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# CHINA DAILY

GLOBAL EDITION 中国日报 FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2023

**Presidential inspection**



President Xi Jinping, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, browses local specialties on Wednesday in Lizu village in Yiwu, Zhejiang province. During his inspection, he also visited the Yiwu International Trade City, the world's largest small commodities market. XIE HUANCHI / XINHUA

## Xi steers path for a strong sports nation

His vision helps drive public participation to new heights, bolster exchanges among peoples

By XU WEI in Hangzhou  
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President Xi Jinping will attend Saturday's opening ceremony of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, the Foreign Ministry announced on Thursday.

The grand sports gathering is expected to create more opportunities to boost public fitness, enable the global community to better understand China and build up the nation's competitiveness in sports.

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Xi will also hold a welcoming banquet and bilateral events for visiting foreign leaders from Cambodia, Syria, Kuwait, Nepal, Timor-Leste, South Korea and Malaysia from Friday to Saturday, the ministry said.

The president's personal participation in the Asian Games, as well as in the Beijing Winter Olympics last year and the Chengdu Universiade this past summer, represents a key part of his vision to build China into a strong country in sports, said analysts.

Wang Xiaozan, a professor at Shanghai-based East China Normal University's College of Physical Education and Health, said that hosting three major sports events within a time span of less than two years has significantly enriched China's experience in this regard. It has improved sports infrastructure and spurred the public's enthusiasm for boosting their fitness, Wang said.

She said the events will help the younger generation garner a high level of sportsmanship.

"Most importantly, it will build up the nation's sports population, a key aspect of developing China into a country strong in sports," she said.

The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, for example, fueled a national drive to get 300 million people involved in winter sports, an initiative set out by Xi in the bidding stages for the global sports event.

International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach said during Xi's visit to the IOC headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland, in 2017 that Xi has a clear vision of sports' important role in society and in the education of young people.

Zheng Zhiqiang, a professor of sports industry and governance at Jimei University in Xiamen, Fujian province, highlighted the emphasis made by Xi, an avid sports fan, on steering China's sports development to a higher level.

Xi said in an interview in 2014 that he likes swimming and mountain climbing, and is a fan of soccer, volleyball, basketball and tennis.

Zheng said that Xi's interest and involvement in sports have given him a deeper understanding of the role of sports in social development.

With the emphasis from the Chinese president, the public fitness campaign has become a national strategy, and building China into a strong nation in sports has become an important part of the Chinese dream, he said.

Meanwhile, the past decade has seen significant progress in China's sports development, with Team China making major breakthroughs at Summer and Winter Olympics, as well as at other major global competitions.

Moreover, public participation in sports has reached new heights, said Wang, the professor at East China Normal University.

For the Chinese president, sports have also served as a major channel to build up ties with other countries and a bridge to reach out to local people.

In a reply letter sent to the US-China Youth and Student Exchange Association and friends from the US state of Washington last month, Xi wrote that sports are "a bond that promotes friendship among peoples".

Over the years, Xi has visited the academy of English Premier League soccer club Manchester City, where he posed for selfies with the club's then star striker Sergio Aquero, and jointly watched with Russian President Vladimir Putin a friendly ice hockey match in Tianjin between Chinese and Russian youth teams.

He also watched a friendly soccer match between Chinese and German youth teams in Berlin with then Chancellor Angela Merkel in 2017 and received a No 10 jersey of the Argentine national soccer team, the number worn by soccer superstar Lionel Messi, during a visit to South America in 2014.

## Putin: Russia 'highly acclaims, actively supports' BRI

By ZHANG YUNBI  
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Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke highly of the Belt and Road Initiative and praised President Xi Jinping's "strategic judgment" of the world situation, in his latest meeting with senior Chinese diplomat Wang Yi.

During their meeting in St. Petersburg on Wednesday, Putin noted that since Xi's visit to Russia in March, bilateral exchanges and cooperation have yielded fruitful results, and Moscow looks forward to strengthening the planning for and deepening of pragmatic cooperation with China.

Russia "highly acclaims and actively supports the BRI" and opposes the distortion and discrediting of the initiative, he added.

Moscow is willing to strengthen synergy between the Eurasian Economic Union and the BRI and promote the process of regional integration, he said.

He also told Wang that Russia, since the beginning of this year, has overcome the impact of unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States and other Western nations, and the Russian economy has started to resume growth and is operating normally.

Wang, a member of the Political

Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, concluded his four-day visit to Russia on Thursday.

During the trip, he also met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Nikolai Patrushev, secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, to discuss cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

Wang told Putin that China is willing to work with Russia to take the important consensus of the two heads of state as the fundamental guideline, enhance strategic mutual

trust, deepen pragmatic cooperation and further consolidate China-Russia friendship.

China has been Russia's top trade partner for 13 consecutive years. Annual trade between the two countries amounted to a record \$190.2 billion last year.

In the first half of this year, bilateral trade exceeded \$114 billion, according to the Foreign Ministry.

Chinese Ambassador to Russia Zhang Hanhui noted that in recent years, the two countries "have accelerated the synergy between the BRI and the Eurasian Economic Union".

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## Libya's catastrophe a consequence of 'Arab Spring'

During Muammar Gadhafi's rule in Libya, the country's economy was stronger than many other African nations. Libya benefited from a steady income generated by its oil reserves, which accounted for a substantial portion of the country's GDP and government revenue.

Gadhafi implemented a nationalization program, under which the state took control of major sectors of the economy, including oil, banking and some heavy industries, to ensure social and economic stability. He also adopted socialist policies, providing subsidies for basic commodities and services like food, fuel and healthcare. Under his rule, the people of Libya enjoyed higher per capita income and a relatively higher standard of living than most African countries.

However, the situation changed dramatically after the "Arab Spring", which engulfed Tunisia, Yemen and Libya starting in December 2010. The Arab Spring revolutions that followed toppled several governments not friendly with the United States and was seen at the time as a triumph for Western democracy. However, more than 10 years later, it is evident that blindly following the Western democratic system has led to negative outcomes in these countries. They have experienced

**WORLD WATCH**  
By Tony Kwok

chaos, civil wars and famine and have become major sources of refugees seeking shelter in Europe.

The fall of Gadhafi was largely a result of Western intervention during the Arab Spring revolution. Western powers launched NATO-led military operations, using the pretext of protecting civilians from the Gadhafi regime. The military campaign culminated in the execution of Gadhafi by rebels supported by the West.

The people of Libya have become the ultimate victims of this upheaval. The country has morphed from relative prosperity to teetering on the brink of total collapse and has become an international humanitarian basket case.

Gadhafi's downfall created a power vacuum and political fragmentation. Libya now has two rival governments — the Parliament-backed government in Benghazi and the Western-supported government in Tripoli. This prolonged instability has led to rival factions and armed groups vying for control, resulting in political chaos that hampers effective governance and



People sit amid rubble on Wednesday in Libya's eastern city of Derna, which was ravaged by deadly flash floods. ABU BAKR AL-SOUSSI / AFP

economic decision-making, hindering efforts to stabilize and rebuild the economy.

During and after the conflict, oil production and exports were disrupted due to damaged infrastructure, attacks on oil facilities and disputes over control of oilfields. These disruptions caused a decline in oil production and revenue, undermining the country's economic stability.

Furthermore, foreign investment declined significantly as many companies that operated successfully during Gadhafi's rule withdrew their operations. This

decline in economic activity and job opportunities, coupled with the lack of investment in sectors beyond oil, such as infrastructure, manufacturing and services, hindered economic diversification and long-term development.

After the Arab Spring, former US president Donald Trump distanced the US from any future responsibility for Libya, treating it as a problem to contain rather than actively assisting in resolving its civil war and building a peaceful democratic country.

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## HANGZHOU GOES ALL OUT TO HOST GREEN ASIAD

Improvements made to environment in city and surrounding countryside

By XING WEN in Hangzhou  
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**In-depth**

Xu Manshan, 61, who has spent half his life working in water conservancy, grew up on the picturesque Dongzhou Island, which lies on the Fuchun River in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province.

The island used to be an isolated speck in the middle of the river, accessible only by a handful of ferry crossings. This lack of convenient transportation links plunged it into economic hardship.

"Back then, every household on the island relied on farming for a living, but getting essential supplies such as grain and fertilizer required arduous journeys in small wooden boats," Xu said.

"People listened for a rooster's crow before venturing outdoors during the day, while relying on lanterns to guide them home at night. It was quite a hassle."

In 1976, the residents decided to build two dams at either end of the island to connect it to the river banks. "Men, women and children pitched in to help build the dams. I was in junior high school at the time, and as soon as school ended, I rushed to join the labor force. We carried massive stones on our shoulders and placed them into the river," Xu said.

The dams enclosed nearly 133 hectares of an inner lake by harnessing part of the Fuchun River's tributary, allowing the islanders to start fish farming, revamp low-lying areas and boost grain production. The island's economy began to pick up.

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Newsstand prices: US \$1 Canada C\$1; UK 1.6 EU 1.6 Kenya 50 Kenya Shilling Asia Pacific: Thailand 120 THB; Philippines 120 PHP; Myanmar 2000 Kyat; Japan 210 yen; Dubai 10 dirham; Pakistan 300 rupee

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## Venues: Eco-friendly measures adopted

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Building the dams triggered Xu's interest in water conservancy and further developing his home island. In 1979, he entered university, where he studied water conservancy, but as time passed by, the impact of the dams emerged.

First, they obstructed water in the tributary, the Beizhi River, causing it to flow exclusively from the southern side of Dongzhou Island, thus putting pressure on flood control measures.

Second, the ecological impact was evident, as the dams turned a 7.5-kilometer stretch of the river downstream into stagnant water, leading to sedimentation and deteriorating water quality.

With the Fuyang Water Sports Centre due to be constructed on the southern bank of the Beizhi River to host rowing, kayaking and other water sports during the upcoming Asian Games, the authorities in Hangzhou launched a rehabilitation project on the river to address these issues by dismantling the dam and constructing water gates. Xu was chosen to head the project.

The Asian Games are scheduled to open in Hangzhou on Saturday evening.

"By removing the upstream and downstream dams and converting 'dead water' into 'live water,' in addition to dredging a 12-kilometer river channel, we restored the waterway's flood-carrying capacity. We also installed water gates and locks upstream and downstream, significantly improving the river's self-purification and navigational abilities," Xu said.

Dongzhou Island, which has gradually regained its ecological vitality, is providing vital support for the Asian Games.

"My happiest childhood memories are of swimming in the river, catching fish and shrimp, and searching for clams. After the project was completed, I felt as though the Dongzhou Island of my cherished childhood had returned, complete with its pristine landscapes and serene waters," Xu said.

Preparations for the Hangzhou Asian Games have not only transformed Xu's hometown, but also improved the environment in the city and surrounding countryside. Moreover, the commitment to "going green" has been ingrained in every aspect of constructing venues for the Games.

**Sustainable venues**

Some 24,000 square meters of the roof area at the Fuyang Water Sports Centre is covered by soil and adorned with various plants, blending seamlessly with the surrounding natural landscape.

The venue has a 45 percent greenery ratio and provides carbon sequestration, oxygen release and heat insulation while reducing rainwater runoff. Carbon sequestration is a natural or artificial process in which carbon dioxide is removed from the atmosphere and held in solid or liquid form.

Under the venue's gravel garden area, underground system recycles rainwater. After being filtered through gravel and permeable fabrics, rainwater is used for the atrium display, fountains and irrigation. This system saves some 1,000 metric tons of water per month.

Only 12 of the 56 venues for the Asian Games in Hangzhou are newly built.

Among them, the Shaoxing Baseball and Softball Sports Center in Shaoxing, Zhejiang province, is the largest, with a seating capacity of 10,000. Its design incorporates elements such as Shaoxing's textile heritage, traditional boats and calligraphy.

The venue's interior public space is cleverly integrated with the surrounding community, creating an organic connection.

In addition to the competition areas, it features a hotel, a community fitness center and commercial areas capable of meeting diverse post-event operational needs.

Chen Yuewei, a publicity officer for Shaoxing, said the venue is poised to become a vital service center.

Furthermore, the authorities in Shaoxing are pushing for a national-level baseball and softball youth training center to be established in the city.

Meanwhile, the Shaoxing Keqiao Yangshan Sport Climbing Centre used to be the site of an abandoned mine. Construction and development work has transformed it into an international competition venue and youth sport climbing base. The center, which resembles a cocoon, features a semi-open design, allowing athletes and spectators to enjoy views of the Yangshan Scenic Area.

The other 44 competition venues have either been renovated or are temporary constructions, with the emphasis placed on adopting prefabricated building techniques and using sustainable and renewable materials.

For example, amenities in the Guobo Squash Hall at the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Center, such as glass walls and spectator seating, can be dismantled, allowing the venue to be reused after the Games.

Zhou Congcong, director of maintenance services at the venue, said, "We are donating one of the squash courts to the Asian Games Museum, with the other seven courts being offered to local communities, schools and educational institutions, ensuring their continued contribution to promoting the sport."

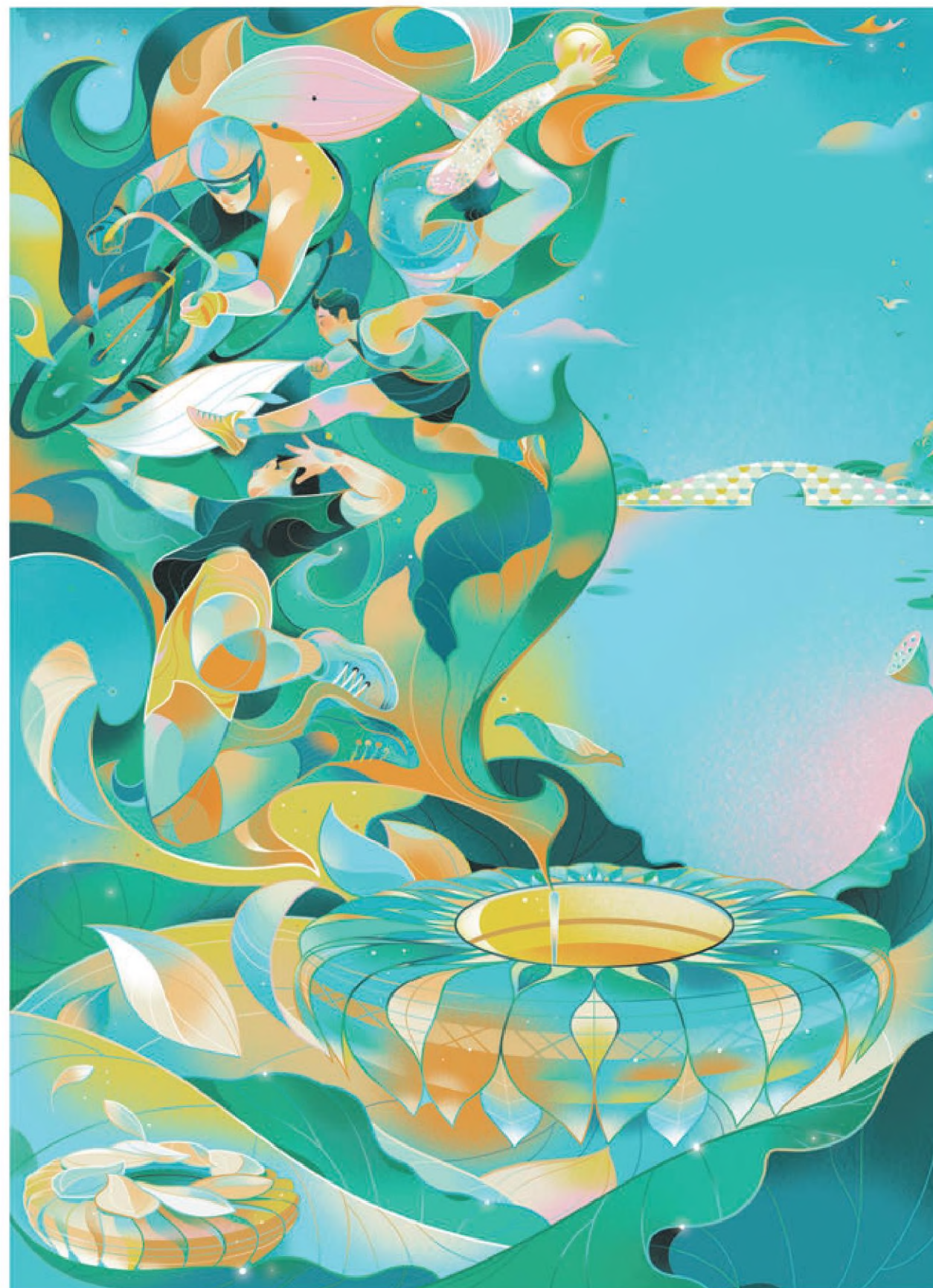
**Emissions curbed**

Green energy sources are being used at all the Asian Games competition venues.

Some of the green electricity used at the venues is photovoltaic energy transmitted from areas such as the Qaidam Basin in Qinghai province, the Jiayu Pass in Gansu province, and the Loess Plateau in north-central China. State Grid Hangzhou Electric Power Supply Co said wind power for the Games is generated in areas such as the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region.

The term "green electricity" refers to electricity production processes with minimal to zero carbon dioxide emissions, reducing the environmental impact when compared with conventional power generated from fossil fuels.

Chen Rong, director of the venue construction and



LI MIN / CHINA DAILY

management department for the 19th Asian Games Organizing Committee, said, "The green power agreement for the Games now stands at 220 million kilowatt-hours, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 115,400 tons."

Hangzhou has also been promoting the use of electric vehicles and enhancing its green transportation system. State Grid Hangzhou Electric Power Supply Co has gone to great lengths to ensure that all the Games venues are equipped with charging stations.

The company has also installed China's first high-power wireless charging station for new energy vehicles at the Asian Games Village in Hangzhou's Xiaoshan district. With 102 charging stations and 2,024 charging points established, the company offers comprehensive support services for green transportation during the Games.

Even the mascots for the Games showcase an innovative approach to sustainability.

Their fabric was produced by using digital printing technology, which, unlike traditional methods, does not produce any waste water, gas or pulp. To minimize air pollution, the mascots are cut out by workers using electric scissors instead of laser machines. The electricity used to produce the mascots was generated from photovoltaic installations on the factory roof.

Furthermore, a diverse range of eco-friendly licensed products has been created for the Games, including backpacks made from 10 recycled bottles and frisbees crafted from 1,000 grams of rice husks.

Hua Fang, who works for the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee's market development department, said, "Licensed merchandise serves as distinctive event keepsakes, and we also promote the use of new concepts and technologies in product design and development."

“  
The green power agreement for the Games now stands at 220 million kilowatt-hours, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 115,400 tons.”

**Chen Rong,**  
director of the venue construction and management department for the 19th Asian Games Organizing Committee

To stage the first carbon-neutral Asian Games, the authorities in Zhejiang launched a digital management platform on July 11. The platform uses digital technology to oversee management of carbon emissions in six cities, and includes functions such as data collection, accounting, emissions reduction and evaluation.

A statement from the Hangzhou Asian Games Organizing Committee's environmental protection department said: "The carbon footprint of a large sporting event covers many aspects, including construction of the competition venues, transportation, accommodations, competition preparations, and spectators."

"It is very difficult for humans to evaluate all this. With the platform, we only need to input and check raw data. Carbon emissions are automatically calculated by the system."

**Low-carbon initiative**

Meanwhile, a "low-carbon account" program has been designed for residents of the Asian Games Village, including athletes, technical officials, media representatives and volunteers.

This initiative harnesses the capabilities of Alibaba Cloud's artificial intelligence algorithms and dual carbon products to encourage low-carbon living among the village residents.

Residents earn points for their accounts by adopting eco-friendly practices in the village, such as recycling packaging and bottles, as well as refraining from using plastic bags for shopping. These points can be exchanged for Asian Games memorabilia, including badges made from low-carbon, environmentally friendly materials.

Outside the village, preparations for the Asian Games helped foster the concept of a green lifestyle in Hangzhou.

Hu Fangfang, a resident of the city who has volunteered to promote waste sorting in her community, said, "Although this task is formidable, and developing good habits takes time, I believe that with our collective efforts, everything is moving in the right direction."

Sun Yi, an environmental protection volunteer in Hangzhou, said: "Everyone is an active participant in making the Asian Games go green. It's not just about encouraging others, but more important, taking action in our daily lives."

To seek more ways to achieve carbon neutrality, institutions, companies and individuals are encouraged to donate their carbon credits and carbon allowances for the Asian Games.

By using Ant Forest, a mobile platform developed by Ant Group, participants can donate the virtual green energy points they collect for eco-friendly activities, such as using public transportation.

