

Manhunt in Maine

Wide search continues for suspect in mass shooting that killed 18 people

WORLD, PAGE 8



Hub city aims to bolster cross-Strait sci-tech exchanges

BUSINESS, PAGE 9



Rural blueprint

Strategy of vitalization reaps real benefits for villagers, cooperatives

GLOBAL LENS, PAGE 7

CHINA DAILY

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The Shenzhou XVII manned spaceship, perched atop a Long March 2F carrier rocket, lifts off on Thursday from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China. ZHU XINGXIN / CHINA DAILY

Shenzhou XVII astronauts join peers in Tiangong

By ZHAO LEI
at Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center
zhaolei@chinadaily.com.cn

Crew members of Shenzhou XVII — China's 12th manned spaceflight — arrived at the Tiangong space station on Thursday evening, joining their peers from the Shenzhou XVI mission who have been in orbit for five months.

A Long March 2F rocket, carrying the spaceship with mission commander Senior Colonel Tang Hongbo, Lieutenant Colonel Tang Shengjie and Lieutenant Colonel Jiang Xinlin on board,

lifted off at 11:14 am from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwestern China's Gobi Desert.

After a six-and-a-half-hour flight, the Shenzhou XVII spaceship docked with the front port of the Tianhe core module, the main body of Tiangong.

The Shenzhou XVII crew members hail from the People's Liberation Army Astronaut Division. The mission is the first spaceflight of Tang Shengjie and Jiang, who are from China's third generation of astronauts.

The mission has also made Tang Hongbo, who belongs to

the nation's second generation of astronauts, the first person to return to Tiangong. His first space journey was on board the three-month-long Shenzhou XII mission, the first manned flight to Tiangong, which concluded two years and one month ago.

Following the docking process, the Shenzhou XVII crew spent nearly two hours on preparatory work to enter the space station, which included changing into intravehicular work suits from their pressure suits.

Meanwhile, the Shenzhou XVI crew — mission commander Major General Jing Haipeng,

Colonel Zhu Yangzhu and Professor Gui Haichao — waited inside the connection cabin. After all preparations were done, Jing's team opened a hatch in the connection cabin at 7:34 pm to welcome the new team of astronauts.

The first to step out of the Shenzhou XVII spaceship was Tang Hongbo, followed by Tang Shengjie and Jiang, who were all greeted with hugs by Jing, Zhu and Gui. The astronauts then exchanged thoughts inside the Tianhe module.

See *Mission*, page 3

SCO countries urged to forge closer bonds

Premier emphasizes need for nations to safeguard regional security, step up recovery

By MO JINGXI in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
mojingxi@chinadaily.com.cn

Premier Li Qiang underlined on Thursday the need for Shanghai Cooperation Organization countries to enhance regional security, accelerate economic recovery and forge closer bonds among their peoples amid global risks and challenges, in order to bring more stability to the region and the world.

Speaking at the 22nd meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the SCO member states in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, Li also called for efforts to reinforce the alignment of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation with the member states' respective development strategies, promote the construction of major economic corridors, and work for the establishment of an SCO development bank.

Founded in 2001 to mainly focus on regional security cooperation, the SCO has now carried out practical cooperation in more areas, including the economy and trade, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges. With nine full member states, it accounts for nearly half of the world's population and approximately a quarter of global GDP.

"It is important to join efforts to create a safe and efficient transport system, continuously promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, and ensure the stable and uninterrupted functioning of industrial and supply chains," Li said. He noted that it must not be forgotten that the original purpose of the organization is to "keep the fate of the region in the hands of regional countries, to resolve regional issues through coordination, without interference from outside".

As an example of an open and inclusive regional organization, the SCO has provided security and stability for regional countries by adhering to the "Shanghai Spirit", which features mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diverse civilizations and pursuit of common development, experts said.

That's why SCO cooperation, different from bloc-building by some countries, has become increasingly

This will on the one hand, help regional countries to be better prepared for emerging risks, and on the other hand, contribute to world peace and stability with its good experience."

Su Chang, research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

attractive to more regional countries, including nations in the Middle East, they said.

Su Chang, a research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that over the past years, the SCO countries have, through practical cooperation, established mature mechanisms to deal with traditional security issues such as terrorism, separatism and extremism, as well as nontraditional ones such as climate change.

"This will, on the one hand, help regional countries to be better prepared for emerging risks, and on the other hand, contribute to world peace and stability with its good experience," she said.

Su added that the Belt and Road Initiative, which is in line with the "Shanghai Spirit", has brought concrete benefits to some SCO countries by turning landlocked Central Asian countries into the junction connecting Asia and Europe, and has also greatly advanced the economic development of relevant countries.

Xiao Bin, deputy secretary-general of the Center for SCO Studies at the CASS, said that the SCO countries have demonstrated that development comes from a safe and stable environment, and the organization could be a potential driving force for global economic recovery.

A dozen documents, including a joint communique and several resolutions on trade, economic and railway cooperation, were signed following the meeting.

New BRI phase set to boost Macao's intl role

During the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, held in Beijing on Oct 17 and 18, President Xi Jinping announced eight major steps that China will take to support high-quality Belt and Road cooperation.

I am optimistic that the new phase of the Belt and Road Initiative will boost Macao's role on the international stage as a business-service platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries.

The forum was attended by 151 countries, or about 78 percent of the 193 member states of the United Nations, 41 international organizations and some 10,000 representatives from all over the world. I am sure that no other country in the world has ever been able to host, on its own initiative, that many nations and international organizations at a single event.

As of August, 155 countries have participated in the BRI. I wonder if any analyst forecast the rapid

WORLD WATCH
By Harald Bruning

expansion of the initiative when President Xi announced it during a visit to Kazakhstan in September 2013.

