cold war.

"That situation is really like three-dimensional chess where you play not only against one board horizontally, you have to play three boards vertically as well," he said.

Nye noted that the top board of military competition is "close to zero sum", but on the second board of economic relations, the world has been multipolar for two decades, with the United States,

China, Europe and Japan all as the great powers.

Then the bottom board is transnational relations and things that cross borders, outside the control of governments. Those issues include climate change and pandemics, where "it makes no sense to talk about polarities or zero sum or non-zero sum", he said.

There's "definitely no way" the world can solve climate or handle pandemics with simply looking at it as "power over others"; it has to be "power with others", so in that sense, it's intrinsically a large, non-zero sum or positive sum component to it, according to Nye.

"If we just focus on the top board, and pretend we're playing the Cold War again, we're going to miss out on the second and third boards. So I think for those two reasons, it is not a zero-sum game and to the extent that we call it one, we make our job too easy."

During the discussion, Nye noted that the military relationship is often zero sum when it is competing for influence and balance of power, but it can also be "negative sum".

"It's also true that if we blunder into an overexaggeration of Chinese strength and wind up with a situation like August 1914, where everybody thinks that a short, sharp war will clarify the balance of power, and wind up with four years, which killed 10 million people and destroyed four regimes, that would be a terrible outcome for us, for China and for the world," Nye said.

For that reason, Nye said he is in for "managed competition" between China and the US.

Nye, also co-chair of the Aspen Strategy Group, which organized the Aspen forum, said that about 40 years ago, when the group was started, the American polity was almost as politicized as it is now, with deep divisions over national security and talks of starting up another cold war.

"What's interesting was the idea that if we got people out of Washington, then got them up into the Aspen mountains, perhaps the coolness of Aspen, both literally and figuratively, would lead to better quality discussions," he said.

## US drug shortages at decade-high levels

By MINLU ZHANG in New York  
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Shortages of a wide range of crucial drugs in the US are the highest in a decade, especially cancer drugs that affect thousands of patients who face delayed or canceled chemotherapy appointments.

There were 309 active national drug shortages as of June, including 177 sterile injectables, according to the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP), which tracks drug shortages. That is an increase from 295 at the end of last year and the highest total since 2014.

The shortages include antibiotics, medication like Adderall for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), a diabetes drug Ozempic and chemotherapy drugs.

Unexpected demand spikes, manufacturing challenges, and limited availability of ingredients are causing the shortages.

The shortage of critical drugs may worsen after a tornado touched down in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, on June 20 and ripped up the roof of a Pfizer factory that makes nearly 25 percent of Pfizer's sterile injectable medicines used in US hospitals for anesthesia, medicines that treat infections and drugs needed for surgeries or intensive care units for patients who are placed on ventilators, according to the drugmaker.

Pfizer said all employees were safely evacuated and accounted for, and no serious injuries were reported. The drugmaker is still assessing damage.

Experts said it is too early to know how the damage to Pfizer's plant might affect the availability of medicines.

Pfizer is the largest producer of generic injectable drugs for the US, according to IQVIA, which tracks sales data. Pfizer products accounted for 19 percent of the country's supply for the first five months of this year. Fresenius, based in Germany, and Hikma

Pharmaceuticals, based in London, are the second and third largest suppliers, respectively.

At least 129 sterile injectable drugs are already in short supply in the US, according to the University of Utah's drug information service, Bloomberg reported. "This could be a big hit on the drug supply in the US," Stephen Schondelmeyer, a professor at the University of Minnesota who studies the pharmaceutical industry, told Bloomberg. He said even if other producers start making sterile injectable drugs, it could still take weeks or months.

A White House spokesperson said the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) "is monitoring the situation closely as it evolves and is working with the company to understand the extent of the damage and any potential impact to the nation's drug supply".

At least 25 cancer drugs are now in shortage, according to the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. Two in particular — carboplatin and cisplatin — may be hurting cancer research the most because they are used with such a wide variety of cancers. Cisplatin and other platinum-based drugs are prescribed for 10 percent to 20 percent of all cancer patients, according to the National Cancer Institute.

The current shortage of cisplatin began earlier this year when Intas Pharmaceuticals, a major supplier, closed a factory in India due to FDA concerns over document destruction by workers. Consequently, there was also a decline in the supply of carboplatin, an alternative chemotherapy drug.

The FDA in July allowed more cancer drugs to be imported from China because of the shortage of chemotherapy drugs and no alternatives.

The effect of the shortage of cancer-treatment drugs on cancer research may be felt for years to come.

The National Cancer Institute, the federal government's main agency for cancer research and

training, told CNN that at least 174 of its 608 trials may be affected by the shortages. That number can't account for other trials that rely on those drugs or possible trials that researchers would like to start but can't.