## TOP NEWS

## Lecture from space



College and school students at Beihang University in Beijing watch Shenzhou XVI crew members conduct a science experiment on Thursday inside the Tiangong space station. The astronauts delivered a lecture and carried out experiments to show physical phenomena in the unique environment. Tens of millions of students across China watched the televised event. The 48-minute educational program was also livestreamed worldwide by China Media Group. KUANG LINHUA / CHINA DAILY

## Ties: Russia willing to safeguard intl fairness with China, Putin says

From page 1

"China-Russia all-around pragmatic cooperation has shown great strength in the political context and in tapping opportunities. ... Economic and trade cooperation between the two countries is progressing in terms of both quantity and quality, yielding fruitful results." Zhang said in a recent interview with Chinese media.

Zhang Hong, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies, said, "The development of China-Russia relations has consistently followed the principle of not targeting any third party and seeking no confrontation or alliance."

Putin said that the development of the current international situation "fully echoes President Xi Jinping's strategic judgment" that the world faces changes unseen in a century.

He added that Russia is willing to maintain close coordination with China under multilateral frameworks such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and BRICS; jointly resist unilateralism, hegemony and bloc-based confrontation; and safeguard international fairness and justice.

Wang said that China and Russia, as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, share an important duty in advancing world development and progress.

"The two sides should strengthen multilateral strategic cooperation, safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of the two countries, and make new efforts to make the international order more just and reasonable," he said.

The two sides also exchanged views on the current international and regional situation.

Regarding the Ukraine issue, Putin reiterated Russia's willingness to resolve it through dialogue and negotiation.

## Hangzhou's history, attractions will be on display at Asian Games opening

By SUN XIAOCHEN in Hangzhou  
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With a lot more on offer than just a visual spectacle, the Hangzhou Asian Games' opening ceremony promises to wow the world with a high-tech display of the host's historical and cultural attractions.

The ceremony, which starts at 8 pm on Saturday at the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Stadium in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, will deliver many historic firsts and is expected to provide a blueprint for the sustainable and digitally enhanced future of such gala events, according to the ceremony's creative team.

The breathtaking projections, depicting Hangzhou's past and present, onto the floor and background screens, the glass-free 3D images of athletic actions and the innovative lighting of the cauldron, which will involve a virtual torchbearer, will be among some of the showpiece moments of the ceremony, according to Sha Xiaolan, chief director and chief producer of the ceremony.

"More importantly, all of the technology, props and programs will help us present the rich history and profound culture of Hangzhou and Zhejiang, as well as the Chinese people's wish to unite all Asian nations, in an aesthetic and intensive way," Sha said at a news conference introducing the ceremony on Thursday.

The entire ceremony is expected to last for about 115 minutes, beginning with a welcome show, followed by the delegation parade, traditional protocols and the main artistic performance.

The creative team has run five rehearsals since Aug 29, with preparations adjusted and finetuned to guarantee a smooth and glitch-free performance on Saturday night.

"The final three dress rehearsals have helped us to accurately complete drills on all the equipment and visual elements. We are confident that we will put on a dazzling show the world will remember," Sha said.

A backup plan to perform an abridged version of the ceremony at a nearby indoor venue has also been prepared in case of bad weather, while the transport arrangements for the arrival and departure of about 50,000 spectators in a safe and efficient way have also been tested fully, said Li Yiqing, spokesperson for the operation center of the opening and closing ceremonies.

The concept of hosting large-scale events in an eco-friendly, sustainable and economic way has guided the production team to switch the traditional firework show with a virtual display projected onto screens instead, and to use zero-emission methanol as the fuel to ignite the main flame.

"We have approached the event by following the guiding principles of delivering the ceremony in a green, streamlined, safe and excellent way," said Li.

The highlight of the show will see the sky above the stadium lit up by millions of virtual sparks, each representing the participants of the game's online torch relay, which will eventually form the shape of a person who is expected to descend to the stage and light the main cauldron together with the final physical torchbearer.

The online torch relay has attracted over 100 million users since the program was launched in June.

"It's the first time that such a method is being used to ignite the main flame of a major international sporting event, a method that has stood out from the previous routines and reflects the essence of sport, which is to involve people," said Sha.

"It also conveys the warm message of building a global community of all mankind for a bright, shared future."

The artistic performances will feature local characteristics, such as the autumn equinox, one of China's 24 solar terms that celebrates the harvest season in fall, the surging tide that has witnessed the historical changes of Hangzhou and the Liangzhu civilization, which dates back some 5,000 years.

During the delegation parade, 10 iconic sightseeing spots at Hangzhou's famous West Lake will be projected onto the oval-shaped floor screen, allowing athletes from across Asia, and the audience, to enjoy the city's picturesque scenery in an immersive way.

## Chaos: European governments face criticism

From page 1

Europe, on the other hand, has primarily focused on preventing migrant boats from leaving Libya's Mediterranean coast and reaching neighboring European countries.

Against this backdrop, the recent catastrophic news of the collapse of two dams above Derna, resulting in extensive flooding, destruction of neighborhoods, homes and infrastructure, and loss of lives, possibly up to 20,000 deaths and 250,000 people left homeless, highlights the dire situation in Libya.

The dams, built 50 years ago, had been neglected and left in a dilapidated state. Experts had warned last year that the dams were at risk of failing if faced with massive flooding. However, due

to the ongoing civil conflict and weak governance, critical infrastructure like the dams were not properly maintained.

This catastrophe could have been avoided if public infrastructure, such as dams, had been adequately maintained — a scenario that might have been more likely under Gadhafi's regime and a functioning, financially stable government. The search and rescue operations that followed would have been done more expeditiously if public services had not declined over the years, and humanitarian assistance could have been more forthcoming with the rich oil reserves in the country's coffers.

Libyan social media are already filled with criticism of European governments, pointing out that these governments

actively intervened in Libyan politics, leading to the rise of corrupt politicians who are now being blamed for the disaster. However, these same European governments seem to vanish when providing real assistance.

It is pointless for the West to shed crocodile tears for the plight of the Libyan people. Instead, the West should reflect on its past actions and cease engaging in subversive plots and undercover activities aimed at undermining the stability of foreign governments.

The author is an honorary fellow at Hong Kong University's School of Professional and Continuing Education and a council member of the Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macao Studies. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

## China V-P makes policy statement

At UN, Han Zheng says country opposes hegemonism, unilateralism, Cold War mentality

By ZHAO HUANXIN

at the United Nations  
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A small number of countries have "arbitrarily" imposed illegal and unilateral sanctions, severely undermining the harmony and stability of international relations, so the global community should jointly resist such acts, Chinese Vice-President Han Zheng told assembled world leaders at United Nations headquarters on Thursday.

In a policy statement delivered at the 78th UN General Assembly's General Debate, Han also said that major countries should lead by example and deliver on their commitment to multilateralism, and that China opposes the use of human rights and democracy as a political tool to interfere in the affairs of other countries.

Han's compact speech of around 15 minutes touched wide-ranging topics, including China's consistent policies on peace, development and win-win cooperation, which Han said is the "unstoppable" historical trend.

But Han also talked specifically on Ukraine, Palestinian and Cuba issues, as well as protection of rights and multilateralism.

The vice-president began his speech by saying the global order faces multiple challenges at present, when the international security situation is grim, economic recovery lacks momentum, and the gap in development is widening.

He said that "facing profound changes in the world in our times and in history", Chinese President Xi Jinping made a major call of building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Xi called on the international community to jointly build a world with lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity, a world that is open, inclusive, clean and beautiful.

"More and more countries have realized that they all share a huge stake of common survival, and that unity and cooperation is the right way to take," Han said.

The vice-president said the world should uphold equity and justice, and safeguard peace and security.

Stressing that the security of all countries is interconnected, Han said it is important to follow the vision of common comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and embark on a path to security featuring dialogue over confrontation, partnership over alliances and win-win outcomes over a zero-sum game.

"Cessation of hostilities and resumption of peace talks is the only way to settle the Ukraine crisis," Han said. "China supports all efforts that are conducive to the peaceful resolution of the Ukraine crisis and stands ready to continue playing a constructive role for the early attainment of peace."

He also said the Palestinian issue is at the core of the Middle East issue, and the fundamental way out lies in the two-state solution.

"China will continue to support the Palestinian people in pursuing their lawful national rights," he said.

As for Cuba, Han said China "firmly supports the Cuban people in their just struggle" to defend their sovereignty and oppose external interference and blockades, and that it appreciates Cuba's efforts to fight terrorism.

"We should respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries and observe the purposes and principles of the UN Charter," Han said. "China opposes hegemonism, power politics, unilateralism and Cold War mentality."

In his speech, Han also proposed staying open and inclusive, and advancing human civilization.

He noted that diversity is a defining feature of human civilization, and different countries and civilizations should prosper together by respecting each other, advancing together by drawing on each other's strengths, and seeking win-win outcomes by pursuing common ground while setting aside differences.

Han said promoting and protecting human rights is a cause pursued by all countries, and ensuring a good life for people is the biggest human right.

As countries have different histories, traditions and conditions, they must and can only explore a path of human rights development suited to their national conditions in response to the needs of the people, he said.

"We should advance the international human rights cause through dialogue and cooperation and oppose politicization and double standards," Han said.

Another proposal Han made at the UN venue was calling on the world to stay true to multilateralism and improve global governance.

Han said China is firm in supporting the international system with the UN at its core, and the UN should make advances in all the three pillar areas of security, development and human rights in a balanced manner.

"It also should see that all countries jointly safeguard universal security, share development achievements and charge the course for the future of the world."

He also said China stays committed to opening itself wider to the world and will

continue to add new momentum to global economic development while welcoming all countries to share in the opportunities and benefits created by China's development.

Last but not the least, the vice-president said China is a "natural" member of the Global South — it will remain a member of the big family of developing countries as the largest developing country.

The US Congress introduced a resolution earlier this year that opposes China's status as a developing country in the World Trade Organization.

Han said China "breathes the same breath" with other developing countries and shares the same future with them.

"China is firm in upholding the legitimate rights and interests of developing countries. It supports and respects their efforts to independently decide on their development paths in keeping with their national conditions," he said.

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CHINA DAILY (ISSN 0748-6154) is published

daily except weekends by China Daily USA,

1500 Broadway, Suite 2800, New York,

NY 10036. Periodical postage paid at New

York, NY and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

CHINA DAILY USA, 1500 Broadway, Suite

2800, New York, NY 10036.

Vol. 38 - No. 1180

## CHINA

# Foreign film makers gather for inaugural Panda awards

Participants from overseas given chance to learn about Chengdu

By HUANG ZHILING, PENG CHAO and ZHU DIQI in Chengdu

Directors, actors and producers from home and abroad strengthened cultural exchanges at the first Golden Panda Awards, held from Tuesday to Wednesday.

The Golden Panda Awards is an international cultural activity that invites TV and film makers to submit outstanding works along a common theme. This year's theme was "Brilliant Civilization, Resplendent Vision".

Baris Gencel, a creative director and digital artist from Cyprus, said the event will help foster cultural exchanges between China and the world and enhance our common shared community.

Gencel made the remarks at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding while participating in a supplementary activity called "Face-to-Face with Pandas" on the sidelines of the event, which was co-hosted by the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and the Sichuan provincial government in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan, from Tuesday to Wednesday.

He was excited to see real pandas and learn more about Chinese culture.

Gencel said it was of vital importance for directors to go to different places and to take a look at different cultures. "All the different experiences, and everything I am seeing, is bringing a new perspective into my work," he said.

"China has an amazing and very long history and very deep culture. It's like a gold mine waiting to be unearthed. That's why I am here."

Andre Morgan, who has been working on productions around the



Renowned Chinese film director Zhang Yimou (center), who chairs the jury of the first Golden Panda Awards, leads other jury members during the ceremony on Wednesday. XIANG YU / FOR CHINA DAILY

**7,000+** submissions

were filed from 104 countries and regions for the first Golden Panda Awards.

world for nearly five decades, said while China is becoming more open in the field of culture, the event offered a great opportunity for Chengdu and China to deepen cooperation and people-to-people exchanges with the world.

Communication, Morgan said, is the most important thing in international cooperation in the film and TV drama industry.

"For producers and directors, they need to study the history, culture and customs of different countries, and what kind of movies or TV series people like to watch," he said.

Gregori Winkowski, a producer from Germany, said he came to Chengdu not only for the event, but also for the pandas and delicious food. In the past few days, he had tasted Chengdu food, taken the Chengdu subway and seen the life of Chengdu people, which were all brand-new experiences for him.

"It looks so amazing here and we have to come back again to shoot a movie," Winkowski said, adding that he had walked around the city with Julius Nitschkoff, an actor in TV drama *Dear Vivi*, and seen a lot of locations.

Rao Shuguang, president of the China Film Critics Association, said the event was expected to gather high-quality film resources from around the globe and promote the international development of Chinese films.

The Chinese box office has seen rapid growth in recent years, but there is still a long way to go for the international dissemination of Chinese films, Rao said.

He suggested Chinese film practitioners use internationally accepted languages to tell Chinese stories that convey the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind, to realize people-to-people bonds and to gain empathy from overseas audiences.

The first Golden Panda Awards received more than 7,000 submissions from 104 countries and regions. A total of 25 awards across four categories of film, TV drama, documentary and animation were presented on Wednesday night.

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## Technology blockades 'strip right of development'

By CUI JIA [cujia@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:cujia@chinadaily.com.cn)

Adopting technological blockades and suppressing other countries' scientific and technological development in the name of "human rights protection" have stripped the right of development, as such actions block people from all over the world from enjoying the fruits of social progress, Chinese human rights experts said.

Science and technology have never had such a profound impact on the happiness and well-being of people, so such behaviors from certain countries need to be watched very carefully by the international community, Bao Liying, a representative of the China Society for Human Rights Studies and a professor at Beijing Institute of Technology, said on Wednesday evening.

She made the remarks during a symposium entitled "Science and Human Rights" on the sidelines of the 54th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland.

Wang Fuliang, a researcher at the Science and Human Rights Research Center of the institute, said the development of technology requires the establishment of a win-win mechanism. Any technological hegemony or decoupling under the pretext of human rights protection is a resurgence of old-era protectionism.

"A few Western developed countries, led by the United States, have always sought to establish their own human rights perspective and

value system. The unfair, politicized concept of human rights protection primarily aims to seek unilateral benefits through coercive measures. Such selfish practices are contrary to the basic principles of sharing and governing in the era of intelligent technology," Wang said.

The development of technology requires the continuous enhancement of technological exchanges worldwide, and the human rights of people around the world can only be further improved when the scope and depth of cooperation in scientific and technological development continue to expand, he added.

Yang Kuan, an associate professor of the institute's School of Law, said people should also be aware that outer space technologies have played an important role in promoting the sustainable economic and social development of the world.

But the rapid development of space technologies and activities has also brought about problems such as the increased militarization of outer space, the encroachment of outer space resources and the destruction of the outer space environment, posing new challenges to the common security and interests of mankind in outer space, he added.

"All countries should abandon hegemonism in outer space, abide by the principles of maintaining peace and security, and promote outer space activities for the benefit and interest of all humankind, so that outer space technologies and applications can truly contribute to the well-being of all humankind and address common risks," Yang said.

## Safety first



Visitors learn about safety in intelligent connected vehicles during a simulation at the World Intelligent Connected Vehicles Conference in Beijing on Thursday. The five-day convention will focus on the commercialization of ICV technologies. WU YIBIN / FOR CHINA DAILY

## Shenzhen to help Saudi Arabia diversify economy

By WANG XU in Shenzhen, Guangdong [wangxu@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:wangxu@chinadaily.com.cn)

High-tech hub Shenzhen is set to play a key role in the future of Saudi Arabia as the Gulf nation seeks to reduce its dependence on oil and transition into a more sustainable economy.

Shenzhen Mayor Qin Weizhong visited Saudi Arabia last week, during which time Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah University of Science and Technology signed cooperation agreements with several institutions in Shenzhen, Guangdong province.

"Shenzhen, known for its advanced technology and innovation, can offer Saudi Arabia access to cutting-edge technologies, expertise and investment opportunities," said Wei Jianzhang, vice-president of the Belt and Road Initiative's International Cooperation and Development Research Institute in Shenzhen.

"This collaboration can facilitate the transfer of knowledge, research and innovation between the two regions, leading to mutual growth and progress."

According to Wei, Shenzhen's

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Wei Jianzhang, vice-president of the Belt and Road Initiative's International Cooperation and Development Research Institute

expertise in areas such as digital economy, smart cities, 5G communications and renewable energy can contribute to Saudi Arabia's technological advancements, and the city's strong manufacturing base and global supply chain connections can provide opportunities for Saudi businesses to expand their market reach.

"Similarly, Saudi Arabia's investment in Shenzhen can stimulate economic growth and create

employment opportunities," Wei added.

On Sept 14, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology signed cooperation agreements with several institutions in Shenzhen, including Tsinghua Shenzhen International Graduate School and the Chinese University of Hong Kong in Shenzhen, to enhance research, development and innovation, further strengthening knowledge exchange between the country and China.

The memorandums of understanding came during a visit to the university by a high-level delegation headed by Qin and 50 representatives from various institutions in the city. The agreements aimed to bolster bilateral ties in industrial innovation, technology transfer, research, talent exchange, training programs and entrepreneurship.

Emphasizing the importance of Saudi Arabia as a key partner for Shenzhen, Qin said the city will actively implement the significant agreements, particularly in areas such as new energy, digital economy, smart cities, infrastructure, finance, science and technology innovation, culture, sports and tourism.

"I believe these efforts will contribute to the Belt and Road Initiative as well as Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030," Qin added.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the BRI, and Saudi Arabia, as the largest economy among the Arab countries, was among the first to respond to and actively participate in the initiative.

"Our collaboration with esteemed Shenzhen institutions embodies one of KAUST's primary objectives to enhance the commercialization of our research and promote global research partnerships and talent cultivation. These synergies will amplify our influence and bring tangible benefits to the Kingdom," said KAUST president Tony Chan after the signing.

Abdullah Bin Obiyah, consul general of Saudi Arabia in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, expressed his belief that Shenzhen can play an effective role in the China-Arab community of common destiny in the new era.

"I expect deeper cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Shenzhen in 2023," he said.

Wang Tianhui contributed to this story.

## 22 reporters from 14 countries tour Xinjiang

URUMQI — A group of 22 journalists from 14 countries concluded a trip to Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region on Wednesday, after gaining firsthand knowledge about the region's development and diverse culture.

The nine-day trip, which started on Sept 12, took the journalists from 17 overseas media organizations to various places in Xinjiang, including the regional capital Urumqi, the city of Turpan and Kashgar prefecture. During the trip, they witnessed Xinjiang's social stability, economic development and diverse culture, as well as the happy lives of residents.

At a shopping center in the port city of Horgos on the China-Kazakhstan border, Maxim Cherevik, an editor at the Information Telegraph Agency of Russia, quickly spotted goods from Russia.

"The Chinese government has invested heavily in port construction, created many job opportunities and driven up regional growth," Cherevik said. "From here, I can see great potential for Belt and Road construction."

Since ancient times, Xinjiang has been a region where diverse cultures meet. In the ancient city of Kashgar, the journalists strolled through the streets, immersing themselves in the rich folk culture.

After visiting the ancient city and a memorial hall, Sakalasoorya, an editor from the Daily Mirror in Sri Lanka, learned about the tremendous changes that Kashgar has undergone.

"China has invested a lot of resour-

ces in transforming the old city, which shows Xinjiang's commitment to the protection of traditional ethnic culture," Sakalasoorya said.

Visiting the Xinjiang Art Theater Muqam Art Troupe, the journalists learned about the efforts to protect and inherit the Twelve Muqam, the traditional music of the Uygur ethnic group.

"I was impressed by the performance of the Twelve Muqam," said Afdah Bin Mujap, a director at Sunshine Daily of Malaysia. "The culture and language of ethnic groups in Xinjiang have been well protected."

During the trip, they also visited an exhibition about Xinjiang's efforts in anti-terrorism and deradicalization, where they witnessed China's achievements in this regard.

"I have seen how Xinjiang has fought against terrorism and radicalization over the past years," said Judahni Calabroso, a journalist with the Philippines' SMNI TV Station. "Now, Xinjiang is a very safe and harmonious place."

Supachai, a journalist with the Economist newspaper of Thailand, said, "I am impressed by the great efforts China has made in the fight against terrorism and radicalization," adding that China's measures in this regard are very effective.

In recent years, the Chinese government has faced unfounded accusations from some Western powers that the Uygur population in the region has experienced oppression. The government strongly denies these accusations.

XINHUA — CHINA DAILY

## Alzheimer's disease on the rise among under 60s

By WANG XIAOYU [wangxiaoyu@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:wangxiaoyu@chinadaily.com.cn)

The number of people under 60 with Alzheimer's in China has been growing fast, and experts have called for strengthening early prevention efforts and enhancing the development of novel drugs.