The BRI marked the 10th anniversary of its founding about a month before last week's forum. There also were two other anniversaries of particular relevance to the People's Republic of China and the Macao Special Administrative Region this month: the Mainland and Macao Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement, which gradually liberalized trade between the two sides, was signed on Oct 18, 2003, and the first ministerial-level Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (also known as Forum Macao) was held in Macao from Oct 12 to 14, 2003.

The setting up of Forum Macao, which is slated to hold its sixth ministerial-level meeting next year, has immensely elevated Macao's position on the international stage and provided a tremendous boost to its role as a business-service platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. Thanks to Forum Macao, the city has become a relatively important tool of the country's foreign and economic policies.

Addressing the 20th anniversary of Forum Macao on Oct 20, Macao Chief Executive Ho Iat Seng described the 10-nation organization, set up at the central authorities' initiative, as "an invisible bridge across the oceans that closely connects Portuguese-speaking countries and that has gradually become a 'promoter' for comprehensive cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries".

Macao's platform role has turned from just a concept two decades ago into reality and, at the same time, "has significantly enhanced Macao's international standing, assisted the appropriately diversified development of Macao's economy and provided Macao enterprises with a broader space for cooperation", he said.

See *Role*, page 3

HOT QUESTIONS ASKED IN BID TO SOLVE CLIMATE CONUNDRUM

Extreme weather events pose increased challenges

By ZHANG ZHOUXIANG
zhangzhouxiang@chinadaily.com.cn



The word "extreme" is a leading candidate to best describe summer in China this year, when an average temperature of 22 C was experienced, the second-highest recorded in the country since 1961.

While there was also limited rainfall nationwide, with drought affecting some northwestern areas, Beijing witnessed its heaviest downpours since 2012.

In recent years, extremely hot summers in China have been followed by bitter winters, so the big question is whether the coming months will be exceptionally cold.

Zhu Dingzhen, a retired chief expert at the China Meteorological Administration's Public Meteorological Service Center, said it is

hard to give a definite answer, but there is a high probability that this winter will be a tough one.

"There is no direct link between temperatures in summer and in winter, but when the former are extremely high, it is a sign that the entire climate system is turbulent, meaning there is a much higher possibility of the latter being extremely low," Zhu said.

See *Temperatures*, page 2

LI KEQIANG PASSES AWAY

BELJING — Li Keqiang, member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the 17th, 18th and 19th Communist Party of China central committees and former premier, passed away on Friday in Shanghai. Li recently had a rest in Shanghai. On Oct 26, Li had a sudden heart attack and passed away at 00:10 on Oct 27 after all rescue measures failed. He died at the age of 68. The obituary will be issued later.

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XINHUA

PAGE TWO

Temperatures: Efforts needed to slow rises

From page 1

Zhu stressed that extreme cold is a "concept" of weather rather than climate, and refers to single-day temperatures rather than the average temperature for a whole season.

A good example is 2021, when China had a warm winter, but Beijing experienced its lowest recorded single-day temperature.

"A warm winter doesn't mean it is warm every day. With climate change intensifying, there might be relatively frequent spells of cold weather during warm winters, so we must always be prepared," Zhu said.

Chen Wei, an associate researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Atmospheric Physics, said that as air pressure near the ground is higher in hot regions than in polar areas, a constant air flow from the former to the latter develops into westerly winds in middle latitudes of the northern hemisphere.

"A so-called protective wall is formed, turning any cold wave from the north into westerly winds, thus preventing it from heading further south," Chen said.

However, due to climate change, temperatures in the Arctic region are rising, narrowing the gap with those on the equator.

Chen said that as a result, westerly winds become weaker in middle-latitude regions, preventing cold waves going south. Combined with the increasingly unstable polar vortex that unleashes more cold waves, the frequency of cold weather naturally increases.

"That's why extremely cold days can appear in warm winters," Chen said.

In a worst-case scenario, the process can become a vicious circle. The huge piles of ice in the Arctic act like a large mirror, reflecting solar rays back into space, but as the ice melts, the reflection weakens, so more heat accumulates, accelerating the meltdown process. This in turn further weakens the reflection.

Chen said the academic term for this process is the "Arctic amplifying effect", which has already begun and will not be reversed until efforts are made to significantly slow global warming.

Severe flooding

A report released early last month by the China Meteorological Administration stated: "Heavy rainfall has become more frequent, causing severe flooding in North and Northeast China, resulting in 'U-turns' between drought and flooding."

"Typhoons are few in number but more destructive in force, with Typhoon Doksuri causing heavy flooding. There have been more days with high temperatures, some of which have been extreme. Catastrophes such as short-term strong rainfall, lightning storms and hurricanes have been reported more widely."

While for urban residents the term "weather catastrophe" may result in disrupted travel arrangements or having to stay at home, for agricultural production, it means actual losses.

Wang Qingxue, 60, a farmer from Shandong province, said: "A cold wave is enough to kill all the seedlings in a field. That's why we farmers are really afraid of drops in temperature in autumn and spring. Humans just need to put on more clothing, but crops obviously cannot do so. In recent decades, we have grown more seedlings in greenhouses."

Wang Ke, deputy dean of Renmin University of China's Institute of Ecological Civilization, said humans face greater challenges to their health in extreme cold and heat. Some outdoor construction and engineering projects also have to be suspended or operated at lower efficiency, while crops might wither in cold weather or die in heat, thus posing a bigger risk to national food security.

Cities either have to face losses during flooding or raise construction standards to cope with such incidents, which come at a huge financial cost.

On Aug 9, the Beijing municipal government said that during flooding in the city this summer, 33 people died and 18 went missing. A total of 1.29 million people were affected by the floods, 59,000 rooms collapsed, 147,000 rooms were damaged, and 150 square kilometers of agricultural land was left underwater.