Dr Mark Fleury, policy principal with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, told CNN that the issue hasn't gotten as much attention as the shortages' effects on individual patients, but it has put the country's push for better cancer medicine in real jeopardy.

New drug shortages had nearly a 30 percent increase from 2021 to 2022, affecting 295 products by the end of last year, according to a March report from the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, NBC News reported.

During the pandemic, due to a regulatory change, patients could receive prescriptions from doctors without in-person visits, leading to a surge in the demand for prescription drugs.

Shortages particularly of generic drugs in the US have been a longstanding problem. The industry has consolidated, and some manufacturers lack motivation to resolve shortages as inexpensive generics result in slim profits.

Generic drugs represent about 90 percent of all prescriptions filled in the US, yet they account for only approximately 20 percent of drug spending in the country. Their low cost means generic drugmakers don't make much money, NBC News reported.

Declining profits have forced some US-based factories to close permanently, worsening the drug shortage across the nation.

Last week, NBC News reported the closure of Akorn Pharmaceuticals, a manufacturer responsible for producing 75 generic drugs. All the drugs were pulled from the market following the company's shutdown.

In 2021, 78 percent of the suppliers of active pharmaceutical ingredient suppliers, which are key components that provide a drug with its intended effect, were from China, India and the European Union, according to the FDA.

Agencies contributed to this story.



Migrants trying to enter the US from Mexico approach the site where workers are assembling large buoys to be used as a border barrier along the banks of the Rio Grande near Eagle Pass, Texas on July 11. The floating barrier is being deployed in an effort to block migrants from entering Texas from Mexico. ERIC GAY / AP

## DOJ sues Texas over Rio Grande barrier

By AI HEPING in New York  
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The US Department of Justice (DOJ) sued the state of Texas on Monday over its use of floating barriers in the Rio Grande to deter migrants from crossing the southern border.

The nine-page lawsuit filed in the federal District Court in Austin asks the court to compel Texas to remove the floating barriers and stop them from constructing more water barriers.

Republican Governor Greg Abbott said earlier Monday before the suit was filed that he wouldn't order the barriers to be removed in defiance of a DOJ request.

The buoys are connected with webbing and anchored to the bottom of the river in the Eagle Pass area, which has seen about 270,000 migrant detentions this fiscal year.

"This floating barrier poses threats to navigation and public safety and presents humanitarian concerns. Additionally, the presence of the floating barrier has prompted diplomatic protests by Mexico and risks damaging U.S. foreign policy," said Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta in a statement.

The DOJ's legal action over the floating barriers is based on a clause in federal law that "prohibits the creation of any obstruction to the navigable capacity of waters of the United States, and further prohibits building any structure in such waters without authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers".

Abbott wrote in a letter to President Joe Biden following a DOJ request on July 21 to remove the barriers that "Texas will fully

This floating barrier poses threats to navigation and public safety and presents humanitarian concerns."

Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta

utilize its constitutional authority to deal with the crisis you have caused."

The DOJ gave Texas a deadline of Monday at 2 pm ET to commit to the removal of the floating border barriers or face legal action.

Abbott added, "Texas will see you in court, Mr. President."

On Monday, White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre repeatedly criticized Abbott for what she called "dangerous and unlawful" actions. "The one person that is sowing chaos is Governor Abbott. That's where he continues to do political stunts in an inhumane way."

Abbott started Operation Lone Star to block migrants from crossing the southern border in March 2021. It has cost the state billions of dollars and has faced criticism from migrant advocates and the Biden administration.

Efforts by Texas state officials to deter illegal crossings along the US-Mexico border have placed migrants, including children, at risk of drowning or being cut by razor wire, a state trooper and a medic said in an internal message this month. The medic's

allegations included reports of migrant children and pregnant women being cut by the razor wire assembled by state officials. He also reported concerns about the river barriers forcing migrants to cross the Rio Grande in more dangerous parts of the river, where they could drown.

The Texas Department of Public Safety announced an internal investigation into the allegations and has denied the accounts. In a joint statement with other Texas top officials, Abbott's office said there have been no orders or directions given under Abbott's border initiative that "would compromise the lives of those attempting to cross the border illegally".

Under Abbott's direction, Texas has transported more than 27,000 migrants to Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington DC, to protest "sanctuary city" policies that limit local cooperation with federal deportation agencies.

Unlawful crossings along the US-Mexico border have recently plummeted. In June, the number of migrants apprehended by the Border Patrol after crossing the southern border without authorization fell to just under 100,000, a sharp drop from May and the lowest level since the start of Biden's tenure, according to federal statistics.

The decrease in unlawful crossings came after the Biden administration enacted stricter asylum rules for those who enter the country illegally and expanded efforts to direct migrants to programs that allow them to come to the US legally.

Agencies contributed to this story.

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