Those aged 60 to 79 account for about 62 percent of people newly diagnosed with the memory-robbing disease, but the proportion of new cases in the under 60s take up 21 percent, much higher than the global average of around 5 to 10 percent, according to a report released by the Alzheimer's disease branch of the Chinese Aging Well Association on Wednesday.

The finding suggests that Alzheimer's is increasingly affecting

younger people of working age in China, highlighting the need to step up prevention, as well as early screening and diagnosis of the disease across the whole of society.

Sun Yongan, a neurologist from Peking University First Hospital, said that despite growing awareness of the disease, more efforts are needed to spread education on early interventions to grab the golden window of opportunity to initiate treatment.

"We have called for carrying out screening, diagnosis and therapies as early as possible to win more time to slow down and contain the progression of the disease," he said. "Meanwhile, it is important to introduce novel treatments to address a lack of precise and effective clinical therapies targeting the disease."

China has about 15.1 million dementia patients aged 60 and above, including 9.83 million with Alzheimer's.

Creating effective drugs for the disease has been a global challenge. In China, five medications have been approved for treating the disease, but they only work to contain symptoms in the short term, and are unable to target the pathogenic mechanism to slow the disease's progression.

The report said nearly 49 percent of patients report negative treatment outcomes, and 37 percent feel treatment fees are too costly.

Wang Gang, a neurologist from Ruijin Hospital, said that the majority of patients and their family members proactively inquire

about the use of innovative drugs.

"How to access effective medications has been their key concern," he said.

On Sunday, a separate report released by the China Association for Alzheimer's pointed out that the incidence rate of dementia, including Alzheimer's, has been rising gradually over the past decades. The incidence rate for men and women above 60 is around 2.4 and 4.2 percent respectively.

The report suggested prioritizing prevention and establishing a comprehensive system to monitor cases and deaths of Alzheimer's and other dementia diseases.

It also suggested setting up early prevention demonstration programs in cities with deeply aged populations.

WORLD

India, Canada in diplomatic row after killing

Visa services for Canadians suspended amid Ottawa allegations over Sikh separatist's death

By RENA LI in Toronto renali@chinadailyusa.com

India suspended all visa services for Canadians on Thursday amid an escalating diplomatic row between New Delhi and Ottawa following allegations from Canada that India's government may have been involved in the killing of a Canadian citizen in British Columbia.

"Important notice from Indian Mission: Due to operational reasons, with effect from 21 Sept. Indian visa services have been suspended till further notice," the BLS Indian Visa Application Center in Canada said in a statement.

BLS is the agency that processes visa requests for India, including for entry, tourist, student and employment visas. The center has physical locations in cities such as Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg and Vancouver.

Canada is a popular destination for Indians, especially students. In 2022, nearly 300,000 Indians were pursuing higher education in Canada.

The notice also affects Canadians who do not already have visas. According to India's Bureau of Immigration, 80,000 Canadian tourists visited India in 2021, making them the fourth-largest group.

Tensions have continued to escalate between the two countries this week since Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told Parliament that Canada has "credible intelligence" linking agents of the Indian government to the killing of a Canadian citizen at a Sikh temple in British Columbia.

Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, 45, was killed in June by two masked men in the parking lot of a Sikh temple in Surrey, where he served as president.

The case remains under investigation by BC's Integrated Homicide Investigation Team.

In the wave of tension, Mukhbir Singh of the World Sikh Organization called on the Canadian government to better protect the community, according to CBC News.

"There have been a number of cases where officials have warned them that there was a threat to their life," he told a news conference Tuesday.

New Delhi called the Canadian accusation "absurd and motivated" and urged it to instead take legal action against anti-Indian elements operating on its soil.

India has accused Canada of giving free rein to Sikh separatists, including Nijjar, for years. Nijjar, who denied the allegation, was working to organize an unofficial Sikh diaspora referendum on independence from India at the time of his killing.

In its advisory on Wednesday, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) warned Indian nationals and students in Canada that "threats have particularly targeted Indian diplomats and sections of the Indian community."

"In view of growing anti-India activities and politically-condoned hate crimes and criminal violence in

Canada, all Indian nationals there and those contemplating travel are urged to exercise utmost caution," the advisory said.

On Thursday, the MEA cited Ottawa's "interference in internal matters" and called for a comparable diplomatic response.

Addressing a media briefing, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said: "Their numbers here are very much higher than India's diplomatic presence. ... We have seen Canadian diplomatic interference in our internal affairs. This is being taken into account, and parity is being sought in rank and diplomatic strength."

Stating that Canada did not share any specific information with India on the Nijjar case, Bagchi said, "Canada should worry about its growing reputation as a place and a safe haven for terrorists."

He said New Delhi had provided specific information with Canada on anti-India activities carried out on Canadian soil.

"Safe haven is being provided in Canada. ... We want the Canadian government to not do so and take action against those who have terrorism charges or send them here to face justice. ... We've sought either extradition request or assistance related to that, at least more than 20 to 25 individuals we've requested over the years, but the response has not been helpful at all," Bagchi said.

Hours after Ottawa expelled an Indian diplomat, a senior Canadian diplomat was ordered Tuesday to leave India within five days.

The dueling expulsions of diplomats have escalated tensions. Trudeau had frosty encounters with Modi during the Group of 20 meeting held in New Delhi in early September, and a few days later, Canada canceled a trade mission to India planned for the fall, according to The Associated Press.

Ottawa had already been discussing the matter with key allies such as the Five Eyes intelligence sharing alliance, which also includes the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand.

The results so far have been muted, Reuters reported. The UK refused to publicly criticize India and said bilateral trade talks will continue as planned. A statement from Foreign Secretary James Cleverly about the affair did not mention India by name.

US national security adviser John Kirby said that the White House was "deeply concerned" and encouraged Indian officials to cooperate in any investigation.

The unprecedented escalation of tensions with Canada has triggered concerns over potential ripple effects in a range of areas, including trade and people-to-people ties.

According to the data on the India MEA website, there are 1,689,055 overseas Indians in Canada, or 5.26 percent of the total overseas. In Canada, there also are 178,410 non-resident Indians and 1,510,645 persons of Indian origin.

Agencies contributed to this story.



People rally to express support for Democratic Party leader Lee Jae-myung before the vote on the motion seeking Lee's arrest on Thursday. YONHAP NEWS AGENCY

ROK opposition leader's arrest approved

By YANG HAN in Hong Kong kelly@chinadailyapac.com

Despite an opposition-controlled National Assembly, a motion seeking the arrest of the main opposition leader of the Republic of Korea was passed on Thursday.

The motion for the arrest of Lee Jae-myung, head of the Democratic Party of Korea, or DP, was passed by a 149-136 vote in a secret ballot. There were six abstained votes and four invalid votes. Lee's DP holds 168 seats in the 298-member parliament.

Three people did not show up for the session, including Lee, who was in hospital after 19 days of hunger strike. With the motion having been passed, Lee will need to appear in court before a judge to challenge his arrest.

A warrant review can take place as early as next week but many expect the court to adjust the dates considering Lee's health condition.

Lee, 58, has been hospitalized since Sept 18 after his health deteriorated because of a hunger strike. He started the hunger strike on Aug 31 in protest against the government policies, including its failure to stop Japan from releasing nucle-

ar-contaminated water from the crippled Fukushima nuclear plant.

Lee, who lost to President Yoon Suk-yeol by a slender margin in last year's election, has been accused of breach of trust and bribery. He also faces charges, including alleged involvement in a company's illegal cash remittance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

If found guilty to all the charges, Lee could be sentenced to at least 11 years in prison, according to legal experts.

21 detained

Before the parliamentary vote, ROK Justice Minister Han Dong-hoon explained in the National Assembly why the ministry filed the motion to seek Lee's arrest. A total of 21 people have been arrested in this connection, either as Lee's accomplices or related persons, he said.

Han's speech was interrupted several times due to fierce shouting and protests from DP members.

The Justice Ministry submitted the motion to the National Assembly on Sept 19 after the ROK president signed it off on the previous day.

By law, legislators are immune to

arrest when the parliament is in session unless a majority of the members participate in a vote and a majority of those voting cast their ballots in favor of the motion.

One day before the parliament vote, Lee wrote on his Facebook page that the motion to arrest him was "illegal and unfair."

"The court should make sure that the investigation into Lee, who damages the state and the people with numerous charges and has no remorse, can be carried out properly," Kang Min-kuk, spokesman for the ruling People Power Party, or PPP, said in a statement on Sept 21.

The DP did not release any official statement as of 7 pm local time.

The National Assembly, on the same day, also passed a ceremonial motion on the dismissal of Prime Minister Han Duck-soo.

The DP submitted the motion on Sept 18, saying the prime minister is responsible for the failures of the Yoon government.

It is the first time that a dismissal motion against the prime minister has passed through the National Assembly. However, the passing of the motion is seen as having no legal binding since Yoon can reject it.

New US base plan in Japan raises concerns

By JIANG XUEQING in Tokyo jiangxueqing@chinadaily.com.cn

Japan's increased military expenditure and the strengthening of its alliance with the United States have received strong criticism from civil groups and analysts, while the media said the US is planning to establish a command post for its Space Force in Japan in the near future.

The move, if confirmed, will enhance its space capabilities in the Asia-Pacific region in what analysts warned could risk fueling the space race, as the US Space Force is a powerful arm with both offensive and defensive capabilities.

The command post in Japan will be the third of its kind in Asia-Pacific, following the establishment of similar sites in Hawaii and the Republic of Korea last year, Press TV reported.

Such a move is not good for the region, analysts said, as it will encourage militarization in space and lead to an arms race in outer space among capable countries.

Japan's joint military drills with the US are repeatedly conducted in the waters of Northeast Asia, sparking concerns among

neighbors, including China.

Takakage Fujita, secretary-general of the Association for Inheriting and Propagating the Murayama Statement, said the US is making use of the Japanese government's policy of blindly following the US' containment policy against China.

The plan to establish a Space Force stationed in Japan is also a part of this. The Japanese government's inability to say no — in other words, its readiness to comply with everything the US dictates — has become highly convenient for the US military, he said.

'Dangerous path'

"For Japan to blindly follow the US' military strategy is a dangerous path to erasing Japan's postwar peace policy. It may be dragged into trouble and conflict with China, provoked by the US. Such military compliance by Japan will inevitably provoke China's backlash," Fujita said.

"Friendship with China is Japan's greatest security. For the sake of Asia's peace and development and Japan's national interests, it's necessary to regain the

original and normal friendly relationship with China."

The new US move aims to integrate Japanese security with US interests, potentially blurring the lines of Japan-US interests, said Satoshi Tomisaka, a professor at the Institute of World Studies at Takushoku University in Tokyo.

Japan's tendency to engage in military expansion and strengthen its military alliance with the US is truly concerning and Japan should insist on upholding its pacifist Constitution, said Nahoko Hishiyama, secretary-general of an organization that opposes a proposal by former prime minister Shinzo Abe to revise the Constitution.

"Japan should strive to be a neutral nation in its relations with neighboring countries. It must seek peaceful coexistence with other Asian neighbors and refrain from provoking them," Hishiyama said during a rally in Tokyo on Tuesday against Japan's aggressive military buildup and attempts to amend the Constitution.

"The current danger is being created by Japan aligning itself with the US"

Sunak hits back over net-zero criticism

By JULIAN SHEA in London julian@mail.chinadailyuk.com

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has defended reforms of his government's steps toward reaching net-zero carbon emissions, after a policy leak led to him announcing them earlier than planned and receiving heavy criticism from across the political spectrum and industry.

Speaking on the BBC Radio 4's Today, Sunak said the United Kingdom's decarbonization targets were "more ambitious than pretty much any major economy in the world", adding that reforms including delaying a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by five years were "absolutely not slowing down efforts to combat climate change".

He also rejected criticism from Chris Stark, chief executive of the UK's Climate Change Committee, who said the proposals made it "difficult to escape the idea we're not moving backward" on green policies, accusing Sunak of "wishful thinking". "We have absolute confidence and belief we will hit (the targets)," Sunak replied.

Business Secretary Kemi Badenoch has also backed him up. "This is not some sort of cynical ploy ... this is the right thing to do, and I fully support the prime minister," she told Sky News.

Wednesday's hurried policy announcement, which was made while Parliament was not sitting because of the imminent political party conference season, incurred the wrath of the speaker of the House of Commons, Lindsay Hoyle.

"If he had the power, the Speaker would recall the House immediately — and he is writing to the prime minister today, to express that view in the strongest of terms," a spokeswoman for his office said.

"This is a major policy shift, and it should have been announced when the House was sitting ... this is not the way to do business. Ministers are answerable to MPs — we do not have a presidential system here.

"The House of Commons is where laws are made, national debates are had — and where statements should be made."

Auto producer Ford UK was critical of measures relating to the phasing out of new petrol and diesel vehicles. "Our business needs three things from the UK government: Ambition, commitment and consistency," Ford UK's chair Lisa Brankin said. "A relaxation of 2030 (the initial cutoff date) would undermine all three."

There were also complaints from the energy sector, with Chris Norbury, chief executive of one of the country's biggest energy suppliers, E.ON UK, calling the measures, including a planned phaseout of gas boilers, a "misstep on many levels". The claim that ditching environmental measures would ease pressure on household budgets was a "false argument", as there is no "green versus cheap" debate.

Norbury also said the policies risked "condemning people to many more years of living in cold and drafty homes that are expensive to heat, in cities clogged with dirty air from fossil fuels, missing out on the economic regeneration this ambition brings".

Russia-Iran ties 'at new level' amid Western curbs

By REN QI in Moscow renqi@chinadaily.com.cn

Relations between Russia and Iran have reached a new level despite opposition from much of the Western world, Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu said during his visit to Teheran on Wednesday.

"We are aiming at an entire range of planned activities, despite opposition from the United States and its Western allies," Shoigu was quoted by the Interfax news agency as saying.

"Sanctions pressure on Russia and Iran shows its futility, while Russian-Iranian interaction is reaching a new level."

Iranian Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiani met with Shoigu to discuss bilateral defense

and military cooperation and issues of common interest, the Iranian Students' News Agency reported.

Ashtiani said the decades-long defense cooperation between the two countries to ensure regional and global stability and security will continue within the framework of international peace and security.

He said the two countries had successfully cooperated in fighting terrorism in West Asia, among others, noting that tackling common regional and international challenges, including US-led unilateralism, is a priority in the bilateral cooperation.

He said Iran views the proposed 3+3 format, comprising three Caucasian states of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and their three neighbors Russia, Turkey and Iran, as a

solution for the peaceful resolution of problems in the Caucasus region.

Shoigu hailed the high level of bilateral strategic relations, stressing that the strategic cooperation between the two countries should expand.

Shoigu welcomed the idea of the 3+3 format for the resolution of the Caucasus region's problems, stressing the importance of the presence of regional countries, such as Iran, in the process.

Iran and Russia, both under sanctions imposed by the United States, have recently expanded bilateral political and economic relations to counter US moves.

At the United Nations Security Council, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Wednesday defended his country's use of its veto

power as a "legitimate tool" of international relations.

Lavrov was addressing the council shortly after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called for the stripping of Russia's veto power over Moscow's special military operation in Ukraine.

Delivering his speech while facing US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Lavrov accused the West of stirring internal strife in Ukraine over several years, arming Kyiv and pushing it toward a military conflict with Russia.

"The principle of noninterference in internal affairs has been trampled multiple times," he said.

Lavrov said Russia was open to negotiating a way out of the Ukraine crisis and accused Zelensky of refusing to talk.



Russia's Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu (center right), accompanied by Iran's military officials, visits an Iranian aerospace exhibition in Teheran on Wednesday. RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY/HANDOUT VIA REUTERS

## WORLD

## UN officials laud China's SDG efforts

By MINLU ZHANG

at the United Nations  
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While crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine conflict have set the world back, senior officials from the United Nations acknowledged China's achievements in pursuing the UN's Strategic Development Goals (SDGs).

To further accelerate the SDGs by 2030, there are four areas crucial for most countries, especially developing countries, to focus on: effective governance, employment and inclusivity, resilience and infrastructure, and urbanization, according to Xu Haoliang, UN under-secretary-general and associate administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

Most nations recognize the importance of establishing efficient governance mechanisms as a key for development, Xu said. Creating opportunities for employment, especially for young people and the general population, is important, he said.

Building resilience to natural disasters and the impact of climate change, with a strong emphasis on developing infrastructure is essential, said Xu. He also highlighted the development of urban areas.

"China has made significant achievements in these areas," Xu said on Thursday during a panel discussion moderated by China Daily at the UN SDG Media Zone on the sidelines of the 78th session of the UN General Assembly.

China's rapid infrastructure development, substantial progress in urbanization, and successful poverty-reduction efforts are attributed to its effective governance, he said.

"In the past 40 years, China has lifted 770 million people out of poverty,"

Xu said. "So without its strong government support and robust employment opportunities, this poverty alleviation would have been impossible."

The Chinese government also has invested significant resources in improving the effectiveness of government operations. For instance, it utilizes e-government to support the government and offer various services to the public, said Xu.

China also has undertaken various initiatives, such as achieving the milestone of generating 50 percent of its power without reliance on petroleum and other conventional fuels, he said.

China's commitment to attaining carbon neutrality is actively underway, among other efforts, all of which can serve as valuable examples for developing countries, he added.

China's increase in renewable energy power generation last year was twice that of Europe's during the same period, and eight times that of the United States' during the same period in 2012, Xu said. "China's investment in renewable energy is very fast."

"In fact, China is indeed making different explorations every day in using innovation to support the development of recycling," said Xu. That is particularly in areas like big data applications, remote sensing for pollution monitoring and control, and the integration of technology with agriculture, he said.

China has made tremendous achievements, but the pace of development knows no bounds, Xu said. Every country must continue to overcome existing challenges and forge ahead. It's a journey every nation undertakes, he said.

"While China's development is impressive, it's crucial to remember that China remains the world's largest developing country, given

its economic scale," said Xu. "The international community and other developing nations can draw valuable lessons from China's development experience and receive support from its existing capabilities."

He noticed that the Chinese government is also continually researching how to utilize its current capacities to assist in development. Chinese initiatives such as the Global Development Initiative (GDI) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are examples of such assistance, Xu said.

"From my understanding, China allocated approximately \$8 billion annually to support the development of developing countries from 2013 to 2018. These efforts are set to intensify in the future," Xu said.

"Therefore, in terms of collaboration and trilateral cooperation, China has the potential to make significant contributions to achieving the sustainable development goals and lifting up the developing world," he added.

Li Junhua, the under-secretary-general for economic and social affairs at the UN, echoed Xu in a panel discussion moderated by China Daily on Monday.

"We welcome all the initiatives announced by member states that contribute to the implementation of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. To our knowledge, the Belt and Road Initiative has conducted numerous programs and projects, which covered almost 150 member states."

The GDI has "received a warm welcome from a number of member states, including the UN entities. We really hope to see, that as we map out specific programs for the coming years, it will inject more energy and progress towards accelerating the SDGs," Li said.

## Perilous ride



Migrants travel on top of a train in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, on Wednesday with the intention of reaching the United States. Thousands of migrants riding atop railway cars in Mexico this week or waiting in the kilometer-long lines by the tracks to hitch a ride to the US have triggered the closure of one US border crossing and forced Mexico's largest railroad to suspend dozens of freight trains. JOSE LUIS GONZALEZ / REUTERS

## Briefly

INDIA  
Visa services for Canadians suspended

India has suspended visa services for Canadian citizens, visa service provider BLS International said on Thursday on its website, citing a notice from the Indian mission. The announcement came amid a diplomatic tussle between the two countries, where Ottawa accused New Delhi of involvement in the killing of a Sikh leader in Canada. "Important notice from Indian Mission: Due to operational reasons, with effect from 21 Sept. Indian visa services have been suspended till further notice," the BLS' Indian Visa Application Center in Canada said. Meanwhile, Canada's High Commission in India said on Thursday that it has decided to temporarily "adjust" staff presence in the country after some diplomats received threats on social media platforms.

SOUTH KOREA  
17 US soldiers probed for drug crimes

Seventeen US soldiers stationed in South Korea are being investigated by the local police for "alleged illegal drug behavior," the United States Forces Korea said on Wednesday. Two women, a South Korean and a Filipino, involved in the case have been arrested for allegedly smuggling drugs from the United States through military mail, South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported. The women also engaged in the use, sale, or distribution of the banned substances, it said. The 17 US soldiers have been referred to prosecutors and could face charges but have not been detained, Yonhap said. South Korean police have seized drug sales proceeds of \$12,850 as well as synthetic cannabis and other related material from the suspects, according to Yonhap.