In September last year, a report by Oxford University estimated that the world might face losses of \$23 trillion due to climate change by 2050. In comparison, China's GDP last year was \$18 trillion.

Skeptics have long questioned whether the planet is experiencing climate change. Some articles have even gone viral with headlines such as "10 benefits of global warming", claiming that with global warming, some tropical or sub-tropical fruit could be planted in northern regions, while dry northwestern regions would become wet.

Chen said this is possible because more vapor could develop in areas with higher temperatures, increasing uncertainties about global rainfall.

"It's possible that regions that used to be dry could become wet, but the cost would be too high for humankind to bear," she said.

Chen added that the amount of new rainfall in dry regions, if there is any, would be limited. Only a relatively small proportion of vapor can be carried from oceans to inland areas, and during this process a large amount of vapor dissipates.

If there is enough rainfall in inland regions to turn deserts green, this would mean humans could no longer survive in coastal regions, Chen added.

Zhu, from the China Meteorological Adminis-



SONG CHEN / CHINA DAILY

tration, said only part of the flooding in the past decade was the result of increased rainfall. The majority came from melting glaciers on the Tianshan Mountains in Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region.

"Glaciers are the most important water storage for humankind. If they melt more quickly, naturally our water resources will be exhausted more rapidly," he said.

Yang Yong, who launched the 2015 World Water Source Summit in Yushu city, Qinghai province, visited the sources of several major rivers, including the Yangtze, in summer last year, a typically wet season. He saw large parts of the river banks covered by sand. The Yangtze, the Yarlung Zangbo River and the Indus River in India all experienced this problem.

In April 2017, the Tianshan Mountains Glacier Observatory found that two areas of the No 1 glacier had retreated by 6.3 meters and 7.2 meters, with the western branch experiencing its biggest retreat since it formed in 1993.

Common cause

All these extremes point to a common cause of climate change. Throughout the 20th century, the Earth's average air temperature rose by 0.6 C due to the accumulated effects of carbon emissions for the past few centuries, which were sufficient to raise summer temperatures and lower those in winter by record levels.

It is hard to imagine what would happen if global temperatures rose by 2 C, the limit set by the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference in 2009 and underlined further by the Paris Climate Conference in 2015. Also, some key clauses of the Paris Agreement, such as that referring to nationally determined contributions, are volun-

“Winters and summers have become longer at the expense of spring and autumn. Unless humanity can reverse carbon emissions, there is little hope of solving this problem.”

Liu Hongzhi, deputy head and secretary-general of the International Ecological Economy Promotion Association

tary, instead of legally binding, meaning that participants have the choice to implement it or not.

On Sept 8, a technical report published on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change website said that despite global efforts in the past seven years to cut carbon emissions and meet the most basic 1.5 C goal by 2030, the world is still missing the emissions goal by 20.3 billion to 23.9 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.

"Global emissions are not in line with modeled global mitigation pathways consistent with the temperature goal of the Paris Agreement, and there is a rapidly narrowing window to raise ambition and implement existing commitments in order to limit warming to 1.5 C above pre-industrial levels," the report said.

Liu Hongzhi, deputy head and secretary-general of the International Ecological Economy

Promotion Association, which is based in Beijing, said the damage caused to health by extreme weather is beyond general expectations. Researchers affiliated with the association have long found that extremely high and low temperatures can increase the risk and death rate from cardiovascular diseases. Temperatures of more than 32 C are extremely bad for those with such diseases.

"That's why when winter or summer arrives, we call for seniors to take precautions," Liu said. "But winters and summers have become longer at the expense of spring and autumn. Unless humanity can reverse carbon emissions, there is little hope of solving this problem."

The G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, published on Sept 10, vowed to "pursue low-greenhouse gas/low-carbon emissions, and climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable development pathways by championing an integrated and inclusive approach."

All the experts interviewed for this article called for more concrete steps to support this declaration and turn a dream into reality.

Wang, from Renmin University, said, "Climate radicalization is not gradual, and we cannot expect a long, comfortable process to adapt to changes."

He cited this summer as an example, as temperatures in Beijing alone exceeded 35 C on 29 days, compared with an average of 21 days from 1960 to last year. Worse still, temperatures in the capital exceeded 40 C on five days.

Questions are already being asked about the number of days on which temperatures will rise above 40 C next summer, and the amount of time that humankind has to deal with this urgent problem.

TOP NEWS

Role: BRI extension shows nation's growing influence

From page 1

Forum Macao's future activities should be closely aligned with Xi's eight steps for the next phase of the BRI. In other words, Forum Macao should become an integral part of the BRI, the world's most successful initiative of its kind.

Regrettably, the BRI continues to be maligned by many politicians and commentators in the West. I presume this is based on the all-too-typical cocktail of ignorance and arrogance, as well as the misguided fear and even envy of a rising China.

Unlike in the Global North (with a few exceptions such as Portugal and Serbia), the China-proposed BRI has been almost unanimously welcomed by the developing Global South, Africa in particular.

British sociologist Martin Albrow, noted for his work on globalization, has written a thought-provoking article with the headline "Belt and Road Initiative and China's 'relational power'".

"Relational power" has been defined as "a country's power by how it is able to put its material power into action by developing connections with other countries".

Albrow underlined that the BRI's extension to nearly 75 percent of the countries of the world and half of the world's population inhabiting the 11 countries of the newly expanded BRICS grouping shows the growing influence of China in world affairs.

"But this is not hard power, and I would not even call it soft power.

It is something else. Let us call it relational power, the ease with which you can communicate with another, initiate contact, find what is in your mutual interests, exchange goods and services, and discover what you have in common," Albrow wrote.