JAPAN  
Toshiba to delist after takeover by consortium

A 2 trillion yen (\$14 billion) tender offer for troubled electronics and energy giant Toshiba by a Japanese consortium has been completed, clearing the way for it to be delisted, the company said on Thursday. In the tender offer, announced last month and ended on Wednesday, the number of shares purchased exceeded the minimum needed, at 78.65 percent, it said. The switch to Toshiba's new parent company and largest shareholder, TBJH Inc, will take place on Sept 27. The move still needs shareholders' approval, and a meeting has been set for November, according to Toshiba. Toshiba will then delist from the Tokyo Stock Exchange within a month.

XINHUA—AGENCIES



The pavilion of the China Chamber of Commerce in New Zealand at the 2022 China International Import Expo. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By WANG JINHUI

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As a vital opportunity for China to accelerate the formation of a new development pattern and boost high-level opening-up, the China International Import Expo plays an active role in helping New Zealand's small and medium-sized enterprises enter the Chinese market.

"This year's event is sure to be incredibly popular," said Li Ruiqin, secretary-general of the China Chamber of Commerce in New Zealand, a nonprofit organization committed to providing a broad range of support, services and resources to its members in an effort to foster mutual understanding, trust and trade between China and New Zealand.

He added that New Zealand companies began to register in mid-April for the CIIE — set for Shanghai in November — and the 450-square-meter exhibition space and 24 slots offered by the chamber have been quickly snatched up. Li said that ever since the first edition of the CIIE in 2018, the chamber has organized New Zealand companies to participate in the CIIE.

## SMEs work big market

New Zealand's national economy

is dependent on foreign trade. Around 90 percent of its goods earmarked for export are mainly agriculture, fisheries, forestry and resource-based products. Most of the exporters are SMEs with fewer than 20 employees.

According to the statistics department Stats NZ, China remains New Zealand's largest trading partner. The total value of goods and services trade in the first quarter reached 9.38 billion New Zealand dollars (\$5.53 billion). For New Zealand, the Chinese market is not only large but possesses huge potential.

Li said that the reason why the chamber persists in encouraging companies to take part in the CIIE is rooted in its mission to "boost economic and trade exchanges between China and New Zealand" and because of its deep trust in the event.

Previously, the CIIE roadshows were mainly held in Auckland. In 2022, the chamber began hosting roadshows in the cities of Christchurch and Nelson, in addition to Auckland, as the country's many



A signing ceremony during a roadshow of the China Chamber of Commerce in New Zealand for this year's CIIE.

exporters are scattered across both the North and South Islands.

During these roadshows, the chamber heard from various companies. "They are eager to exhibit in China. Over the past two to three years, they haven't been able to meet their distributors and feel a growing distance from the market. They really

want to go back and see," Li said.

Wimpex, New Zealand's largest dry powder and granulated foods packaging manufacturer on the South Island, has participated in the CIIE for two consecutive editions with help from the chamber. In 2022, despite the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the company met

many interested buyers and signed letters of intent during the exhibition.

Organizing companies to participate in the CIIE is by no means an easy task. From registrations, logistics for exhibits, booth decoration and visa processing to travel arrangements, there are many details at work. "When you look at it all, the average communication time for each company is about 40 to 50 hours. Looking back at the roadshow, it's like a sowing process and the blossoming results happen naturally," Li said.

## Trade to cultural exchange

In 2017, New Zealand signed a cooperation agreement with China under the Belt and Road Initiative. On Jan 26, 2021, the two sides signed a supplementary agreement to upgrade the free trade agreement between the two countries.

It enhanced the quality and efficiency of China-New Zealand trade relations on the basis of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Part-

nership agreement, or RCEP. On this path, there is not only economic and trade cooperation but cultural exchange.

China is one of New Zealand's most important tourism markets. At the fifth CIIE, the New Zealand Joint Brand Pavilion had an exhibition space of 400 sq m. The chamber also invited representatives from New Zealand Tourism and New Zealand's ministry of education.

This year, in addition to tourism resources, Maori cultural performances will once again be showcased to the world during the CIIE. Maori cultural performances, also known as New Zealand Maori haka, refer to the traditional dance form of New Zealand's Maori people, featuring synchronized movements, rhythmic stomping, chanting and vocalizations.

On June 25, New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins led a delegation to Beijing. Among the members of Hipkins' delegation were representatives from the tribe that won this year's national Maori haka competition in New Zealand.

"Through the grand stage of the CIIE, we hope that the uniquely charming Maori cultural performances can shine brightly, allowing China and the world to see the fascinating New Zealand," said Li.

# GLOBAL LENS

WAW tractors at work in Songyuan, Jilin province, in October, 2021. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



## GEARED UP & ON A ROLL



Above: A WAW tricycle assembly line in Tamale, Ghana, last December. Right: WAW launches a new tricycle in Lubumbashi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, last December. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Chinese agricultural machinery helps farmers reap rich rewards in developing markets

**‘W**hen I saw the tricycle, it was love at first sight,” said Ugandan businessman John Kalema.

Kalema, 46, runs a transportation business at a farmers’ market in Kampala, capital of the African country.

His first diesel-powered cargo tricycle is a sturdy, popular model of the Wuzheng Group, or WAW, a manufacturer of motor tricycles and other agricultural vehicles in Wulian county of Rizhao, in East China’s Shandong province.

Kalema’s three Wuzheng tricycles each help him bring in at least 780 yuan (\$107) a week, enough to earn him a name as a successful entrepreneur in the community.

“What’s most important for my business is loading capacity, durability and fuel efficiency,” said Kalema, adding that for those reasons, Wuzheng’s tricycles, known locally as WAW Tuku-Tuku vehicles, are crucial for farmers, workers and other locals like himself.

“In comparison with a petrol tricycle, with a WAW diesel tricycle we save over 30 percent daily on fuel alone,” he said. “The support and service team is amazing ... we can move toward a better tomorrow with these machines.”

Kalema’s experience and that of many others like him reflect the positive impact that major Chinese companies are having in Uganda.

In line with the Belt and Road Initiative promoting shared development, Wuzheng Group is helping Ugandan farmers with agricultural mechanization, reducing labor costs while increasing production and incomes.

The large-scale promotion of agricultural technology and machinery in Uganda has helped plug technological and expertise gaps, with millions of farmers set to benefit from the move, according to the company.

Bu Qingshan, who heads Wuzheng’s international cooperation activities in Uganda, said technology and training exchanges, such as regular workshops to aid local workers in vehicle maintenance and repair, will help Ugandan farmers to fully tap their rich resources.

“We also learn from them, their local knowledge and local conditions, to further maximize efficiency and share the benefits,” he said.

Similar efforts are also reaping rewards in Wuzheng’s Southeast Asian developing markets.

Li Chunyang, who runs the group’s operations in the region, said its vehicles sold in markets such as Myanmar and Indonesia are adapted to the local climate and farmers’ needs, including custom-fitted canopies and direct-rear gear shifts for greater maneuverability in smaller farm plots.

“We’ve set up service and accessories centers that can solve problems on the spot,” Li said. “Response from the locals has been very good and the benefits are clear.”



From left: WAW farming products are explained to customers in Pakokku, Myanmar, in November, 2019. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY Welders at work in a WAW factory in Wulian, Shandong province, on Sept 4. A worker on the assembly line in the Wulian factory on Sept 4. PHOTOS BY WANG HAORAN / CHINA DAILY Below: The company donates scholastic items to children in Bouake, Cote d’Ivoire, in September, 2021. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



## BUSINESS

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## Experts: China prudent about rate cuts

Structural monetary tools in focus amid Fed's hawkish stance, dollar strength

By ZHOU LANXU  
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China may turn more prudent about aggregate monetary easing measures such as interest rate cuts in the short term amid the continued strength of the US dollar, but beef up structural monetary support, experts said on Thursday.

That said, the country may still reduce the benchmark interest rate for mortgages slightly in the rest of the year if more stimulus is needed to consolidate the property market recovery, they said.

Their comments were in response to the US Federal Reserve's latest policy statement signaling that it may further raise interest rates and keep the rates at a very high level for a longer-than-expected period.

On Wednesday, the Fed decided to maintain the target range for the federal funds rate in the 5.25 to 5.5 percent range, in line with market expectations. What caught analysts' greater attention was the Fed's hint that it may implement another rate hike of 25 basis points by the end of the year and may cut the rates by only 50 basis points in 2024, versus 100 basis points it implied in June.

Shao Yu, chief economist at Orient Securities, said the dollar may retain its strength and weigh on other currencies as the Fed is likely to further increase interest rates and keep them high for a relatively long period to curb stubbornly high inflation.

Following the Fed's hawkish statement, the US dollar Index, which gauges the greenback's value

relative to a basket of key currencies, hit a six-month high of 105.69 on Thursday. The onshore renminbi weakened to 7.3097 against the dollar on Thursday, the lowest level since Sept 11, according to market tracker Wind Info.

"China still has room for interest rate cuts as the domestic economic situation remains the key determinant in policymaking, but relative cautiousness (in policy easing) could be seen in order to balance the targets of growth stabilization and foreign exchange rate stability," Shao said.

"If the real economy recovers slower than expected, monetary and fiscal policies may still amplify counter-cyclical adjustments despite the dollar's strength."

Shao's views echoed a central bank official's pledge on Wednesday to beef up support for the economy while stabilizing the renminbi. "Various tools in reserve will be used to improve the supply-de-

mand relationship in the foreign exchange market to resolutely fend off the risk of exchange rate overshooting," said Zou Lan, head of the People's Bank of China's monetary policy department.

Zou said the central bank will keep liquidity ample, lower financing costs of the real economy and encourage financial institutions to reprice outstanding mortgages and support the resolution of local government debt risks.

On Wednesday, the country held the loan prime rates, or market-based benchmark lending rates, unchanged after cutting the reserve requirement ratio on Friday to boost market liquidity. The RRR refers to the proportion of money that lenders must keep as reserves.

Lou Feipeng, a researcher at Postal Savings Bank of China, said the possibility of a cut to the over-five-year LPR is higher than that of a cut to the one-year LPR in the near term as the

former serves as a benchmark for mortgage rates and may further decline if the recovery of property demand needs further support.

Yet, the overall likelihood of further LPR cuts could be limited over the rest of the year given commercial banks' squeezed profit margins, Lou said, adding he expects structural monetary tools to be rolled out and aid resolution of local governments' debt risk.

Yi Gang, former governor of the PBOC, wrote in an article published in CPPCC Daily on Tuesday that he would suggest use of structural monetary tools to expand the supply of affordable rental housing.

Ouyang Shijia contributed to this story.



Online  
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## Briefly

## Nation raises prices of gasoline, diesel

China raised retail prices of gasoline and diesel on Thursday, based on recent changes in international crude oil prices. Gasoline prices increased by 385 yuan (\$53.7) per metric ton and diesel prices by 370 yuan per ton, the National Development and Reform Commission said.

## Tianjin's used vehicle exports hit record high

Tianjin saw its exports of second-hand vehicles hit a record high during the first eight months, said the municipal commerce bureau on Thursday. During the period, Tianjin exported 11,000 used vehicles to over 20 countries, with the total export value exceeding 2 billion yuan (\$274 million). Both figures represent sixfold increases over the same period the previous year.

XINHUA · CHINA DAILY

## HIGHER GROUND

## Sino-Arab ties set to deepen on all fronts

By WANG KEJU and  
HU DONGMEI in Yinchuan

China's trade and investment cooperation with Arab nations, championed by the ongoing China-Arab States Expo, has not only grown stronger in traditional sectors, but has also led to broader prospects in emerging areas, said senior officials and company executives on Thursday.

The sixth China-Arab States Expo, a four-day biennial event that kicked off on Thursday in Yinchuan, Northwest China's Ningxia Hui autonomous region, has exhibition venues covering 40,000 square meters. It has attracted 1,000 domestic and foreign businesses.

Economic and trade ties between China and the Arab world have expanded to include new sectors such as communications, nuclear energy, aerospace and satellites, in addition to established ones like energy, investment and infrastructure, said Zheng Jianbang, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress.

Going forward, China is willing to work with Arab states to build a strategic energy partnership featuring mutual benefits and long-term friendship, as well as explore the possibility of a renminbi settlement system for oil and gas trade, to safeguard the security and stability of global energy supply chains, Zheng said.

China will further enhance the "oil and gas plus" cooperation model and expand cooperation in upstream field development, engi-



Exhibitors from Arab countries seen at the ongoing China-Arab States Expo, which opened in Yinchuan, Ningxia Hui autonomous region, on Thursday. ZHAO XIN / CHINA DAILY

neering services, storage, transportation and refining, Zheng added.

Data from a report jointly released on Thursday by the expo secretariat and China-Arab Research Institute showed that China's imports of crude oil and natural gas from Arab nations accounted for 48.38 percent and 15.7 percent, respectively, of its entire imports last year.

China-Arab oil and gas cooperation has evolved from an earlier model that relied on trade to one focused on investing in and collaborating across the whole industrial chain.

Meanwhile, China-Arab collaboration in the new energy sector is booming and has a promising future, according to the report.

Acting on a mutually beneficial strategy of opening-up, China will continue to promote high-standard openness and create new opportunities for Arab states and other countries, Zheng said.

China is now the Arab countries' largest trading partner, with China-Arab trade value almost doubling from the 2012 level to \$431.4 billion last year. In the first half of this year, trade between China and Arab states

reached \$199.9 billion, data from the Ministry of Commerce showed.

Thanks to the highly compatible development strategies and complementary industrial structures of China and Arab nations, two-way investment is constantly increasing and infrastructure collaboration is fast emerging, said Li Fei, vice-minister of commerce.

Last year, China's new direct investment in Arab countries came in at \$2.62 billion, rising 13 percent year-on-year, while new investments by Arab countries in China totaled \$1.05 billion, an almost nine-fold year-on-year increase, Li said, adding that Chinese companies signed new construction contracts worth \$36.7 billion with Arab nations in 2022, up 38 percent year-on-year.

The expo has acted as an important platform for promoting cooperation between China and countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, especially Arab countries, said Ali bin Ibrahim Al-Malki, assistant secretary-general of the League of Arab States.

This year's event is expected to result in the signing of over 400 projects worth more than 170 billion yuan (\$23.2 billion), which will hit a

record high since 2013. Investment projects will make up more than 90 percent of all initiatives, according to the expo organizer.

In addition, the event has played a positive role in promoting economic exchanges between China and Arab countries and helping Arab countries to learn from China's effective policies to achieve economic recovery and growth, he added.

China's economy has emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic to post steady growth, inspiring optimism and confidence throughout the world. More than one-third of the global economic growth this year is expected to come from China, said Mutib Harby, Asia president of Saudi Aramco.

The Chinese government has pledged strong support for industrial transformation and future industrial development, along with its optimized COVID-19 response measures following the pandemic, fostering an enabling environment for foreign business to invest and grow their businesses in this vibrant market, Harby said.

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## Purchasing limits eased to propel realty market

By QIU QUANLIN in Guangzhou  
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The latest adjustments to the home-purchasing restrictions policy and value-added tax exemption period in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, will better support local people in addressing housing issues through market-oriented methods and promote the recovery and development of the residential property market, local authorities and industry insiders said.

According to a notice issued by the local government on Wednesday evening, residents with local household registrations, or *hukou*, in the city's districts of Yuexiu, Haizhu, Liwan, Tianhe, Nansha and some areas in Baiyun district, can only purchase a maximum of two residential properties.

Non-locals who can provide proof of having paid individual income taxes or social insurance continuously for the past two years in Guangzhou are limited to buying just one residential property.

According to the previous policy, families without local *hukou* were required to have continuously paid personal income taxes or social insurance for five years.

The policy adjustment to purchasing restrictions is conducive to unleashing housing demand among locals, said the Guangzhou Municipal Housing and Urban-Rural Development Bureau.

The adjustment mainly targets peripheral areas of the city, with the central urban area still implementing stricter purchasing restrictions. The suburban districts of Huangpu, Panyu and Huadu are not included in the adjustment to property purchase restrictions, according to the notice.

"The peripheral areas of the city have a large supply and a relatively longer destocking cycle. Easing purchase restrictions is beneficial to enhance transaction activity in peripheral areas and further stabilize market operations," said Li Yujia, chief researcher of the housing policy research center at the Guangdong Urban and Rural Planning and Design Institute.

In a move to invigorate the pre-owned property market, the VAT exemption period for sales of residential properties in the city's Yuexiu, Haizhu, Liwan, Tianhe, Huangpu, Panyu, Nansha and Zengcheng districts has also been adjusted from five years to two.

"The adjustment of the VAT exemption period is beneficial to reducing transaction costs in the secondhand housing market and promoting accelerated recovery and development of the existing housing market," said Li.

After the policy was announced, there were over 700 additional secondhand housing listings across the city on a single day — Thursday — according to data from Beike, a real estate service agent focusing on sales of used properties.

"The VAT adjustment policy will help promote the circulation of commercial housing, thus meeting demand of new residents, young people and migrants settling in the city," Li added.

The property market in Guangzhou, which has been rapidly declining since early this year, will gradually stabilize in the remaining months of the year, Li said.

According to statistics from the local housing authority, the market for new homes in Guangzhou has been declining for five consecutive months, reaching a new low in absolute transaction levels since November last year.

## Better relations with ASEAN lift farm product sales

By ZHENG YIRAN and  
SHI RUIPENG in Nanning

China and member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations are deepening their trade ties to make the most of rising demand for regional farm products like durian, a fruit whose popularity in China is soaring.

Signs of such demand were in evidence at the four-day China-ASEAN Expo or CAEXPO that concluded in Nanning, capital of the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, on Tuesday.

Standing behind a refrigerator at the Malaysian pavilion, David Chen, a Malaysian exhibitor, busily wrapped a bagful of durian-flavored mooncakes for Xu Feng, a Chinese customer. Chen duly informed Xu of the storage method and the best-before date. Before their transaction ended, more visitors thronged the pavilion to buy fresh Musang King durian.

Xu said: "These mooncakes are priced at 25 yuan (\$3.4) apiece. They taste so yummy I want to buy more."

Mostly grown in Malaysia and Thailand, durian has emerged as a prominent symbol of both the booming China-ASEAN cooperation and China's vast market potential.

The China market accounted for 91 percent of the world's demand for durian in the past two years, according to an HSBC report.

"During the CAEXPO, we sold seven cartons of durians. All the durian products we brought here were sold out. There were also expressions of interest from potential buyers in China," said Chen.

Sharon Yan, executive deputy general manager of Guangxi Mayi Imported Goods Supply Chain Management Co Ltd, a domestic exhibitor at the CAEXPO, said: "We brought seven durian varieties to the event. In the past, improving living standards and consumption

upgrade in China had created an appetite for the delicious durian in spite of its smell.

"Consumption increased year after year, and now durian ranks among the top fruits with the highest import value in China. Its price, however, remains relatively high, giving it the tag of a luxury fruit. That's why we entered the durian business, hoping to reduce intermediary procurement processes and thereby the price."

The firm offers finance, Customs declaration, warehouse and logistics services for the durian supply chain. It established a 50,000-square-meter cold chain warehouse in the Qinzhou Port Area in China (Guangxi) Pilot Free Trade Zone, and a central kitchen in the China-Malaysia Qinzhou Industrial Park, where durian is processed and made into byproducts.

The company's inspection teams travel to ASEAN member states reg-

ularly to enrich its durian import channels and stabilize the product quality and prices.

In 2022, Mayi imported 5,000 metric tons of durian and durian raw materials, with an import value of 400 million yuan, up 100 percent and 60 percent year-on-year, respectively.

In 2021, at the Special Summit to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of China-ASEAN Dialogue Relations, China announced that it planned to import \$150 billion worth of farm products from ASEAN member states in the next five years.

That encouraged ASEAN member countries to strive to export more farm products with higher quality, including durian, coffee and palm oil. Sharimahton Mat Saleh, deputy CEO of Malaysia External Trade Development Corp, said: "We have 107 Malaysian companies and nine government agencies taking part in this year's expo. We are pleased that our durian and durian-based prod-



Exhibitors from Vietnam sell durian at the 20th China-ASEAN Expo in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region. ZHANG AILIN / XINHUA

ucts are received well by the Chinese market"

Wang Xiongchang, mayor of Qinzhou, said: "Qinzhou Port Area, which connects Guangxi and ASEAN, has initiated the construction of the Pinglu Canal project. Once completed, farm products from ASEAN can be shipped to Nanning, Chengdu, Sichuan province

and other cities in China in a quicker and cheaper manner"

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Online  
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# BUSINESS

## 3D-printed medical devices gain ground

By ZHUANG QIANG  
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3D printing, a technology key to the medical devices market, has been offering vast opportunities for innovation and customization in medical solutions. 3D printing is attracting greater attention among hospitals and healthcare service providers as well as high-tech developers globally, according to an industry report.