Albrow, author of the 2018 book *China's Role in a Shared Human Future*, emphasized in his article that "relational power ... means the capacity to work with others. It is cooperation for greater ends than any can achieve individually."

One can only hope that "relational power" will play an increasingly important role in international relations. The international community would surely benefit from it.

According to Albrow, "China has an approach to world affairs that is deeply embedded in its own history. Not for nothing has Chinese thought over the centuries designated the unity of our world with the concept *tianxia*, (or) 'all under heaven'."

The ancient concept is of dramatically renewed significance during this global age for all of us — here in Macao and elsewhere in our troubled world.

What mankind urgently needs is to commit itself to establishing a community with a shared future. The BRI can certainly play a constructive role in this endeavor.

The author is director of The Macau Post Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.



China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi meets with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken at the US State Department in Washington on Thursday afternoon. ZHAO HUANXIN / CHINA DAILY

Wang Yi: Deepen dialogue for healthy US-China ties

China's foreign minister starts 3-day visit to US as nations look to stabilize relations

By ZHAO HUANXIN
in Washington
huanxinzhao@chinadailyusa.com

China and the United States have disagreements but also share important interests, so they need to have "in-depth" and "comprehensive" dialogue to reduce misunderstanding and stabilize the relations, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said at the start of his US visit on Thursday.

Wang, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs, traveled to Washington for a three-day visit at the invitation of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

"China and the United States are two major countries. We have disagreements; we have differences. At the same time, we also share important common interests and we face challenges that we need to respond to together,"

Wang said before their meeting at the US State Department.

Therefore, the two countries need to have dialogue, Wang told reporters, a nod to Blinken's repeated calls to "maintain open channels of communication."

Then Wang highlighted the nature and purpose of that dialogue.

"Not only should we resume dialogue, the dialogue should be in-depth and comprehensive so that with dialogue we can increase mutual understanding, reduce misunderstanding and misjudgment, constantly seek to expand common ground and pursue cooperation that will benefit both sides so that we can stabilize China-US relations and return it to the track of healthy, stable and sustainable development," he said.

The veteran diplomat also noted that in China-US relations, from time to time there will be some "jarring voices", and when that happens, China treats it calmly.



We have disagreements; we have differences. At the same time, we also share important common interests and we face challenges that we need to respond to together."

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi

"Because we think what is right and what is wrong is not determined by who has the stronger arm or a louder voice, but by seeing if one behaves in a way that is consistent with the provisions of the three China-US joint communiqués, consistent with international law and basic norms of international relations, and consistent with the development trend of the times," he said.

"We are confident that at the

end of the day, facts will prove everything, and history will give its fair verdict," he added.

Blinken said he agreed with what the foreign minister said and he "very much" looked forward to "constructive" conversations over the next two days, according to a State Department release.

On Tuesday, China's Foreign Ministry said that Wang will have an in-depth exchange of views with senior US officials on bilateral relations and international and regional issues of common concern.

Wang will have "friendly exchanges" with people from all walks of life in the US and will make clear China's principled position and legitimate concerns regarding China-US relations during this visit, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said.

White House spokesperson John Kirby said at a briefing on Thursday that Wang is scheduled to meet US national security adviser Jake Sullivan on Friday.

The conflict in the Middle East was also set to be on the agenda during the talks between Wang and US officials, Kirby said.

Aid for youngsters



Students participate in an aid distribution event of the China Foundation for Rural Development's Smiling Children Food Package Project in North Central Province of Sri Lanka on Tuesday. The ceremony to launch the project was held in Colombo on Wednesday with the Sri Lankan Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena in attendance. XINHUA

Mission: Three generations of astronauts meet in space

From page 1

Jing said he and his team were very happy and excited to see their "brothers from Shenzhou XVII". He pointed to a banner his team had placed inside the Tianhe module that read, "Welcome, our teammates".

"We have been in space for nearly five months and we missed you so much," Jing said. "We know that you trained very hard and made all-out efforts to prepare for your mission. ... Now, you have realized your dream of being in this space station and we want to extend our heartfelt congratulations."

The meeting of the two teams is very meaningful because it marks the first space-based gathering of crew members from China's first, second and third generations of astronauts, said Jing, who is from China's first generation of astronauts. With the arrival of the Shenzhou XVII crew, 20 Chinese astronauts have made it to the Earth's orbit, he added.

Tang Hongbo thanked Jing and his team for the warm welcome, and said that returning to Tianhe "makes me feel I am at my space home again".

"Your outstanding performance during the past five months has set a very good example for us. We closely followed your work and learned a lot from you when we trained on the ground," said the Shenzhou XVII mission commander.

Jiang echoed Tang Hongbo and

said they will continue to learn from the Shenzhou XVI astronauts during the space station handover process.

After their talks, the six astronauts took a group selfie amid cheers from ground controllers. The event was broadcast by China Central Television.

The handover process will take place over the next four days, and the Shenzhou XVI crew will return to Earth on Tuesday. The Shenzhou XVII crew will man the space station for about six months and return in April.

In addition to their routine tasks, the Shenzhou XVII crew members will perform experimental repair operations during spacewalks, according to the China Manned Space Agency.

Pang Zhihao, an expert on space exploration technology and a renowned spaceflight writer, said that repair capabilities and skills are crucial to any long-working spacecraft.

"Tiangong is set to operate in orbit for more than 10 years. It is understandable that any spacecraft designed to have such a long life span runs the risk of external impacts, particularly from space debris," Pang said.

"Our space station is in good condition so far, but we need to be well prepared for every possible scenario. It is very important for our astronauts to be able to fix broken parts or replace them with new ones," he added.

California governor emphasizes continuing engagement, respect

By XU WEI and YIN WEIHAO

California Governor Gavin Newsom, who is on a weeklong trip to China, underscored on Thursday the significance of people-to-people exchanges between China and the United States, saying that the two nations should continue engaging and respecting each other.

He made the remarks at the Great Wall Climate Dialogue, a policy dialogue with China's Minister of Ecology and Environment Huang Runqiu and officials from five Chinese provincial-level regions at a hotel near Yanqi Lake in Beijing's northern outskirts.

Huang said Beijing is looking forward to stronger exchanges and cooperation with California in terms of the carbon market, climate investment and financing, climate adaptation and environmental law enforcement.

Newsom told reporters after the meeting that "there is no substitute for people-to-people exchanges" between the world's two largest economies.

He added that progress can only be made when people "work through" their differences and disagreements, and "do it in a responsible and respectful way".

"That's the spirit that brought me to China," he said.

He added that it was a matter of great concern that "there hasn't been a US governor visiting China in four-and-a-half years".

Newsom also expressed discomfort with the nosedive of China-US relations in recent years.

"I don't want to live in a world of this kind of friction and negativity. I don't want my kids growing up like that," he said, recalling his experience of "being under a desk at school preparing for a nuclear war".

"That's no way to raise your family. And I don't want to see that replicated here in China. I don't want a Cold War with China."

Newsom began his fourth trip to China and his first as governor of California on Monday, touring Hong Kong and Guangdong province before arriving in Beijing.

"It's a remarkable place, remark-

able people," he said of China. "And we're a remarkable place with remarkable people in the United States."

During the session with Chinese officials, Newsom presented the case for stronger collaboration between Beijing and Washington.

"China and the United States represent from 41 to 44 percent of the world's emissions. We're never going to address the issue of climate change on this planet unless the US and China work more collaboratively together," Newsom said.

He added that he made the trip because of his "deep desire to enhance and advance our relationship on the issue of low-carbon green growth".

Meanwhile, California, he explained, is on the front line of climate change. It is a state where "the hots are getting a lot hotter, dries are getting a lot drier, where we're experiencing record-breaking heat, drought, and this year record-breaking floods".

He said that the US state, which is the world's fifth-largest economy, looks forward to partnering

with China and leaders at the sub-national level on climate-related issues.

Yang Wanming, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, the co-host of the dialogue, said cooperation between China and the US in addressing climate change and promoting green development will contribute to the green and high-quality development of both sides.

"It is advantageous for the people of both countries and it also contributes to the development of all of humanity."

The climate dialogue is intended to help promote subnational cooperation and promote the steady and healthy development of Sino-US relations, he said.

Zhang Haibin, a professor from Peking University's School of International Studies and the Institute of Carbon Neutrality, said a joint response to climate change is of strategic significance to both China and the US, as the crisis poses an existential threat to both nations and humanity.

"It is important for the US to drop the mentality of 'outcompeting China' and work with China to jointly develop a healthy and secure global ecosystem," he said.

Contact the writers at
xuwei@chinadaily.com.cn

CHINA

Overseas graduates eligible for civil posts

By WANG XIAOYU
wangxiaoyu@chinadaily.com.cn

Graduates returning from some prestigious higher education institutions overseas will be eligible to apply for civil service positions in some regions, through a dedicated channel that was previously only reserved for their counterparts from top-notch domestic colleges, according to several local governments.

In China, there are mainly two ways for fresh graduates to compete for a government job. The majority of young applicants sit the highly competitive annual national-level or provincial-level examinations for civil servants.

In the latest round that took place in January, there were more than 1.95 million applicants, with about one in 43 being recruited.

The other approach is to enroll in a program that will send applicants to grassroots positions in rural or less-developed areas for two to three years. Part of the appeal lies in that they are more likely to be assigned higher-level positions upon returning.

The second approach, commonly referred to as the "selected and assigned graduates", also carries additional requirements, including that applicants must be a member of the Communist Party of China, hold a leadership role in student unions on campus or have been awarded national-level scholarships that are closely associated with academic grades.

For years, the channel was only accessible to graduates from elite universities in China, such as Peking University and Tsinghua University in Beijing and Fudan University in Shanghai.

However, a growing number of provincial-level authorities have announced slots for returnees from overseas in recent years.

For instance, officials in Sichuan province in Southwest China said earlier this month that it will recruit a number of new graduates from overseas with majors in urgently needed fields through the "selected and assigned graduates" track.

Applicants need to have majored in one of 24 fields of study, such as electronic information, equipment manufacturing, digital economy, modern agriculture and aerospace engineering.

They are also expected to graduate from a list of 52 foreign universities and two from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The list consists of Ivy League universities and other prestigious campuses in the United States, as well as a few in Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Australia, Japan, Singapore and more.

The Shanghai government said that in the openings for 2024, overseas returnees from 73 colleges outside the mainland can apply.

Beijing has broadened the eligibility to all new graduates from the top 100 universities overseas. The ranking will depend on the 2023 Academic Ranking of World Universities that was released by Shanghai Ranking Consultancy this year.

Other provinces that have announced they will accept overseas returnees include the provinces of Guangdong, Shandong, Henan, Hebei, Shanxi, Yunnan as well as Chongqing.

Wang Yukai, a professor at the National Academy of Governance, told China Newsweek that allowing young people with overseas study experiences to join the government system will bring positive outcomes.

"Such graduates are likely to have a broader perspective, and those majoring in the science or technology sector will be able to learn from advanced industries in developed countries and gain more insights into industry development," he said.

Zheng Tian, an engineering major from the University of Texas in Austin, said the policy change gives her one more choice for her future career and she will probably put in an application.

Fruit ninjas



Students from Zhuji Technician College demonstrate food carving skills during the 2023 China (Zhejiang) Vocational Education and Training Exhibition in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, on Thursday. This expo attracted more than 30 technical colleges, vocational training institutions and human resources agencies in the province, to showcase the innovation and achievements in vocational education.