In general, 3D-printed medical devices mainly include implants, surgical instruments, prosthetics, tissue engineering devices and others. 3D-printed medical implants are made using 3D printing technology to create complex geometries.

These provide applications in orthopedic, spinal, dental, hearing aids and other medical categories that are used by end-users such as hospitals, diagnostics centers, academic institutions and more.

According to a recent report from Exactitude Consultancy, the global 3D printing medical devices market is projected to reach \$7.92 billion by 2029, up from \$2.07 billion in 2020, at a compound annual growth rate of 16.1 percent from 2022 to 2029.

North America remains the largest region in terms of market size, taking up more than 41 percent of the global total, with the United States being the largest producer and consumer of such devices, the report said.

China has seen an increasing number of high-tech companies turn



Visitors check out 3D-printed medical devices during an expo in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, in May. CHEN GUANYAN / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

to these cutting-edge technologies in recent years.

Wedo-Bio, a medical device manufacturer based in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, said recently that its 3D-printed porous titanium cage — WedoCage™ — has achieved approval from the National Medical Products Administration.

With the approval, its 3D-printed cage can now be used for the treatment of degenerative spinal diseases, such as herniated discs, and is the first of its kind in the nation approved by the NMPA.

The company said its products are able to perform better than polyether ether ketone, or PEEK, cages, which are commonly used as a treatment for degenerative spinal diseases. The WedoCage™ recorded a fusion rate of 97.10 percent in the six-month postoperative tracking, which was higher than that of the PEEK cage — 85.29 percent.

"The approval of this product indicates a significant step forward in the development of additive man-



Wedo-Bio's 3D-printed porous titanium cages. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

ufacturing for medical devices, from single materials to composite materials, and from biologically inert materials to biologically active materials," said Wu Suhua, general manager of Wedo-Bio.

Since its establishment in 2017, Wedo-Bio has been ramping up efforts on key medical projects, and established cooperation with top institutes nationwide to help improve the nation's industry chains in related fields, Wu said, adding that a number of breakthroughs have been achieved in

fields including bio-modification and medical additive manufacturing polymer composites research and development.

In the future, Wedo-Bio will continue technological innovation, promote the application of its sci-tech achievements, and seek new safer and more accurate and efficient solutions for patients, Wu said.

China has huge potential for applying 3D printing in orthopedics treatments, which is pending further R&D efforts of domestic enterprises and researchers, Liu Zhongjun, director of the Department of Orthopedics at Peking University Third Hospital, was quoted as saying by Guangming Daily.

More close cooperation between the two sides will boost the nation's independent innovation progress and expand the current product category, which will benefit more patients so that more high-quality cost-effective domestic products can be applied as choices for patients, Liu said.

## Nation's ODI further rises in Jan-Aug

Investment in BRI economies grows 22.5% to 140b yuan in reporting period

By ZHU WENQIAN  
and ZHONG NAN



We (China and the EU) have identified several promising areas for collaboration, including the green economy, digitalization ..."

Wu Hongbo, special representative of the Chinese government on European affairs

China's outbound direct investment has continued to grow in the first eight months of this year, especially in economies involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, the Ministry of Commerce said on Thursday.

From January to August, China's outbound non-financial direct investment reached 585.61 billion yuan (\$80.17 billion), up 18.8 percent year-on-year. In particular, Chinese companies' non-financial direct investment in the countries and regions involved in the BRI achieved 140.37 billion yuan, up 22.5 percent on a yearly basis, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Meanwhile, during the eight months, turnover of China's foreign contracted projects reached 648.62 billion yuan, up 6.1 percent year-on-year. The value of China's newly signed contracts in foreign countries reached 863.34 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 2 percent.

The turnover of China's foreign contracted projects in the economies involved in the BRI reached 529.52 billion yuan, up 4.8 percent year-on-year. The value of China's newly signed contracts in BRI economies achieved 725.35 billion yuan, up 5.6 percent year-on-year, the ministry said.

Shenzhen CLOU Electronics Co Ltd, a subsidiary of Chinese home appliance maker Midea Group and a player in the global energy storage market, announced earlier this month that it established a company in the United States to strengthen its business in the North American market and further consolidate its industry position globally.

"Midea Group has strong confidence in the green energy sector. We will leverage our expertise in energy storage to dive deep into the green energy market. The establishment of the new company in the US will enable us to further penetrate the global market, including North America," said Fu Yongjun, vice-president of Shunde, Guangdong province-based Midea Group.

Additionally, the 10th China-European Union High-level Economic and Trade Dialogue will be held in Beijing on Monday and Chinese Vice-Premier He Lifeng will co-chair the meeting with

European Commissioner for Trade Valdis Dombrovskis, said He Yadong, a spokesperson of the ministry during a news conference in Beijing on Thursday.

Speaking at a forum hosted by the Center for China and Globalization in Beijing on Thursday, Wu Hongbo, special representative of the Chinese government on European affairs, noted that both China and Europe have substantial untapped potential for cooperation.

"We have identified several promising areas for collaboration, including the green economy, digitalization, artificial intelligence and high-end manufacturing," Wu said.

"As the EU is a strong advocate of open economies and a staunch supporter of green development, fair and equitable international competition should act as a catalyst for its green development and transformation," he said.

Wu added that by replacing confrontation with cooperation, both China and the EU can enhance their ability to prevent and resolve risks while contributing to global economic development.

On another front, with the upcoming Mid-Autumn Festival and National Day holiday, a traditional peak period of consumption in China, the Ministry of Commerce is organizing a group of activities to help boost domestic spending.

The ministry will also help promote the introduction of a batch of policies and measures to support the aftermarket of cars to further push the accelerated consumption recovery in China.

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## Machinery makers shift focus to overseas markets

By LIU YUKUN  
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Major machinery manufacturer Guangxi Liugong Group plans to further boost its overseas business to offset the domestic industry downturn, targeting a 50 percent share from the current 43 percent within three to five years.

Senior Vice-President Luo Guobing said: "Excavators are a major product for us and we are expanding our footprint in multiple regions with various product lines. Currently, we have more than 30 overseas subsidiaries selling products to over 170 countries and regions."

According to Liugong's half-year financial report, the company's net profit in the first six months stood at 614 million yuan (\$84.1 million), a 28 percent year-on-year increase. Its revenue grew 9.22 percent to over 15 billion yuan, among which 6.49 billion yuan was from overseas business, up 57.64 percent year-on-year.

The company said that the prices and profit margins of products sold to overseas markets tend to be higher than those in the domestic market. Electric products, such as electricity-powered excavators, are also performing well in overseas sales. It said a surge in overseas business performance has offset the domestic industry downturn and contributed to the company's overall growth.

"In the past two years, the improvement of China's supply chain has ensured the timely delivery of our goods despite COVID-19 challenges, making it a favorable growth opportunity in the overseas market. Liugong has seized the opportunity for rapid development," Luo said.

Expanding overseas business has become the choice for many machinery engineering companies to discover new growth points amid the downturn in the domestic industry, experts said.

According to the China Machinery Industry Federation, in the first half, the construction machinery industry saw a decline in sales of excavators and loaders by 24 percent and 13.3 percent year-on-year, respectively, due to sluggish construction of real estate and cyclical factors.

Last year, the China Construction Machinery Association's statistics on China's 26 major excavator manufacturers showed that a total of 261,346 excavators were sold, a nearly 24 percent year-on-year decrease. Among them, domestic market sales were 151,889 units, a 44.6 percent year-on-year decrease, marking the lowest point since 2018.

In this context, many companies are choosing to focus on overseas markets to offset the decline in domestic demand. According to the CCMA, in 2020 and 2021, excavator exports grew by 31 percent and 97 percent, respectively. Despite a high base, in 2022, excavator exports saw

a 60 percent growth to 109,457 units. The proportion of exports to total sales doubled from 20 percent in 2021 to nearly 42 percent last year.

In the first eight months of this year, exports reached 72,717 units, a 4.42 percent year-on-year increase from a high basis point while domestic excavator sales reached 61,812 units, a 43.5 percent year-on-year decrease, said the CCMA.

According to Zhesang Securities, recent policy incentives in the real estate sector will benefit downstream demand for construction machinery, with domestic demand gradually picking up.

Wen Wu, a senior vice-president of Liugong, said: "Even with a slight increase in demand, the current amount of stock of large machinery will create a lag of time in fulfilling actual demand. We remain optimistic about the future but should not expect rapid improvements in the short term."



## FIGHTING AGAINST DESERTIFICATION

Public Interest AD: 037  
LI MIN, MA XUEJING  
CHINA DAILY

## BUSINESSFOCUS

## LNG deals ramp up amid green transition

SOEs seal long-term contracts for key fuel, ensuring supply despite volatile market

By ZHENG XIN  
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China has been stepping up its natural gas purchases as well as facilitating construction in recent years, as part of efforts to ensure sufficient energy supply amid its green transition, said industry experts.

The country is looking to sign more deals to avoid future shortages and reduce dependence on spot deliveries, with 33 percent of global long-term liquefied natural gas volumes going to China, according to Bloomberg's calculations.

China is on track to become the top importer of LNG worldwide in 2023, as Chinese companies agree to buy more on a long-term basis than any single nation for the third straight year, data compiled by Bloomberg reveal.

An analyst said as China heavily depends on imports for natural gas, the country must diversify its imports among various countries as a cushion against geopolitical disruptions and uncertainties.

"Energy security has always been a priority for China, as the country is making efforts to avoid energy shortages while seeking to fuel economic growth," said Luo Zuoxian, head of intelligence and research at the Sinopec Economics and Development Research Institute.

China's natural gas consumption rose steadily in the first seven months of 2023 amid efforts to achieve green development, with apparent consumption of natural gas during the January-July period standing at 227.1 billion cubic meters, up 6.5 percent year-on-year, according to the National Development and Reform Commission.

In July alone, apparent consumption of natural gas increased 9.6 percent year-on-year to 32.49 bcm, data from the country's top economic regulator showed.

According to Luo, State-owned enterprises have played a key role in ensuring sufficient natural gas supply in recent years.

State-owned China National Petroleum Corp recently sealed a 27-year deal with Qatar with a stake in the latter's massive expansion project, while ENN Energy Holdings also inked a decades-spanning contract with US developer Cheniere Energy. Supplies from both contracts are slated to begin as soon as 2026.

Companies including CNOOC, Zhejiang Provincial Energy Group and Beijing Gas Group are also in search of similar deals.

As Chinese companies are signing more contracts, they are gaining more control over the global LNG supply, with China playing a key role in balancing the market, Luo said.

According to Li Ziyue, an analyst at BloombergNEF, long-term contracts, with a relatively steady price compared to the spot market, help China to secure LNG supply in an increasingly volatile gas market, with large fluctuations in spot prices.

China's efforts will, in turn, help support global export projects, while Beijing's influence on the market is also set to increase, she said.

China's LNG imports could rise to as high as 138 million metric tons by 2033, nearly double the current levels, according to Norwegian consultancy Rystad Energy.

Alexei Miller, chief executive officer of Russian gas giant Gazprom, was quoted by Reuters as saying that the company accounts for more than half the increase in China's gas imports this year, without providing figures.

The Chinese gas market is growing. China's gas imports increased over the first eight months of this year and more than half of the increase in the



**Above:** An employee guides a liquefied natural gas carrier arriving at a receiving station in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, on Sept 7. MAO SIQIAN / XINHUA

**Below:** An LNG carrier receives a water cannon salute upon reaching a gas facility in Shenzhen on Sept 7. WANG XIAOKE / FOR CHINA DAILY

supplies imported to the Chinese market was provided by Gazprom, he said.

Russia supplies gas to China via the Power of Siberia pipeline. Exports through the route reached 15 bcm last year, with a planned rise to 22 bcm in 2023, according to the company.

Experts predict that China's natural gas consumption will peak before 2035 and account for 10 percent of energy consumption by 2060, primarily used for power generation and peak load regulation.

China's natural gas consumption is expected to exceed 600 bcm around

2035, constituting 15 percent of the primary energy consumption, said Huang Weihe, an academician at the Chinese Academy of Engineering.

According to Huang, China will focus on power generation and industrial fuels before 2040 for the development of natural gas, to facilitate the transformation and upgrading of industrial and energy structures.

"The ongoing urbanization process in China is among the primary drivers behind the sustained growth in urban natural gas consumption," he said.

"As China's urbanization accelerates, the urban population continues to

expand, leading to an increase in the number of gas consumers, which rose to approximately 413 million by 2020, a growth rate of nearly 45 percent compared with 2013."

By reducing dependence on fossil fuels, increasing the share of nonfossil energy sources and promoting the development and application of natural gas, China can achieve a transformation and upgrade of its energy structure. This will help lower carbon emissions, drive sustainable development, and provide a stable and reliable energy supply for economic growth, he said.



## China-Central Asia pipeline fosters shared future

URUMQI/ASHGABAT — Modiarov Behzod woke up at 6 am, refreshed and geared up for yet another day of work deep in the desert.

The August sun had already begun to shine brightly and the azure-blue sky was gradually clearing up after the sandy conditions of the previous night had dissipated.

Braving heatwaves, Behzod, an operator in a natural gas field, and his colleagues headed to their workstation in the vast Karakum Desert, situated in the Central Asian country of Turkmenistan, renowned for holding the world's fourth-largest natural gas reserves.

#### Central Asia to China flow

Behzod hails from Turkmenistan and pursued his university education in China. After completing his studies, he returned to his homeland to pursue a career in the natural gas industry with China National Petroleum Corp's Amu Darya River gas project, CNPC's largest overseas natural gas project with a peak production capacity of 41 million cubic meters per day.

The process of gas networks and their flow is highly intricate. Freshly extracted gas from over 100 wells scattered across the desert is channeled through gathering stations before being transported to the processing plant for a series of essential

procedures, including desulfurization, decarbonization, dehydration and de-hydrocarbonation.

After thirty minutes, the gas reaches the border area between Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan 10 kilometers away and merges into the China-Central Asia natural gas pipeline, jointly operated by CNPC and its local partners.

Starting from the first compressor station, the natural gas in the pipeline will travel nearly 2,000 km eastward over the next 84 hours, traversing wild deserts and grasslands, reaching the Chinese border city of Horgos in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region.

"There are four gas sources for the pipeline network. The two main gas sources are from Turkmenistan, accounting for three-quarters of the total intake. In addition, there are gas sources in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan," said Zuo Dong, director of the Shymkent office of the China-Kazakhstan natural gas pipeline joint venture of Sino-Pipeline International Co, adding that the pipeline network has greatly boosted the energy infrastructure interconnection between China and Central Asian countries.

#### New Silk Road of Energy

On Dec 14, 2009, the heads of state of China, Turkmenistan,

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan jointly inaugurated the China-Central Asia natural gas pipeline. Since a part of the pipeline network runs parallel to the ancient Silk Road, it has been deemed the "New Silk Road of Energy".

In Horgos, the gas is compressed again before it is conveyed further inland. Each day, up to 160 mcm of gas can be processed here. To put it simply, 300 cubic meters of gas, enough to meet the needs of a household of three for a year, flow through Horgos in the blink of an eye.

From Horgos, the gas from Central Asia links up with China's West-to-East Gas Pipeline, which transmits the gas further to various Chinese regions, including Shanghai, Fuzhou in Fujian province and Hong Kong.

Data showed that in 2022, Horgos Station delivered about 43 billion cubic meters of natural gas via the pipeline, accounting for 11.8 percent of China's consumption in the same year.

Fu Mingfu, deputy general manager of West Pipeline Co under China Oil & Gas Pipeline Network Corp, said that as of now, more than 440 bcm of natural gas from Central Asia have been delivered, benefiting nearly 500 million people across China.

Through cooperation in the natu-

ral gas sector with China, Central Asian countries are also integrated into the huge energy market. In Turkmenistan, Dec 14 has been designated as the Day of Oil and Gas Industry Workers, as this date marks the official inauguration of the pipeline.

"In Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, we have created more than 11,000 temporary positions and provided over 1,600 long-term jobs. Over the 30-year operational span of the pipeline, it is also expected to generate tens of billions of dollars in tax revenue," said Meng Xiangdong, executive director of Sino-Pipeline International Co.

Currently, the China-Central Asia natural gas pipeline network has three lines in operation, namely Line A, B and C, while Line D is under construction.

During the China-Central Asia Summit held in May this year, China proposed to forge a China-Central Asia energy development partnership, accelerate the construction of Line D of the natural gas pipeline, increase oil and gas trade, develop energy cooperation across the industrial chain, boost cooperation in new energy and enhance the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

#### Stronger human bonds

The New Silk Road of Energy



Modiarov Behzod, an energy sector operator, works at a natural gas field operated by China National Petroleum Corp in Turkmenistan in August. XINHUA

holds greater significance than just an energy transmission line. Recently, Chen Kuan's twin boys celebrated their 5th birthday. The children are named Yi Dai and Yi Lu, meaning "One Belt" and "One Road", respectively.

Chen is an employee of the China-Uzbekistan natural gas pipeline joint venture company. He worked as a cook for the JV, where fate intervened, bringing him together with Agafya, who was an employee at a gas compressor station. This twist of fate led to their deep and enduring love story.

In Chen's words, the pipeline not only connected China and Central Asian countries through an energy supply system, but also gave him the chance to meet his wife.

"The friendship between China and the people of the countries along the route is growing ever stronger, and the road to happiness in the future will only extend longer," said Kairat Ospankulov, deputy general manager in charge of construction for the China-Kazakhstan natural gas pipeline JV.

XINHUA

## COMMENT

## Editorials

## US' attacks on Chinese tech development a double-edged sword that harms itself

In his remarks at the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday, US President Joe Biden once again stressed that the United States seeks to responsibly manage the competition with China so "it does not tip into conflict" and claimed that it pursues "de-risking, not decoupling with China".

Yet the same day, US Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo told a US House of Representatives hearing that she was "upset" by news of the launch of Huawei's Mate 60 Pro during her visit to China last month. "The only good news, if there is any, is we don't have any evidence that they can manufacture 7-nanometer (chips) at scale," she said. Which clearly exposes the zero-sum mentality that prevails in Washington.

When China adopted its reform and opening-up policy in 1978, the US was a main source of knowledge and experiences that it learned from. Likewise, it was by absorbing talent and ideas from all over the world that the US turned itself into the leading global powerhouse for the development of technologies after World War II. Now, half a century later, the US is striving to prevent China doing the same. That means that the US will continue sanctioning China by targeting its high-tech sector.

Yet by doing so, the US is stymieing not just China's tech development but also its own. By seeking to shut its door to China, the US is damaging the profitability of its tech companies, thus constraining their input into R&D. This will in

turn be a drag on the US' future tech leadership.

The Boston Consulting Group has estimated that US companies could lose 18 percentage points of global share and 37 percent of their revenues if the US completely bans semiconductor companies from selling to Chinese customers, effectively causing a technology decoupling from China.

The Chinese market for semiconductor tools is enormous, and US companies such as Applied Materials and Lam Research, benefit greatly from selling to this market. As an article in Forbes pointed out last year, it is more than just the impact on their bottom lines, as many in Washington may proclaim. Selling to the Chinese market gives them increased scale of efficiencies and the profits necessary to invest in future technologies.

Referring to the Vietnam War in his speech on Tuesday, Biden said that with careful effort, adversaries can become partners, overwhelming challenges can be resolved and deep wounds can heal. That is an attitude that the US should adopt in relation to China, rather than clinging to its current confrontational and coercive approach.

It should recognize the common hopes that bind all humanity — hopes for peace, a healthy environment and a better life are dependent on cooperation and collaboration, in technology as well as other areas — and choose to work with China "to bend the arc of history" for the common good of all peoples around the world.

## Strategic autonomy key to good trilateral ties

Following Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's meeting with former Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi in Jakarta in mid-July, and ROK President Yoon Suk-yeol expressing on multiple occasions Seoul's willingness to help resume the China-ROK-Japan meeting mechanism, there has been speculation that the vice-ministerial-level meetings of the three countries will be resumed. Reports have now emerged suggesting that a meeting is due to be held in Seoul on Tuesday.

The meeting mechanism was initiated in 2007 and was suspended because of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019. An important reason why it has not been resumed till now is the divisive efforts of the United States to unite its anti-China front in East Asia by brokering a "reconciliation" between the Fumio Kishida government of Japan and the Yoon Suk-yeol government of the Republic of Korea.

Although both Seoul and Tokyo have expressed their respective willingness to push for the resumption of the trilateral communication mechanism, both the ROK and Japan are part of the US' chip alliance, as well as regional security alliance network, both of which target China.

US President Joe Biden hosted Kishida and Yoon at Camp David in Maryland last month, effectively consolidating the anti-China triad in East Asia. So whether the mooted Tuesday gathering in the ROK capital can bear any fruit if it does take place will largely depend on the extent to which Seoul and Tokyo can shun the influence of the US.

The meeting, should it materialize, will be held

at a time when there has been a slight thaw in what were rapidly freezing relations between China and the US after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Beijing in June. But it must be pointed out that the US has never ceased tightening its tech export controls targeting China nor its provocative military moves in the Asia-Pacific. So what substantial progress can be expected in relations between China and its two neighbors that are string-tied to Washington is open to conjecture.

Their one-sided pro-US diplomacy recently earned Kishida and Yoon the Profile in Courage Award from the US. That speaks volumes of the fact that even Washington knows that their attempts to make the most robust world growth engine a sacrificial lamb on the altar of US hegemony also face strong opposition and resistance from the public in Japan and the ROK.

As China-ROK-Japan trilateral ties stand at a crossroad, the latter two should exercise their strategic autonomy for real to honor their commitment to putting the relations back on the right track of healthy development.

China-ROK-Japan relations have to press forward, or they will slide backward. Beijing maintains continuity and stability in its policy of good-neighborliness and friendship toward both Japan and the ROK. Tokyo and Seoul need to show more foresight and stop portraying China as the greatest strategic challenge and hyping up the fabricated "China threat".

Being cooperative partners is in the best interest of all the three countries and the region at large.

## An indispensable member of Global South

It is not difficult to understand that the Global South refers to developing and least-developed countries.

Yet with the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly debating about global development, which countries belong to the Global South has become an issue. This is because Washington has been trying to exclude China from the ranks of developing countries in a bid to undermine China's leadership role of the Global South.

However, despite the fact that China is the world's second-largest economy, its per capita GDP was \$12,741 in 2022, only one-fifth that of developed countries, and just one-sixth that of the US. China's per capita national income ranked 68th in the world in 2021. This indicates clearly that China is still a developing country, and, as such, is a member of the Global South.

Given what China has been doing to help its fellow developing countries with their development — offering aid to more than 160 countries for common development and getting more than 150 countries involved in its Belt and Road Initiative — it is performing its duties and obligations as a major developing country.

Washington, however, has been trying to estrange China from its fellow developing countries by challenging China's status as a developing nation. When

India, which has become a principal player in Washington's "Indo-Pacific" strategy, convened the Voice of Global South Summit in January this year on the concerns, interests and priorities of developing countries, some 120 countries were invited. China was not.

China was also excluded from the G7 Summit, which was held in May in Japan, when the meeting's agenda included strengthening ties with the Global South. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who has enthusiastically embraced Washington's strategy to contain China, invited the leaders of Brazil, Comoros, Cook Islands, India, Indonesia and Vietnam to attend as representatives of developing countries.

What Washington has been doing will hardly pull the wool over the eyes of most developing countries about the irreplaceable role China has been playing in defending the interests and rights of developing countries.

That the recently-concluded Summit of the Group of 77 and China in Havana adopted a declaration calling for the building of a global community with a shared future, a concept China has put forward, speaks volumes about how important a member of the Global South China is.

Excluding China from the global agenda on the development of developing countries is an attempt by the US-led West to disunite the developing world for the interest of the developed world.

Jiu Zhou



## Opinion Line

## Naysayers understate nation's ability and space to boost economic growth

Some Western politicians, institutions and media recently joined hands to magnify short-term fluctuations in China's economy, playing up the "peaking" of the Chinese economy and "the end of the Chinese miracle". Such voices have appeared in the past, too, but the Chinese economy always managed to overcome the headwinds and it has sailed forward to become the world's second-largest economy.

The recovery of the world economy remains sluggish, and the economies of all countries are facing considerable challenges. China's economic recovery has experienced certain difficulties and challenges since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, but China has never avoided talking about the problems. Instead, it has taken initiatives to address them. From the cumulative data of the first eight months, the main macro indicators of China's economy are still within a reasonable range, and its

momentum of stability and improvements has been consolidated. Its dynamism for high-quality and sustained economic growth is becoming ever more evident.

Innovation endows China's economy with a driving force for sustained growth. In recent years, China's innovation and green development momentum has kept rising, making it a world leader in many important areas. Opening-up gives China's economy an endless vitality for sustained growth. At a time when economic globalization is encountering adverse currents, China has signed 21 free trade agreements with other countries and regions, deployed and built 21 pilot free trade zones and the Hainan Free Trade Port, and signed more than 200 documents on Belt and Road cooperation with 152 countries and 32 international organizations.

China-Europe freight trains have reached more than 200 cities in 25

European countries. The potential of its vast market is attracting more and more international investors to seek opportunities in China.

Reform has increased the resilience of China's economy to deal with risks. The Chinese government has continuously enriched and improved its policy toolbox, strengthening macro-control to maintain stable economic operation and addressing development problems by deepening reform, expanding opening-up and promoting innovation.

China continues to reform, open up and innovate will bring more opportunities to the world, and the country that continuously promotes high-quality development will continue to attract high-quality factor resources. Those who truly understand the history and logic of China's economic development will never underestimate its ability to steer the economy.

— XINHUA NEWS AGENCY

## Australia more rational about relations

Australian Foreign Minister Penelope Wong recently told a CNN journalist what she expected in the world around Australia. "A region and a global order in which not a country dominates and not a country is dominated," she said. The journalist tried to lead the conversation astray by saying China was "dominating" the region, but Wong shot back saying, "I wouldn't use the language".

That short video went viral on domestic social networking sites. Australia knows that a neutral policy rather than taking sides best serves its interests. China knows that and so does the US, but certain Western

journalists seem not to know this fact that is more than obvious.

Wong made the remarks not because she has Chinese Malaysian blood, but because she holds a post where she needs to serve national interests. Australia has suffered too much because of the earlier Scott Morrison administration's policy of leaning overwhelmingly on the US for support. So much so that it decided to spend over 200 billion Australian dollars (\$128.16 billion) in the coming 30 years, by rescinding a submarine-building contract it had signed with France, in the process offending it.

It was not until Anthony Albanese

became prime minister that Australia shifted toward a more practical diplomatic strategy. The Australians have once again realized where their true national interests lie and it will not be that easy for Western politicians to tie the continent to their boat again.

Neither can a few reporters of certain Western media outlets upset things. However hard they try to mislead Australian leaders in their interviews, such tactics cannot trick the latter into making decisions at the cost of their national interests. Such tricks only make their doers laughed at.

— ZHANG ZHOXIANG, CHINA DAILY

## What They Say

## Biden administration up to its tricks in Central Asia

The C5+1 summit US President Joe Biden hosted on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Tuesday, the first of its kind, indicates Washington is now eyeing Central Asia in an effort to put further pressure on China and Russia.

The Tuesday summit vividly shows the US' slight to the five countries in the region — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Unlike the conventional arrangement of multilateral meetings that often choose round tables to embody the equality of all sides, Biden and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken occupied the two seats in the center of an arc table with the leaders of the five countries seated on the two wings. As such, the address Biden made to the media before the summit looked more like a lecture and the support he vowed the US will give these Central Asian countries sounded like condescending gifts.

Although Biden stressed the US would like to extend its counterterrorism funding to the region and strengthen economic connectivity with it, as well as mineral and energy cooperation, all know that these are only a cover for the US efforts to drive wedges between the region and Russia and China.

The geopolitical importance of the US of the landlocked region that lies in the center of the Eurasian continent and borders both Russia and China cannot be overstated. Since both Russia and China's defense and economic centers of gravity are far from the region, which is nevertheless of strategic importance in energy and logistics to them, Washington views Central Asia as an ideal launchpad for its efforts to constrain China and Russia.

However, as former republics of the Soviet Union as well as a long-term target zone of the US' color revolution schemes, with the one in Kazakhstan in 2022 as the latest, all

the five countries in the region are well aware that Washington's sudden charm offensive stems from the mounting difficulties it faces in continuously dragging out the Ukraine crisis and implementing its China containment strategy, rather than any earnest desire to help them pursue common development.

Over the past decade, with the worsening of Russia-US ties and Sino-US ties, Washington has never stopped trying to take advantage of all internal contradictions among the five countries to try and cultivate its own proxies and puppet regimes in the region. The region has also been suffering from the spillover effects of the US' invasion of and failed "democracy experiment" in their neighbor, Afghanistan.

The summit has only served to show the US' long-term ignorance of Central Asia's development needs and its self-serving attempt to harness them to its geopolitical aims.

— LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

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## COMMENT

Chung Jae-hung

## ROK should work to improve ties with China

The Russia-Ukraine conflict, apart from creating more challenges for the world, seems to have signaled the end of the unipolar global order centered on the United States and the emergence of a new international order marked by intensifying strategic competition between the US and China, which prompts strengthening of security and economic cooperation between China and Russia.

The US subprime crisis that caused the 2008 global financial crisis, the Chinese economy overtaking the Japanese economy in 2010, the Crimea incident in 2014, the US launching a trade war against China, and Russia's warning to NATO in 2018 to stop expanding eastward, and the refusal of NATO to do so, leading to the Ukraine crisis are some of the important developments that point to the gradual decline of the US-led West.

NATO's continued eastward expansion and the US' efforts to build a trilateral alliance with Japan and the Republic of Korea reflect the geopolitical changes. Western countries insist on maintaining the West-centric liberal world order based on the international rules set by the US-led West. But many countries, especially the emerging market and developing countries, want to reform the West-led world order, not least because of the tendency of the US to use its self-set rules to interfere in the internal affairs of, and use the dollar as a weapon against, other countries.

## World order should be equitable and fair

The reform of the world order is something that can no longer be avoided. In particular, countries in Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East, South Asia and Africa hope to de-dollarize the global economy and end the US' hegemony. They have realized the need to establish a new international economic and security community marked by cooperation and shared development.

In fact, President Xi Jinping has proposed the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative to unite the world in the pursuit of shared development, safeguard national security and build a global civilization for the good of the people across the world.

On May 18, the leaders of five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and China met in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, at the first China-Central Asia Summit to discuss ways to reform the international order in a way that it becomes equitable, more open and representative. And on May 25, at the second Eurasian Economic Forum of the Eurasian Economic Union, China and Russia declared that they are members of the larger Eurasian family and can never be separated. The two sides also said they respect each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and fully understand the need to

better safeguard national security and conduct free trade and promote the Belt and Road Initiative.

This shows the efforts to build a community with a shared future in Eurasia based on free trade and people-to-people exchanges have intensified, and countries in the region are taking measures to nullify the West's baseless allegations of human rights abuses, especially those against China and Russia.

Irrespective of the US-led West's machinations, the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, to be held next month, will accelerate the shaping of a representative and open world order based on peace, development, cooperation and coexistence.

## Time to reflect on US dollar hegemony

After the Russia-Ukraine conflict broke out, many countries recognized that the major contradictions and conflicts around the world were the result of the struggles between developing and developed worlds, and the outcome of the US' desperation to maintain its global hegemony. The developing countries have intensified their efforts to give shape to a more open, fair and representative world order also because they have realized the drawbacks of using the US dollar as the default international currency are immense.

Accordingly, BRICS countries, including China and Russia, hope to introduce a new "currency" to settle intra-BRICS trade rather than dollar payments; other BRICS countries, too, are promoting to use their own currencies to conduct trade. In terms of the use of the dollar, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, who visited China in April, had asked "why all countries have to base their trade on the dollar," and called to end the situation where the dollar dominates world trade.

The developing countries envisage building a more equitable, fair and open global financial system that is not dependent on the US dollar. And the Belt and Road Initiative and Global Development Initiative can help promote bilateral trade in local currencies.

## Small circles pose big threats to region

Amid all this, the leaders of the ROK, the US and Japan gathered at Camp David, Maryland, on Aug 18 to build a so-called rules-based liberal international order and make efforts to "maintain peace and stability" in the Taiwan Strait.

The attempt of the troika to interfere in cross-strait affairs is open provocation to Beijing. The Taiwan question is an internal matter of China, and any attempt to muddy the Strait's water is interference in China's internal affairs. The leaders of the US, the

ROK and Japan also said they would monitor the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's activities, especially its nuclear and missile programs.

The US has been trying to build anti-China alliances or cliques. The Quad (comprising the US, Japan, India and Australia) and AUKUS (a security alliance among Australia, the United Kingdom and the US) are two such US cliques. Washington has also been making efforts to get NATO involved in the Ukraine crisis, by helping make Ukraine a European Union member and, by default, a NATO member state, in order to weaken Russia as well as to extend the transatlantic military alliance to the Asia-Pacific to contain China.

In the NATO summit in Madrid in 2022, which the ROK and Japan attended as the transatlantic military alliance's "Indo-Pacific" partners, the leaders of the US, Japan and the ROK emphasized the importance of military solidarity and cooperation among the three countries and the need to build a new world order centered on "G12", that is, the G7 economies (the US, Japan, Germany, the UK, France, Italy and Canada) plus Australia, New Zealand, the ROK and NATO and the EU.

As a matter of fact, the ROK had proposed an "Asia-Pacific Treaty Organization" way back in 1968 with the goal of establishing a so-called Asian version of NATO. The idea, it seems, has reemerged and gained

strength in the wake of the Ukraine crisis.

In 1968, the ROK and Japan had argued that in order to counter the growing threats from the Soviet Union and China, it was necessary to establish an Asian multilateral security organization. The "APTO plan" was not realized due to the change in US-China relations. Now that the US-led NATO has once again identified China as a regional threat, it has become desperate to expand to the Asia-Pacific region.

The initial ROK-US-Japan policy was to establish a joint early warning system against the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs and conduct regular military exercises to deter the country from carrying out any nuclear or missile tests. But the formation of the Quad and AUKUS in recent years shows the US is more focused on containing China than taking preemptive or countermeasures against the DPRK.

## Korean Peninsula may face difficult situation

Seoul-Beijing relations face serious challenges, with many international observers saying quite a few Asia-Pacific countries might join the US-led alliance to "safeguard their national security" even at the cost of sacrificing their economic interests, making the popular saying, "US-for-security, China-for-economy", meaningless. The fear is that the Korean Peninsula, with its unique geopolitical and economic characteristics, may find itself in a very complex and difficult situation.

The ROK and the US are allies and the former is an important partner in Washington's "Indo-Pacific strategy". The ROK believes that maintaining friendly relations with the US is necessary to maintain peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula. But given the geopolitical and economic complexities, the ROK in the past has tried to maintain a balance between its relations with the US and China. Currently, however, more inclined to the US.

On the other hand, the Ukraine crisis and the intensifying Sino-US competition have increased uncertainties for the Korean Peninsula and consolidated the strategic economic and security cooperation between China and Russia. But China has also been trying to improve relations with the US, Japan and the ROK while strongly opposing the NATO's eastward expansion and the polarity in the Northeast Asia and helping build an inclusive multilateral world order.

Both the ROK and China know the formation of a multipolar world order is inevitable. They are also striving to build friendly bilateral relations that would facilitate the promotion of peace and prosperity in the region. To bring this idea to fruition, however, they need new policy alternatives and must maintain honest and active communication.

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JIN DING / CHINA DAILY

## Development proved to be the best way to protect human rights

**Editor's note:** At the China-Europe Seminar on Human Rights in Rome on Sept 20, experts shared their views on the human rights development. Excerpts of some experts' essays follow:

## Mutual respect essential to uphold human rights cause

Each nation has evolved, often over centuries, with its own history, institutions, traditions, ways of living and philosophy. Such evolution has not taken place in a vacuum but through a process of exchange and learning from other parts of the world. Yet each nation has developed its own characteristics.

Mutual learning has over the centuries enabled societies to develop and flourish. Despite that, the receiving societies retained their own characteristics, with innovation and integration often creating new achievements but without one society being dominated by the other.

The outcomes have been harsh in cases where societies lacked or didn't have mutual respect. The enslavement of the African peoples, the Holocaust, the Opium Wars all display one commonality: an aggressive lack of respect based on an assumption of a superiority of one set of people over others. In contrast, exchanges and learning based on the recognition of the worth of the other has produced enduring benefits.

In discussions on human rights and different societies adopting different approaches, there are no discernible benefits from confrontation. Turning a discussion into an argument to prove one approach is superior to the others goes against the whole idea of human rights.

A discussion based on mutual respect allows all parties to understand why different societies adopted different approaches to human rights. The difference in the governance of human affairs across countries suggests one society's policy is unlikely to apply to another, especially if the latter has different priorities, traditions, history and culture. The purpose of discussion should be to learn from one another, to share experiences and to understand one another, not to

promote division between peoples.

*Neil Davidson, Lord Davidson of Glen Clova KC*

## Partnership ensures right to development

A true global partnership necessitates replacing charity with some form of deliberate international governance. A global partnership to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals would benefit the peoples of all countries, both rich and poor.

There is considerable agreement on the necessity of structural reforms to initiate inclusive global governance and disrupt the cabal of governments and business interests that have largely ruled the world since 1945. The locus of power must be returned to a strengthened United Nations, ultimately with an elected General Assembly with power to legislate in the interest of "we the people", not "we the peoples".

The Bretton Woods organizations — the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization — need reform since the existing voting pattern perpetuates historical power imbalances. Yet few expect substantive reform to be accomplished soon, because the purpose of the reform is to reduce the influence of the world's most powerful countries that have framed, and benefited most from global governance for more than 75 years.

A global development that might make institutional change more feasible is the rise of China. Western neo-realists see China's growing influence raising the prospect of cold or hot wars. However, taken at face value, something neo-realists would never do, China's remarks on development and global governance chime well. In fact, the changes suggested by China are necessary for the realization of the SDGs by 2030.

On development, China joins many in rec-

ognizing that it is important to resolve the problem of unbalanced and inadequate development, and make development more balanced, coordinated and inclusive. It acknowledges the need to strengthen people's capacity for development and to create a development paradigm where its outcome benefits every person in every country more directly and fairly. And on global governance, China prioritizes peaceful development and the welfare of humanity and speaks to solidarity and cooperation with people across the world and to the need to uphold equity and justice globally.

It is resolutely opposed to hegemony and power politics and calls for more inclusive global governance, more effective multilateral mechanisms, and more active regional cooperation. It emphasizes that to build a community with a shared future for mankind is not to replace one system or civilization with another. Instead, it is about countries with different social systems, ideologies, histories, cultures and levels of development coming together for shared interests, shared rights and shared responsibilities in global affairs, and creating the greatest synergy for building a better world.

*Robert Walker, associate fellow and emeritus professor at the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford, and professor of social policy and development at Beijing Normal University*

## Digital development can benefit the world

China has proposed a new way to promote the right to digital development through technological development. For capacity building, China puts emphasis on technological empowerment rather than output. It believes that even the digitally least-developed countries should enjoy the

right to equitable digital development.

For instance, at the meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2021, President Xi Jinping announced that China will help African countries in implementing 10 digital economy projects, build a China-Africa satellite remote sensing application cooperation center, and support the construction of China-Africa joint research institutes, and innovation-oriented scientific and technological cooperation centers.

The Chinese government and digital technology companies have been working together to ensure all the countries enjoy the right to digital development, promote the concept of inclusive digital society, and bring digital dividends to all.

Chinese high-tech companies are using digital technology to promote digital education, build a digital environment, and develop digital healthcare systems. Huawei alone has helped 18 countries and 22 nature reserves to improve resource management and biodiversity conservation, and promote digital education in many countries.

Thanks to such efforts, many developing countries can avail of quality healthcare, education and environmental resources, and have already made outstanding contributions to promoting the right to digital development.

*Wang Xigen, dean of the Law School of Huazhong University of Science and Technology; and Duan Yun, a PhD candidate at the Law School of Huazhong University of Science and Technology*

## China's contributions to global human rights

The most visible and large-scale global human rights problems of our time are poverty and conflict. Only through sincere communication and in-depth exchanges in

the field of human rights can we protect and promote human rights.

China has been working with other countries to help realize the SDGs worldwide. China eradicated extreme poverty at the end of 2020, achieving a SDG goal 10 years ahead of the United Nations' schedule.

Drawing on its own experience in poverty eradication, China has been helping other developing countries to eradicate poverty through, among other things, funds, project cooperation and technology diffusion. As a matter of fact, the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund was established in 2016 after China pledged to donate \$200 million to the fund; and the trust fund has helped launch more than 40 projects covering economic, social and environmental fields.

Also, China has been taking targeted climate actions, and making rigorous efforts to meet the Paris Agreement targets by reducing carbon emissions, shifting to clean energy, and helping other developing countries to meet their respective climate targets.

Since peace is a prerequisite for development, China has also been working to help restore peace in several regions. For example, it brokered a rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran, earning worldwide praise. Riyadh and Teheran have already re-established diplomatic relations, and can now focus on their respective development as well as promote the development in the entire Middle East.