LIN YUNLONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Judiciaries commit to cross-border crime fight

Senior court officials from BRI nations discuss cooperation on shared issues

By CAO YIN in Quanzhou, Fujian
caoyin@chinadaily.com.cn

Judicial officials from countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative have pledged to increase exchanges on improving judiciary efficiency and fighting cross-border crime, so that they can give stronger legal support to the BRI's high-quality development.

The pledge was made by domestic and foreign legal representatives at the Maritime Silk Road International Forum on Judicial Cooperation, which was held by China's Supreme People's Court in Quanzhou, Fujian province, on Thursday.

In recent years, Chinese courts have seen a rapid increase in disputes. Last year, the Chinese courts dealt with more than 33.7 million cases.

"How to solve such a large number of lawsuits as quickly as possible while upholding justice is a big challenge for us," said Yang Wanming, vice-president of the SPC.

To create balance between the quality and efficiency of case handling, he added that the top court carried out a series of reforms and made several explorations, such as providing assistants for judges, streamlining procedures to tackle simple civil and administrative

cases, and establishing rules for online litigation.

Regarding information technologies as key to improving judicial efficiency, Muhammad Syarifuddin, chief justice of the Supreme Court of Indonesia, said the move is helpful in ensuring judicial transparency and allowing litigants to follow their lawsuits more conveniently.

He encouraged BRI countries to strengthen the application of such technologies in case handling, so as to fill the digital gap and better serve litigants.

As traditional crimes such as fraud, gambling, money laundering, drug trafficking, embezzlement and bribery have been more closely integrated with the internet, participants from home and abroad also called for international cooperation against cross-border crime during the forum.

Zhang Haibo, president of China's Guangdong High People's Court, highlighted the significance of evidence collection in the fight against transnational crimes, revealing that China has signed bilateral treaties on judicial assistance in criminal matters with more than 60 countries.

In addition, China adopted a law on international judicial assistance in criminal matters in Octo-

ber 2018, making provisions on investigation and evidence collection in cross-border crimes, he added.

"Transnational crime is more of a global issue than a national one," Nurlan Musaev, deputy chairman of the Supreme Court of Kyrgyzstan, said while introducing his country's endeavors in combating cross-border crime.

Considering new technologies have been frequently used in fundraising and communication for organized crime, he suggested international exchanges be increased in this regard.

Expressing his determination to advance legal cooperation with BRI countries, Zhang Jun, president of China's SPC, said that Chinese courts are ready to work with all partners to maintain close communication in criminal judicial assistance and in combating transnational crimes, in a bid to jointly build a safe and stable social environment.

He emphasized that Chinese courts will abide by international treaties, respect international practices, fulfill international obligations and give equal protection to litigants, with better handling of BRI-related disputes.

At the forum, participants also shared their ideas on innovative means to resolve international commercial disputes and on tackling e-commerce disputes through online platforms in the digital era.

Offshore aquaculture feeds Guangdong's GDP with fresh fish

By QIU QUANLIN in Guangzhou and HU MEIDONG in Fuzhou

Around one million golden pomfrets weighing over 200 metric tons, along with other fish fry, have been breeding inside a giant intelligent aquaculture platform in Liusha Bay, Zhanjiang, a coastal city in Guangdong province, since it was put into operation in early August.

The Havvii 2, a semi-submersible truss-style intelligent aquaculture platform, which has a volume of 30,000 cubic meters, is capable of cultivating over 1,000 tons of fish in a single farming cycle.

The platform is the largest of its kind in Guangdong, and is equipped with a solar power system, enabling it to achieve self-sufficiency with green energy and allowing unmanned operation and real-time remote monitoring during fish farming.

"We have made a significant investment to breed golden pomfrets as there is a high demand for the fish in the market thanks to its delicious meat," said Lu Zhenxiang, assistant to the president of Guangdong Havvii Agricultural Group, the operator of the platform.

The first batch of golden pomfrets is expected to be available in the market before Spring Festival, with an estimated output value of 20 to 30 million yuan (\$2.7 to \$4.1 million), according to Lu.

Operation of the aquaculture platform follows Guangdong's ambitious plan to develop deep-sea aquaculture equipment and smart fisheries, promoting the transformation and upgrading of the marine fisheries industry toward informatization, intelligence and modernization.

"The construction of offshore aquaculture platforms will help further strengthen the country's marine economy and the so-called blue-grain warehouse," said Lu.

Another platform for offshore aquaculture, Havvii 1, has already been in operation since April, with a breeding capability of 20 kilograms per cubic meter, according to Lu.

A series of systems have been utilized to enable the digitalization of fisheries and data collection,

including monitoring fish growth and water quality.

"With a solar power system and other intelligent and modern facilities, the two platforms have a strong resistance to wind and waves, allowing a similar living environment for fish and greatly increasing farming efficiency," said Lu.

The Havvii 2 has a designed operating life of 20 years. It will be used for the cultivation of popular seawater fish species such as brown croakers, cobias and giant groupers.

Offshore aquaculture has emerged as a new driving force for high-quality development in Guangdong in recent years as the blue-sea economy accelerates.

The output value of Guangdong's marine production topped 1.8 trillion yuan last year, a year-on-year increase of 5.4 percent and accounting for 14 percent of the province's gross domestic product, according to the Department of Natural Resources of Guangdong.

China has been actively promoting the construction of modern marine ranches, considering them as one of the important measures to achieve food security and to practice sustainable food.

In neighboring Fujian province, which is a leader in exports of aquatic products, the blue economy continues to inject vitality into the industry, with the building of 18 deep-sea aquaculture platforms.