These are but some of China's contributions to the global human rights cause.

*Wang Lifeng, a professor at the Human Rights Research Center, Party School of the Communist Party of China Central Committee*

*The views don't necessarily represent those of China Daily.*

## GLOBAL VIEWS



**Editor's note:** The world has undergone many changes and shocks in recent years. Enhanced dialogue between scholars from China and overseas is needed to build mutual understanding on many problems the world faces. For this purpose, the China Watch Institute of China Daily and the National Institute for Global Strategy, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, jointly present this special column: The Global Strategy Dialogue, in which experts from China and abroad will offer insightful views, analysis and fresh perspectives on long-term strategic issues of global importance.

JIN JUNDA

## Not an easy task

US will face challenges in building the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor if it keeps bringing great power competition into economic cooperation

On Sept 9 at the G20 summit, the United States, India, Saudi Arabia, the European Union and other countries announced a memorandum of understanding on working together to develop a new India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC).

Some Western media outlets have characterized this move as a strategic initiative to compete with China's Belt and Road Initiative. However, based on the currently available information, the IMEC still faces significant uncertainties in terms of resources and intergovernmental coordination. These uncertainties stem from the development cooperation model centered on the US.



The US has never hidden the anti-China motivations for its economic development initiatives. In August, President Joe Biden referred to the Belt and Road Initiative as a "debt and noose agreement" in a speech. But from China's perspective, if the IMEC translates into action rather than mere rhetoric, it could hold some positive implications for building a community with a shared future for mankind, as in a world marked by frequent global crises, weak infrastructure in multiple regions and fragile economic structures, real US engagement in the international arena could help address environmental challenges and mobilize countries such as India to participate in global governance.

The current efforts by the US, India and other countries to promote the IMEC come with several advantages. First, traditional powers such as the US and the developed European countries have

established a certain level of political cooperation and institutional presence in regions such as the Middle East. Second, the US holds a technological advantage and attractiveness in the high-tech sector. Third, the IMEC has attracted participation from strategically important regional powers such as India and Saudi Arabia, which are interested in expanding their international influence. The US and its allies may leverage these advantages to promote so-called high standards and intensify competition with China in the realm of development and technology.

However, the IMEC also faces uncertainty in several areas.

First, the continuity of the IMEC faces challenges due to the dynamics of US election politics. The upcoming presidential election in 2024 carries significant uncertainty, and President Biden does not hold a clear advantage over potential competitors such as Donald Trump, who, championing trade protectionism, announced the US' withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership in the early days of his presidency and subsequently had a relatively negative stance toward international development multilateral mechanisms, such as frequently absents himself from ASEAN summits. Even if Trump is not able to run for office, the rise of a president with a similar right-wing populist position could introduce significant changes to cooperative frameworks such as the IMEC.

Second, the high cost associated



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with the IMEC could affect its implementation. Currently, the memorandum and US public discourse do not mention the actual costs of the IMEC. US government debt has already surpassed \$32 trillion, with over \$7 trillion in debt maturing within one year, and there is a risk of a government shutdown on Oct 1. Debt pressure constrains spending by the US government in development areas.

Additionally, fiscal expenditures by the US on other issues, such as the Ukraine crisis, could also limit funding for IMEC-related infrastructure projects. Furthermore, President Biden's IMEC plan

includes many projects with a Democratic Party flavor, such as clean energy initiatives, while the Republicans currently control budgetary decision-making. The ongoing partisan battles between the two parties are creating limitations on US overseas development plans.

In theory, the US could rely on partners such as India to share the costs, but the corridor's facilitation of India's overseas trade is not evident, and the economic benefits for countries such as Saudi Arabia rely on connectivity between Arab nations and Israel, which poses significant challenges. Therefore, once countries begin to implement infra-

structure projects, the US may need to bear a substantial portion of the IMEC's costs, which could be a challenging task for the Biden administration.

Third, the US faces challenges in mobilizing other IMEC members. The Biden administration is skilled in "mini-multilateral" governance cooperation but often struggles to make substantive progress when leading large-scale international frameworks. Take the "Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity" as an example. While IPEF negotiations have progressed relatively quickly, they do not cover key areas of cooperation such as US market access, resulting in limited substantive impact, and significant uncertainty remains. Future IMEC negotiations may also encounter similar challenges, and the US must strike a balance between the negotiating progress and substantive outcomes.

The IMEC heavily relies on the coordinated efforts of key hub countries, especially nations with diverse political, cultural and interest-based demands such as Israel, India and Saudi Arabia. This poses a daunting task for the US as the framework leader. Besides, the IMEC presents policy differences with some non-member countries along its route, such as Iran, which could hinder the implementation of infrastructure projects and the spillover effects of the IMEC into neighboring regions.

In essence, frameworks such as the IMEC primarily serve the US in

promoting its high standards and consolidating its global leadership. Through these frameworks, the US aims to, on the one hand, constrain non-member countries such as China, and on the other hand, standardize and influence other members. However, there are significant differences in interests and even potential sovereignty concerns among other members, especially developing countries. Moreover, frameworks centered on the US are susceptible to US political influence, making economically cooperative efforts led by the US often difficult to sustain.

In summary, the success or failure of the IMEC hinges on the US. To realize the IMEC, the US has to not only make substantial investments but also garner broad international participation and support. This requires the US to move away from a mindset of centrism and great-power competition and instead advocate open, inclusive and diverse international development cooperation.

If the US remains trapped in a confrontational mindset against the Belt and Road Initiative, the IMEC framework is likely to struggle and may not genuinely benefit the countries along its route. However, if the US can genuinely respect the interests and demands of IMEC member countries along the route, as well as those of countries worldwide, then the IMEC and the Belt and Road Initiative can coexist and mutually promote development in a spirit of healthy competition.

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JOSEF GREGORY MAHONEY

## Incredible growth jumpstarter

BRI is one of the keys for responding to a new era of growing global challenges

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative. I spent the past month and a half in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe, conducting fieldwork in Hungary, Greece, Italy, Germany, Poland and Ukraine, with stops in the Czech Republic and Austria before heading back to Shanghai through Qatar.

This is not a travelogue. Rather, as I've moved through a Europe that is still struggling to come to terms with Brexit, the Ukraine crisis, energy security, climate change and sustainable economic growth, with



some countries being friendly to the Belt and Road Initiative, some hostile, and some in between, this is a reflection on current challenges and how we should understand the initiative as a solution and not another headwind in this period of mounting and intersecting problems.

When the Belt and Road Initiative was first proposed and its initial maps were published, it seemed fantastic and yet not unbelievable. As a global vision of real, mutual development largely devoted to building better connections within the Global South, it rang true in terms of Chinese discourses but presented the sort of bold plan of action that Beijing historically would have hesitated to mount on the world stage. Nevertheless, in terms of capacity to actually execute the plan, anyone familiar with Chinese development achievements over the course of reform and opening-up understood that China indeed had the ability to advance the initiative realistically.

In fact, while a great number of non-Chinese, many Western people greeted the initial plans with incredulity and, in some cases, fear-mongering, some Chinese themselves found the Belt and

Road Initiative unsettling — they did not understand why China was taking a greater leadership role in the world, thinking it made more sense to avoid increased risks and responsibilities, and that it was better to concentrate national resources at home.

What some critics and naysayers did not understand then, and what the Chinese leadership would better explain is that China and the rest of the world were already entering a new era. On the one hand, this included China's rise as a major power, its timely achievements of eliminating extreme poverty, suppressing corruption, controlling the COVID-19 outbreak, and establishing a moderately prosperous society with more than 400 million middle-income earners, and doing these things while simultaneously emerging as the global leader in green innovation, environmental cleanups and ecological protection.

On the other hand, it likewise included a recalcitrant Global North, including several Western or West-oriented countries but most especially the United States, clinging desperately to old paradigms that had made it difficult for developing countries to break out of debt traps and take real steps forward, while also ensuring that most emerging countries become stuck in middle income, energy and security traps. But this new era would also include, as some leading scholars, think tanks and government agencies predicted, a global failure to reverse climate change, an increase in novel disease outbreaks, growing political instability and polarization in a growing number of countries, and war.

When I was in Ukraine, I saw a country that needs China's help to mediate peace and, thereafter, help in rebuilding. The West has offered tepid assurances that it can help Ukraine rebuild, but even more tepid have been promises to join the European Union and NATO. In fact, the West cannot save Ukraine and

perhaps cannot even save itself. Indeed, the West bears considerable responsibility for the circumstances that led to the crisis, and likewise responsibility for sustaining it now, with dozens killed daily, despite an effective stalemate since late last year. In fact, almost all of the Ukrainians I interviewed, across the country and across the political and economic spectrums, knew these things to be true.

And yet, many Ukrainians remain vulnerable to disinformation, believing China's neutrality has allowed it to benefit from the conflict, for example, through increased trade with Russia. In fact, those increases are modest compared to the damage China has suffered given intense US pressures in European capitals to return to a Cold War paradigm.

When I was in Greece, I heard much about one of the Belt and Road Initiative's early successes, the Greek Port of Piraeus, but thereafter in Italy, under intense pressure from Washington, the government in Rome decided to abandon the Belt and Road Initiative. The Italian prime minister was in a pickle, forced as others increasingly are into a zero-sum game versus building a shared future for humanity. Although she counterbalanced her decision by assuring that bilateral ties with China remain strong, and perhaps they do, only those espousing US interests or xenophobia see such steps as promising.

In Poland, I saw a country and political elite mobilized by a pro-Ukraine, anti-Russian narrative, but likewise longstanding anti-German narratives that understandably remain part of Poland's national identity. Nevertheless, many people assured me, these "anti-narratives" have more to do with the politics of distraction, advanced by politicians who lack a real vision of the future and seem to believe that advancing a pro-US line is the only way to advance Poland. In fact, Polish people are not politically naive, and while not succumbing to the nega-

tive spirit of such negative rhetoric, most of those I spoke with were unable to envision the possibility of an alternative politics.

In Hungary, people told me of the country's increased economic dependence on China, particularly as its other major economic partner, Germany, has suffered significant setbacks after losing access to Russian energy; and yet, I also heard accounts of the attacks, including dog whistle racism, advanced by Hungarian liberals against Fudan University's efforts to build a campus in Budapest. Hungary remains positive toward China, but US soft power remains potent there.

In Prague, I saw Chinese by the dozens, still a major tourist draw, especially among couples seeking a romantic holiday. And yet, the Czech academics I met there spoke of the increasingly difficult political climate they faced in their universities, of an emerging cancel culture directed against those engaged in candid discussions about global affairs, and a growing lack of confidence in the future. What about China, many asked me: Is there a future for us in China?

To hear such questions in Europe while the EU and the United Kingdom find themselves increasingly drawn down Washington's dark path, and while NATO expands and Washington dreams of advancing it against China, I am reminded effectively of the answers to such questions that we've heard from the Global South, especially Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America: as the past 10 years have demonstrated, and as the Belt and Road Initiative has helped illustrate, there is no future without countries moving hand-in-hand with China. Washington's counter-proposals, such as the Build Back Better World Initiative, are known shams. Without China, there's little to no shared development, no major trading partner, no bulwark against climate change or future pandemics, no respite from US hegemony, no security



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from military and political interventions and the constant threat of eroding sovereignty.

Over the past decade, the Belt and Road Initiative has demonstrated its incredible capacity to jumpstart growth and development. Over the past 10 years, we've also seen the initiative and anything associated with China being demonized by the US and those who have decided to keep their declining fortunes and futures in lockstep with Washington. To be sure, the Belt and Road Initiative has had its ups-and-downs: not every project has been realized, and certainly challenges such as the pandemic were impossible to weather perfectly. Nevertheless, the initiative has proven itself to be one of the few and perhaps only major plan to make significant achievements in advancing human

progress across a great number of diverse countries. It remains the only credible effort capable of still achieving much more in a world that desperately needs much more. It's with this perspective that we should greet the Belt and Road Initiative's 10th anniversary, and encourage others to do the same before they're left further behind.

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## LIFE



The words of the poet Percy Shelly ring out across this ancient land, "Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!" As the Nile ebbs and flows, time has witnessed civilizations rise from sand and stone.

The passage of time has also eroded the cultural wonders of the Karnak temple complex in Luxor, where Thebes, once the capital of ancient Egypt, proudly, magnificently stood.

Some monuments — no matter how magnificent — crumbled and were lost in the sands of time.

The Temple of Montu in Karnak, more than 3,000 years old, where one of the oldest deities in Thebes was worshipped, was one such site. Compared to the grand architecture of the precincts of Amun-Re and Mut in the Karnak complex that rises high above the ground and attracts hordes of tourists, the home of Montu seems much quieter.

In 1938, Chinese archaeologist Xia Nai (1910-85) was on a field trip collecting materials to write his doctoral dissertation on ancient Egyptian beads.

He wrote in his diary: "I decided to spend a whole day at Karnak today. ... The donkey keeper was very surprised that I was going to the Temple of Montu, a rarely visited one that is in ruins, with just rubble remaining. ... However, as I insisted, he had to follow me..."

After returning to China, Xia put aside his Egyptological interest and switched his focus to archaeological excavations in his own country. His theories, discipline and talent cultivation make him widely hailed as one of the founding fathers of modern Chinese archaeology.

Xia's dissertation on beads remains a powerful reference in the field up to this day.

History, by nature, is full of coincidences. Exactly 80 years later, the dilapidated location Xia visited has become a cherished destination for his followers. In 2018, the first official Chinese-Egyptian joint archaeological mission was launched by the Institute of Archaeology at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Egypt's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

"The area had not been systematically researched by archaeologists for more than 40 years," says Jia Xiaobing, a researcher at the institute and executive director of the Chinese side of the joint archaeological team.

"When we first came here, what we could see was basically wild grass as tall as a person," he recalls. "We had to clear it up before we did anything else."

According to Jia, team members from both countries have been ambitiously attempting to gain a greater understanding of the layout, sequence of construction and functions of the site, while trying to explain the historical role of the Temple of Montu during the New Kingdom period (c. 16th century-11th century BC).

From April to early June this year, a new round of excavation was conducted at the site. After a nearly 3-year hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Jia is excited to set foot on the site again. "It's also a journey to meet old friends again," he says.

When Jia's team arrived in Egypt in 2018, more than 250 archaeological excavations were ongoing, and about two-thirds were led by international teams from 20-odd countries.

"We are perhaps relatively late starters," Jia says. "But we have the chance to join the frontier of international Egyptology and make our own contribution to the terrain. ... Egypt also provides us a precious platform for frequent exchange with archaeologists from other countries."

Jia's Egyptian counterpart, Mostafa al-Saghir, general director of the Karnak Temples and Avenue of Sphinxes at the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, notes that the well-selected Chinese team has a great deal of experience and expertise in archaeology, Egyptology and cultural relic conservation, as well as of modern methods of recording, analyzing and interpreting discoveries.

"Most importantly, scholars from a great civilization like China can feel and, maybe sometimes, understand other civilizations better," he says.

#### Mysteries of the gods

Depicted as a falcon-headed man crowned by two feathers and a sun disc, Montu was worshipped as the sun god during the Middle Kingdom period (c. 21st century-18th century BC) before gradually being replaced by Amun. However, worship of Montu continued in Thebes, and he was often later regarded as a god of war.

The precinct comprises temples to



**Above:** The Temple of Montu in the Karnak complex, Luxor, Egypt, seen from the south. **Top left:** A photo from the 1930s shows Chinese archaeologist Xia Nai in Egypt. **Top right:** Jia Xiaobing (left), a researcher with the Institute of Archaeology at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, examines stone inscriptions with Ahmed al-Taher, an Egyptian archaeologist, at the Temple of Montu site.

# Decoding the land of pharaohs

Archaeologists clearing the sands of time will improve understanding of civilization, report **Wang Ru, Fang Aiqing and Wang Kaihao.**

Montu, Maat and Harpre, a high platform-like construction whose function remains unknown, and six Osirian chapels. It takes up around one-third of the Karnak complex, al-Saghir explains.

It also has mud-brick walls, two obelisks, a small sacred lake and the sandstone gate of Ptolemy III Euergetes (the Greek ruler of Egypt from the 3rd century BC) that connects the Avenue of Sphinxes to a quayside by the Nile, and some other ruins.

This precinct is therefore considered a crucial site within Ancient Thebes and its Necropolis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

French archaeologists began surveys of the Temple of Montu in the late 19th century, but the first systematic excavation only began in the 1940s. Some key discoveries of temple ruins around the area were made in the 1970s.

The Sino-Egyptian joint team took up from where the French stopped.

Taking time to preserve the relics and summarize existing findings, they have conducted excavations covering more than 2,000 square meters at the Osirian chapels in the southwest corner of the temple area, as well as at the junction between the Montu and Maat temples.

"From the angle of archaeology, we found that the Montu Temple was built first and was then extended from its southern wall to build the Maat Temple," Jia says.

"We also want to know the relationship between the two temples, and the detailed time they were built."

By excavating the junction, the team also discovered an area of neatly laid mud bricks printed with the throne name of Pharaoh Amenhotep III.

"This suggests the temple was built no later than Amenhotep III's reign," Jia says. "That was in the first half of the 14th century BC."

Gao Wei is an assistant research fellow at the Institute of Archaeology, CASS, and a member of the team. One of his main tasks has been cleaning and studying the second and third of the six Osirian chapels. Ancient people made different wishes at each of the chapels dedicated to Osiris, god of the dead and of fertility — for example from wishes for good crops to the coming of the annual Nile flood and good luck in life.

A section of the bounding walls that enclosed the chapels was also found. Although excavation has not been completed, the discovery echoes an aerial photo taken in 1914 by Theodor Kofler, an



**Top:** Architectural elements preserved on cement platforms in the Temple of Montu. **Above:** A constructional component inscribed with hieroglyphs. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



**Above:** A broken Osirian statue excavated from the site. **Right:** Beard of a bronze Osirian figurine decorated with lazurite, also unearthed from the site.

Austrian photographer, which clearly shows the outline of the rectangular walls with a gap that is believed to be the gate connecting the chapels to the main temple.

This year, the Chinese team returned to the site to document earlier findings — especially of pottery and bronze figurines of Osiris.

"We want to unveil the complete face of the walls, determine the time they were built and if they were restored," Gao says.

He explains that studies of these chapels have reshaped understanding of ancient Egyptian beliefs. Scholars previously thought each city had one major god or goddess. For example, in Thebes, Amun and his family were the main deities worshipped, while in the ancient city of Abydos, Osiris was dominant.

However, the existence of the 20-odd Osirian chapels at Karnak indicates that the worship of gods was diversified, probably during the Third Intermediate Period (c. 1077-664 BC), when the worship of Amun declined.

#### Days of exchange

Since French historian and linguist Jean-Francois Champollion deciphered Egyptian hieroglyphs, whose lineage had been lost to history, and founded Egyptology in 1822, the transliteration system has been based on Western languages. With centuries of academic accumulation, Western scholars have led the development of associated fields of studies, according to Jin Shoufu, an Egyptologist at Fudan University in Shanghai.

"An individual or country can usually contribute to the academic system little by little rather than expect to make a block-busting discovery overnight," he says.

But for China, excavations at the Temple of Montu are a milestone, he adds.

In 1998 and 2000, Jin accompanied Egyptologist Jan Assmann, his PhD supervisor at Heidelberg University in Germany, to excavate and study the mausoleums of officials in Luxor.

"I never thought in my lifetime I would be able to see Chinese scholars conduct their own excavations in Egypt," Jin says.

He participated in preparations for the joint mission and, in 2019, was also a member of the excavation team for academic consulting.

"It's really inspiring to think that Chinese Egyptologists will have firsthand materials for research in the near future," Jin says.

He also hopes there will be more opportunities for him to contribute to transcribing wall inscriptions and inter-

preting the religious role Montu played in ancient Egypt, the evolution of his worship, and its relationship with kingship.

By the time he received a doctoral degree from the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris in 2022, Gao had been involved in the joint mission for six years, ever since early-stage preparations. He was particularly impressed by the Egyptian archaeologists' global horizon.

"Egypt has a mature system for managing and evaluating the work of foreign archaeological teams in their country," Gao says. "Moreover, cultural heritage authorities can talk fluently about even very small sites in English."

According to Gao, the team's work also includes translating terms into Chinese and trying to standardize them for archaeological reports in the future.

On the other hand, Chinese archaeologists also share their experience with their Egyptian counterparts. For example, Jia introduced a recording system summarized from his decadeslong practice in China, down to details like how to arrange and number excavation pits, document information and design charts.

In the eyes of archaeologists, pottery pieces have long been seen as a key indicator in studies of strata, which also inspired Egyptian counterparts. The Chinese team also brought 3D modeling facilities to Egypt. The technique has been widely used in archaeological research in large-scale capital city ruins in China.