Fujian's total marine production value reached nearly 1.2 trillion yuan last year, with aquatic products reaching 8.6 million tons, according to the local government.

More intelligent facilities have been installed in deep-sea aquaculture platforms in the province. In Dinghai Bay of Lianjiang county in Fuzhou, Fujian, wind turbines have been installed inside Zhenyu No 1, a large aquaculture platform, enabling a breeding cage to flip 360 degrees to simulate the wild living environment.

The environment helps give yellow croakers living in the cage wild quality and fresh meat. Fujian produces 80 percent of the country's yellow croakers.

Contact the writers at qiuquanlin@chinadaily.com.cn



The Havvii 2 intelligent aquaculture platform in Liusha Bay, Zhanjiang, Guangdong province, is swimming with over 200 metric tons of fish fry in August. CHEN JIMIN / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Technology adoption a key driver of greater global food production

By LI LEI in Sanya, Hainan
lilei@chinadaily.com.cn

The world needs to invest more in agricultural know-how to bolster food yield, curb rural poverty and combat climate change, according to a consensus reached by a global panel of farming technology leaders on Thursday.

Technological innovation is the crucial driver for transforming the global agri-food systems, according to the Sanya Declaration of the 7th Global Forum of Leaders for Agricultural Science and Technology.

Progress in the area plays a pivotal role in enhancing the world's agricultural production capacity, revolutionizing agricultural sectors, and promoting rural development, the declaration said.

Experts attending the forum called upon governments — especially those in developing countries and possibly facing dire food supply issues — and agricultural enterprises worldwide to step up funding for agricultural research and technology dissemination,

such as by training more talent.

They pledged to work more closely in agricultural science and technology, with the aim of helping reform agri-food systems and addressing global challenges ranging from food insecurity to poverty to climate disasters, and help achieve the goals of the China-proposed Global Development Initiative.

"Efforts should be made to turn global agri-food systems toward being more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable, through enhancing green agricultural technological innovation, climate change adaptation, carbon sequestration and emission reduction in agriculture, and reducing food losses and waste across the entire production chain," the declaration said, adding such expertise is the underlying pillar for achieving "energy-efficient, emission-reducing, green and low-carbon sustainable agricultural development".

Participants lauded the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, the forum's organizer, for launch-

ing the International Mega Science Project from Genotype to Phenotype Initiative, which helps with the sharing of crop genetic resources and offers public products and platforms for molecular breeding.

They also welcomed the idea of the China-Africa Agricultural Science and Technology Innovation Alliance initiated by the CAAS and its African counterpart, the African Academy of Sciences.

The alliance is meant to be an open and shared platform for coordinating agricultural technology institutions and the industry sector, promoting hunger and poverty reduction in Africa, advancing agricultural modernization, and helping reach goals set by the African Agenda 2063.

According to the CAAS, about 580 representatives from 49 countries and 16 international organizations worldwide attended the forum and its side events.

They reached the consensus after extensive discussions on the theme of "Science and Technology Leading the Transformation of

Global Agri-food Systems".

The forum, known as GLAST, opened on Thursday in the seaside resort of Sanya in Hainan province, which is better known for its palm trees and beaches. In recent years, Sanya, seat of a sprawling national seed breeding base, has turned into an emerging hub for international farming know-how exchanges.

The four-day event was organized by the CAAS alongside the provincial government of Hainan, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Addressing the event's opening ceremony, CAAS President Wu Kongming said China's agricultural science community has worked with the government and farmers to successfully feed 1.4 billion people, improving their living standards and nutrition.

He noted that one-fifth of the world's population consumes 700,000 metric tons of grain,

98,000 tons of cooking oil, 1.92 million tons of vegetables and 230,000 tons of meat daily. "It is immense work to meet such needs."

With that in mind, Wu said the country is fast-tracking agricultural innovations and modernizing its farming sector in an "efficient, secure, continuous" fashion, adding technologies and better equipment — such as more water-saving irrigation systems and plowing machines designed for mountainous areas — are contributing a greater share to food production-related progress.

According to the FAO and the World Bank, about 9.2 percent of the world's population still live in persistent hunger and 660 million people worldwide are grappling with extreme poverty. The world's food supply needs to be increased by 70 percent by 2050 to meet the rising demand.

Wu said the initiative can help pool resources to bring about breakthroughs in food production and eliminate hunger on the African continent.

CHINA

Global Strategic Dialogue

Better multilateralism needed to ward off risks

By ZHOU LANXU
zhoulanxu@chinadaily.com.cn

There is an urgent need to strengthen inclusive multilateral collaboration as the world must rise to face the risk of a global economic recession and the shared challenge of climate change, foreign and Chinese experts said on Thursday.

To achieve that goal, efforts should be made to better include developing countries in global economic governance and to ensure an equal distribution of the benefits of globalization among different populations, they said.

China, they added, will not seek decoupling, but safeguard the stability of the global supply chain together with other countries, despite the international rise in protectionism and nationalism.

"More than ever, with all the global shocks that we have seen, we need stronger multilateralism," Hanan Morsy, deputy executive secretary and chief economist of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, said at a session of the Global Strategic Dialogue (2023) in Beijing on Thursday.

The dialogue was co-hosted by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and China Daily.

The session was themed "Globalization and Economic Development".

The world needs to work together to address global shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, said Morsy who also acknowledged that globalization is facing the challenges of rising nationalism.

To further advance globalization, it is important to have a more inclusive system that is more representative of the entire world and the voices of developing economies, including African ones, she said.

Morsy called specifically for reforms to the global financial architecture, including the quota system of the International Monetary Fund, to allow African economies to have a greater say in and access to financial resources.