"China's archaeology has created effective methods during its century-long history," Jia says. "Our concepts sometimes collided with those of our Egyptian counterparts, but we may also bring a new perspective."

"Now we have become like family," al-Saghir says. "The Chinese members have already started to adjust to Egyptian traditions, and vice versa, not only the food."

He and some colleagues have also taken up learning Chinese.

"Mutual influence between Egypt and China is not only words or symbolic. It's something you can really feel and see," he adds. "A very strong relationship has been built through the joint mission."

#### Inspiration for more studies

For Chinese archaeologists, learning more about the origins of Egyptian civilization has greater meaning.

"Grand rivers nurture the world's cradles of ancient civilizations, like ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, and China," says Wang Wei, director of CASS Academic Division of History. "Each civilization has its own features, but their development also demonstrates certain shared patterns."

"As Chinese archaeologists become active in the rest of the world, we may also better understand characteristics of our own," he says.

When the joint mission began, Jia expected to compare their findings to those of contemporary China, namely the Xia (c. 21st century-16th century BC), Shang (c. 16th century-11th century BC) and Zhou (c. 11th century-256 BC) dynasties, but he is now gaining more inspiration.

A major part of his work in China is leading the archaeological project at the Niuheliang site in Chaoyang, Liaoning province, a central sacrificial area of the Hongshan Culture that was from 5,000 to 5,500 years ago.

Jia says that work in Egypt has inspired his studies in Niuheliang.

For ritual ceremonies during festivals, ancient residents of Thebes traveled frequently between the two banks of the Nile. Karnak is located on the east bank, and the cemeteries of the nobles are on the west, as the ancient Egyptians believed that the lands of the dead were to the west, as that was where the sun set.

"People escorted deity statues from the east bank to the west bank for festivals, and then moved them back," Jia says. "In this way, the sites are logically related."

This idea reinforced his longtime speculation that there must be a passageway connecting some of the sites at Niuheliang, including the temple of the goddess and the stone barrows.

In 2021, his team finally managed to find a passageway with symmetrical drainage ditches and waterproof walls on both sides between the two platforms.

"Ancient civilizations communicated with each other and so shall we today," Jia says. "Through exchanges between archaeologists from the two sides, we can form new ideas and advance our work further."

Jia and Gao are scheduled to set off for Luxor in December for another season of fieldwork. They still emotionally recall the day in March 2020 when the main entrance of Karnak was lit up with an image of the Chinese national flag to show support for the Chinese fight against COVID-19.

A passageway for friendship by the Nile may be further illuminated by this joint mission.

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## LIFESHANGHAI

## Retail therapy, with empathy

A look at the burgeoning charity store scene in a city where people are flocking to do good for others, **Yu Ran** reports.

Shanghai has over the past two decades witnessed significant development and changes to its charity sector, as evidenced by the growing number of charity stores that have been popping up across the city.

Charity stores are a relatively new concept in China. Shanghai's first charity store, the Zhenning Road Charity Store in Jing'an district, was opened only 20 years ago.

But in the last decade alone, more than 173 charity stores have been set up in the city. Now, there are 232 stores in total.

Over the years, Shanghai has been refining its regulatory and policy measures, and issuing documents, such as the selection and recommendation regulations for the city's charity awards, and the management measures for special funds for Shanghai foundations to provide support for the charity sector.

Local authorities have also said that they will continue to enhance regulatory policies in the field of charity and provide high-quality development support for Shanghai's charities.

Charity stores fall under two operational models. The first involves individuals from the neighborhood's administrative system working as store staff, who are managed by a neighborhood nongovernmental organization. The second involves using social organizations to manage and operate the stores.

The eight charity stores in the Pudong New Area that are run by the Shanghai Shanxing Public Welfare Service Center are an example of the first operational model.

"The model of a charity store is different from that of traditional retail stores. Our goal is to transform the atmosphere of the store into a place where everyone can come in. We want to use a retail approach with a focus on service to let more residents know that our products have more advantages and are of better quality," says Du Lei, who works at the Shanxing Public Welfare Service Center in Shanghai.

Not all stores managed by the center are run the same way. The Lujiazui Street Charity Store primarily focuses on retail and charitable activities, including setting up street stalls every month to sell affordable fruits and vegetables, and providing home delivery services for the elderly.

These efforts are aimed at making more residents in the vicinity aware of the operational model of the charity supermarket and to highlight the convenience it affords.

On the other hand, a charity store on Weifang West Road mainly provides discounted goods to underprivileged and elderly groups.

"We will adjust the product categories based on the varying needs of the surrounding community residents and collaborate with a variety



**Top and above left:** Filled with a wide range of goods, including colorful and fashionable socks, kitchenware, clothing and even vintage books, the Buy42 Charity Store on the Jiangning Road is a popular place to shop. **PHOTOS BY GAO ERQIANG/ CHINA DAILY** **Above right:** A customer looks at the value on offer at the Lujiazui Street Charity Store. **YU RAN / FOR CHINA DAILY**

of partners. Our primary focus will be on the community, and we will differentiate ourselves through the services," says Du.

#### A trendier kind

Generally, stores run under the first model are more low-key in nature.

Those managed using the second are deemed to be more popular with the general public.

"We are pleased to see that social organizations and other social forces have independently established charity stores which offer a wider range of goods, serve a more diverse range of beneficiaries and have a broader market appeal, compared

The model of a charity store is different from that of traditional retail stores. Our goal is to transform the atmosphere of the store into a place where everyone can come in."

**Du Lei**, a worker with the Shanxing Public Welfare Service Center

to traditional charity stores," says Zhu Qinshao, director of the Shanghai Civil Affairs Bureau.

Among the most popular of the stores run by social organizations is the Buy42 Charity Store on Jiangning Road in Jing'an district.

“

Featuring a design that is reminiscent of a grocery shop, the store has been a major hit with young consumers, many of whom flock to the place to take photos that they can post on social media.

Filled with a wide range of goods,

including colorful and fashionable socks, kitchenware, clothing and even vintage books, the shop is just one of the 42 that social enterprise Buy42 operates in Shanghai.

"We hope to use the down-to-earth vibe of a grocery store to promote charity stores and help them flourish within communities," says Jiang Shujie, chief executive officer of the social enterprise.

"Our intention is to bring the concept of charity stores, which are commonly found abroad, to China so that we can promote eco-friendly consumption and help people understand that our lives can be just as fulfilling without the excessive consumption of resources."

Last year, the organization received 259,469 items worth around 6.8 million yuan (\$932,766) — an 8.18 percent increase in donated value compared to the previous year — from 84 companies. Notably, there was a 54.44 percent increase in the value of donated personal goods that were unused, a sign that the public is getting increasingly involved in the business of doing good for others.

#### Social resonance

Ye Yu is among the many who have come forward to donate.

In 2020, the 46-year-old donated an unworn Chinese-style top to the store.

After seeing someone purchase the item, Ye says she felt a sense of fulfillment that has since made her a regular donor and buyer at the store.

"My first impression was that the store is unlike other retail shops. Here, the products, employees and volunteers have stories behind them," says Ye.

"I used to understand charity as being kind and compassionate to others. But Buy42 has helped me realize that charity can empower every individual, every action and every item to make a positive influence on others," she adds.

According to Jiang, many locals used to view charity stores as nothing more than just secondhand goods outlets.

Those who frequent the stores run by the social enterprise, however, will know that this is not the case.

Besides paying for operational costs, the money raised from selling the donated goods is also used to hire staff from disadvantaged groups and organize charity events.

For example, the manager of the Jiangning Road store has a hearing impairment while the manager of the Gonghe New Road store is an individual with special needs.

The events that the social enterprise regularly organizes include activities that allow children to learn about the importance of environmental sustainability, as well as initiatives aimed at helping individuals with disabilities learn new skills and become integrated into society. It also assists charitable organizations in selling donated items that the latter have no use for. For instance, the cutlery they sell in their store was a donation received by a school for impoverished children.

For items that are particularly challenging to sell, Jiang's team organizes art workshops where people can get creative and turn ordinary items into works of art.

"I hope that our enterprise can become a century-old charity store in China and touch the hearts of many more people with its philanthropic mission," Jiang says.

"We want to allow more people to feel the value of giving back to society."

## Play sets tongues wagging as relations come under spotlight

By **ZHANG KUN** in Shanghai  
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The new play *Perfect Strangers* by the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre has been the talk of the town because of its focus on common relationship problems faced by urban dwellers.

The latest theater adaptation of the 2016 Italian movie *Perfetti sconosciuti* by Paolo Genovese, *Perfect Strangers* premiered on Sept 8 and will run until Sunday at the center before going on a tour of Tianjin, Dalian in Liaoning province, Lishui in Zhejiang province and Xi'an in Shaanxi province.

The production will go on more tours next year as well as participate in a comedy festival in Beijing, according to Ma Yue, director of the play.

*Perfect Strangers* is a comedy featuring seven protagonists who come together for a dinner party on an evening when an eclipse is taking place. The characters then decide to play a game in which everyone places their mobile phones on the table and shares all

#### If you go

**Perfect Strangers**  
7:30 pm, Sept 8-24 (no shows on Monday, matinee only at 2 pm on Sunday);  
2 pm Sept 16 and 23.  
Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre,  
Drama Theater, 1F, 288 Anfu Road,  
Xuhui district, Shanghai.  
021-6473-4567.

the messages, emails and phone calls they receive.

The movie was listed in the Guinness World Records as the most remade in the history of cinema in 2019.

In that year, 18 remakes had been made and eight other adaptations were in the pipeline. In China, the movie was adapted into a film titled *Kill Mobile* in 2018.

Genovese once said in an interview with Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* that the movie "has been able to intercept a social phenomenon which everyone identified with."



*Perfect Strangers* by the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre premiered on Sept 8 and will run until Sunday. The play is a comedy featuring seven protagonists who come together for a dinner party on an evening when an eclipse is taking place. **PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY**

Ma says that she wanted to adapt the movie for theater as soon as she saw the Italian original in Shanghai in 2017.

"It successfully captured some of the most common issues of humanity and created a situation that push-

ed the widely observed difficulties, conflicts and relationship problems in contemporary life to the extreme, which people of different countries and cultural backgrounds all resonate with," she told China Daily.

Ma points out that Genovese's

movie is ideal for a theater adaptation as the story involves seven characters in a closed setting and period.

"But to adapt it for theater, we have to make it exciting for Chinese audiences who might already be

familiar with the movie," she notes.

During the stage design process, Ma had the walls between the different sections of the household removed, with the dining room, sitting room and toilet spread out on the stage to enable different threads of the story to push forward at the same time.

For the prop design, she had two 13-meter-long screens made. In this latest Chinese rendition of the movie, a translucent screen stands in front of the stage before the dramatic events unfold.

The other is a mirror that gradually descends as the evening goes on and secrets are unveiled.

At the end of the show, the translucent screen between the performers and audience goes back up again.

As the stage lights dim, the screen turns into a mirror that shows the audience their reflections.

"I hope that after watching this production they will step out of the theater reflecting on their own lives instead of succumbing to the impulse to check their partner's mobile phone," says Ma.

## LIFE



Mylene Mathieu (left) sieves chili peppers during her trip to Huangling village, Wuyuan county, Jiangxi province. XINHUA

## French expatriate enchanted by Chinese village

NANCHANG — On a scenic platform offering panoramic vistas of traditional gray-and-white Chinese buildings nestled among lush trees, Mylene Mathieu, who is from France, extended her arms, grasping a broad bamboo sieve with hands, tossing red chili peppers up and down.

This is a procedure aimed at properly drying agricultural products, such as chili, corn and peanuts, for longer preservation. The common rural practice is also part of Mathieu's myriad countryside experiences on her trip to Huangling village, Wuyuan county of East China's Jiangxi province.

Mathieu, who moved to Beijing earlier this year after more than seven years studying Chinese, shares her daily life experiences on social media, and has gained tens of thousands of followers in just months. Her trip to Huangling turned out to be a unique experience.

"This is my first time coming to a Chinese village, and I didn't expect to find such a beautiful one," Mathieu says. She posted a video about the chili-tossing on her Douyin short-video account, under a Chinese profile name that translates as "French wife Xiaobengben"; alluding to her status as the spouse of a Chinese man.

Before coming to Huangling, Mathieu did not have high expectations. "I had this image of Chinese rural areas as old and remote," she says.

However, upon entering Huangling, she was immediately captivated by the village's blend of ancient charm and modern convenience. Traditional architecture intricately adorned the landscape, and wide, flat stone paths connected every corner of the village.

Mathieu was especially impressed with a light festival showcasing folk customs.

"I had only seen light festivals in big cities before, but Huangling combines traditional folk parades with lights, preserving tradition while showcasing the charm of modern technology," she says.

She was also captivated by the village's operating model. Villagers found meaningful employment in the scenic area, leading to a shared sense of happiness and prosperity.

"You can feel their happiness radiating from within. Under the village leadership, everyone shares a consensus to pursue happiness together in this picturesque place," she says.

In just a few years, Huangling transformed from a poverty-stricken village into a rural tourism hot spot. Villagers can rake in tourism-related income from sectors such as accommodation, catering and transportation.

The average annual income per villager increased from 3,500 yuan (\$479) before tourism development to over 50,000 yuan currently, with some families earning over 1 million yuan annually through their involvement in the tourism industry.

Today, Huangling is gradually gaining global recognition. It had hosted international summits featuring rural tourism and formed alliances with tourist villages from around the world.

XINHUA

# Tracing expertise to beginning

Skill of transferring images onto paper is an art form steeped in history, **Zhao Xu** reports.

Rubbing, the tracing of characters onto a piece of paper, came into its own during the Song Dynasty (960-1279). Woodblock printing had been invented two centuries earlier and even movable type printing using metal typefaces had appeared. Yet for those who were aiming not just for the content but the display of calligraphic art of a particular piece of writing, rubbing seemed the best option.

For any rubbing to take place, a particular piece of calligraphy must first be transcribed from paper to stone — or wood on rarer occasions — by a master engraver at a 1:1 ratio.

This was no easy task, but the ultimate goal was not to let the characters stay there, but instead, to transfer their vitality to the paper.

To do this, a thin piece of paper was placed over the surface of the stone tablet engraved with characters. Then water, and subsequently ink, was applied smoothly to the back of the paper with just the right amount of pressure, to soften the paper and allow for a thorough transfer of the details of the stone tablet onto it. The paper was left to dry and to eventually be lifted off the stone surface, carrying with it a reproduction of the original.

Repeated numerous times during the Song era, this manual technique enabled educated members of Song society to have access to master calligraphic works either from their own times or from previous eras to whose cultural influences they had willingly subjected themselves.

Oftentimes, the original calligraphy, or even its stone inscription, became lost over time, thus making the rubbings the only surviving proof of the masterworks that had once existed. In that sense, the Song rubbings, and those behind them, have helped to preserve a cultural legacy much valued then and now.

Now, art lovers have the chance to sample some of the most prominent fruits from this collective effort, at

“What we have here is not just a showcase of the beauty of ink and paper, the art of calligraphy, engraving and rubbing, but also the telling of stories steeped in cultural pride and communal spirit.”

Wang Xudong, director of the Palace Museum

an exhibition held at Beijing's Palace Museum and dedicated entirely to the Song rubbings. Of the 40 pieces on display, 20 are drawn from the collection of the Palace Museum, which holds a total of 150 Song rubbings. The other half are from the Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Founded in 1971 with the support of the late HK philanthropist J. S. Lee (1915-2007), the museum aims to serve the university community and the island by collecting, preserving, researching and exhibiting artifacts from ancient and premodern China.

Addressing the exhibition's opening ceremony on Sept 15, Rocky S. Tuan, vice-chancellor and president of CUHK, said, "For 60 years, CUHK has consistently placed great importance on traditional Chinese culture and humanistic values. We have upheld the mission to combine tradition with modernity, and to bring together China and the West."

On loan for the first time, the rubbings from CUHK's collection had been donated to the university's Art Museum by J. S. Lee, whose son Chien Lee was in Beijing on Sept 15.

"Unlike his siblings, my father didn't go to study overseas. Instead, he spent his time at the Yenching University in Beijing, where he acquired an enduring passion for premodern Chinese art and made lifelong friends with people whom he later joined in his collecting efforts," said Chien Lee.

One of those friends was J. S. Lee's Yenching University alumnus and Hong Kong-based banker-collector J. M. Hu (1910-93), whose donations of porcelain and other ancient Chinese artifacts today fill an entire gallery at the Shanghai Museum.

In 1975, Hu donated a Song Dynasty rubbing of a second-century stone inscription titled *The Stele of Huashan Temple* to the Palace Museum. In the current exhibition, it was reunited with another Song rubbing of the same inscription, which, thanks to the late Lee, entered the CUHK Art Museum upon its founding in 1971.

"The stone itself was destroyed during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644)," said Shi Anchang, a highly regarded expert in rubbings from ancient China. "Today, there are only four existing rubbings, including the two showcased here, an additional one from the Palace Museum dated to the early Ming era, and a last one, also from the Song era, that is held at the Calligraphy Museum in Tokyo."

In 1975, Shi's mentor Ma Ziyun (1903-86) traveled to receive the precious gift from Hu.

"What we have here is not just a showcase of the beauty of ink and paper, the art of calligraphy, engraving and rubbing, but also the telling of stories steeped in cultural pride and communal spirit," said Wang Xudong, director of the Palace Museum.

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Top: Rare Song Dynasty (960-1279) rubbings are now on display in an exhibition at Beijing's Palace Museum. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY Left: A Song era rubbing of the Preface to the Collection of Poems of the Orchid Pavilion, which is believed to have been written by 4th-century calligrapher Wang Xizhi. ZHAO XU / CHINA DAILY



## Exporters enjoy success with rewarding plum job

By YANG YANG and MAO WEIHUA in Kashgar, Xinjiang

Last month, plums from Payzawat county in Kashgar, Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, made their export debut as they were shipped to Malaysia. The European plums grown in Xinjiang are also called Xinmei.

Payzawat county is the largest production area of Xinmei covering an area of 30,000 hectares. It accounts for 40 percent of the total in the country, and contributes to 60 percent of the total output, according to official statistics.

It takes 15 days to transport Xinmei from Kashgar to Malaysia. First the fruit is transported to the Shenzhen port in cold chain transport vehicles before being shipped to Malaysia.

As of Aug 21, 17 Xinmei orchards in Kashgar have applied for export qualifications, with an estimated production of over 9,000 metric tons. Fruit products can be exported to countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, including Malaysia and Singapore.

To improve the quality of the Xinmei sector, Payzawat county



Left: Abliz Karim, 70, talks about the good Xinmei harvest in his orchard in Yingmailiu town in Payzawat county in Kashgar, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region. Right: Farmers can learn to grow Xinmei at the training center in the Guangdong-Payzawat Xinmei Modern Industrial Park.

PHOTOS BY YANG YANG / CHINA DAILY



built the Guangdong-Payzawat Xinmei Industrial Park in Yingmailiu town in 2021.

Covering an area of 243,000 square meters, the park includes four main functional areas: research and training area, demonstration area, cold chain warehousing, logistics and intelligent sorting area, as well as a deep processing and packaging area.

This industrial park has played

a significant role in promoting the integration of all elements of the Xinmei sector in Payzawat, and has laid the foundation for the development of a comprehensive chain, integrating production, education, research, and the convergence of primary, secondary and tertiary industries.

Having received training, 70-year-old villager Abliz Karim from Yingmailiu town had a

bountiful harvest this year. His 1.13 hectares orchard, now in its ninth year, produced high-quality fruit with a yield of around 4 tons per mu (0.067 hectare).

"This year marks the fourth year since my Xinmei trees started bearing fruit. In the first year, I sold them for 5,000 yuan (\$685), in the second year for 140,000 yuan, in the third year for 170,000 yuan. This year, my Xinmei trees

brought in 850,000 yuan. In the future, I will continue to manage my Xinmei orchard well, aiming for an annual income exceeding 1 million yuan," says Abliz.

Xinmei has become a pillar sector for increasing incomes and enriching people in Payzawat. Last year, it contributed an average increase of 5,650 yuan per capita for local farmers.

Inside the Guangdong-Payzawat Xinmei Modern Industrial Park, workers are packing the fruits into boxes for cold chain distribution to major cities in northern, central, and southern China.

Payzawat county has established a cold chain logistics system with a total capacity of 150,000 tons, extending the sales period from the previous 20 to 30 days to two to four months, which has led to higher selling prices.

Additionally, the county has introduced companies to develop and manufacture 22 types of products, including fruit juice, dried fruit, fruit wine and fruit jam, thus forming a complete chain for Xinmei.

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