Yi Xiaozhun, former deputy director-general of the World Trade Organization, also stressed

at the session the need to further promote multilateral, inclusive collaboration as no economy alone can survive the multiple global crises, including the risk of a global economic recession amid the emergence of regional conflicts.

Yi said: "It is not only important to help African and Latin American economies — including some least-developed ones — to reap the benefit of globalization, but ensure that the wealth brought by globalization is well distributed within a country. Otherwise, populism, nationalism and even protectionism would still emerge."

Michele Geraci, former under-secretary of state at the Italian Ministry of Economic Development, said one of the obstacles to promoting globalization is the lack of sound analysis and effective communication of how globalization has benefited lower-income groups.

There is a need to explain the benefit of trade to all members of the population, instead of only focusing on the aggregate benefit, Geraci said via an online link.

Despite the rise in protectionism globally and the United States' attempts at ousting China from the global supply chain, Yu Yongding, an academic member of the CASS, said China will further promote trade liberalization, adhere to multilateralism and advocate the authority of WTO and other international institutions.

He stressed that China's new development paradigm — in which the domestic market is the mainstay and the domestic and international markets reinforce each other — does not mean China seeks to decouple with the rest of the world.

"China will not voluntarily withdraw from the global industrial chain. Instead, China will uphold the integrity of the global supply chain together with other countries," Yu said.

In the meantime, China should get prepared for the worst-case scenario that globalization could still face headwinds in the next five to ten years, Yu said, urging efforts to fully tap into the country's internal growth engine and strengthen investment in education and high-tech industries.



Experts hold discussions during a session at the Global Strategic Dialogue (2023) in Beijing on Thursday. WANG ZHUANGFEI / CHINA DAILY

Experts call for trust amid global turmoil

Strengthening dialogue, cooperation important in uncertain time, forum told

By ZHAO RUINAN
zhaorunan@chinadaily.com.cn

In an increasingly divided and conflict-ridden world, experts called on Thursday for countries to enhance mutual trust, strengthen dialogue and cooperation, and make concerted efforts to promote global stability and peaceful development.

The remarks were made at the Global Strategic Dialogue (2023) session titled "World Changes, Peace and Stability", jointly held in Beijing by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and China Daily.

Getachew Engida, former UNESCO deputy director-general and co-president of the China-Africa Leadership Development Institute at Tsinghua University, said that the world is undergoing great changes, characterized by "growing instability and fragility".

"Challenges are steep. Climate change is affecting all societies. Poverty remains enduring, just as inequalities are deepening. ... Conflicts are encouraged and often actively promoted as geopolitical instruments to dominate and spur economic growth in specific sectors whose owners have political leverage," said Engida.

"We see the rise of violent extremism, terrorism, hitting societies across the world," he said, calling for more dialogue between different countries and cultures.

"I believe the need for dialogue has never been so important, that is, dialogue for mutual learning — dialogue between and within societies, dialogue between and within gener-

ations, dialogue between and within cultures, including faiths and beliefs."

Many attending the session expressed their concerns, saying that the ongoing Russia-Ukraine crisis and the recent outbreak of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict indicate that the world is passing through a period of acute uncertainty, unprecedented changes, and major dislocations.

Zhang Yuyan, chairman of the National Institute for Global Strategy at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that the two ongoing conflicts, regardless of their outcomes, will no doubt have a profound impact on the future global landscape, adding more uncertainty to the world.

"There is a continuous escalation of rivalry among countries worldwide and the world is heading toward fragmentation," he said.

However, he also pointed out that a broader perspective of peace should be adopted today, because "there are not just traditional conflicts and wars, but also some non-traditional conflicts and security issues".

He mentioned the US move to put Chinese companies on an "unverified list" in October last year, restricting their access to high-end technology.

A researcher from the Washington-based think tank, Center for Strategic and International Studies, had suggested that it is a declaration of "economic war" against China, according to Zhang.

Amid escalating international tensions, this kind of move would undoubtedly have a direct negative

impact on global economic development, posing greater risks and more challenges to global integration, he said.

"To address the global divisions, it is vital for us to collaborate and work together in a unified front. This is the utmost priority we should embrace in seeking certainty within an uncertain world," he said.

Grzegorz W. Kolodko, director of the Transformation, Integration and Globalization Economic Research Center at Kozminski University in Poland, called on countries to strengthen trust and enhance mutual understanding to tackle the challenges facing the world.

"The Cold War was over for years, ... but now the United States has launched a new 'Cold War' against Russia and China. We must do something that can bring more trust to the world. In this new 'Cold War' between the West, led by the US, and the so-called East, we need trust," said Kolodko, who is also the former deputy prime minister and minister of finance of Poland.

Ashok K. Kantha, former Indian ambassador to China, believes that in a world faced with unprecedented changes, China and India should manage differences, expand common interests, and strengthen cooperation.

China-India relations are critical "not only because we are the world's two most populous countries, but also because we are neighbors," he said.

"More importantly, without cooperation between India and China, the challenges facing the world, such as climate issues, epidemic prevention, and counter-terrorism, cannot be effectively solved. We need cooperation ... to move away from the current downward trend."

What they say



Lasting peace must rest on a complex fabric of interrelated values, attitudes and behaviors, required both in the implementation of international treaties and in the course of daily life, with the practice of respect, tolerance, openness, mutual understanding and dialogue. Today, we must do everything to empower present and future generations with skills to exchange, communicate and cooperate across cultural, religious and national boundaries, to become responsible global citizens in a safer world for all.

Getachew Engida, former UNESCO deputy director-general and co-president of the China-Africa Leadership Development Institute at Tsinghua University



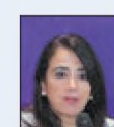
As one of the mega-trends that are shaping the reality of the time, globalization is irreversible across the world, and is good for development in the long run. There is no measurable economy that is able to take full advantage of globalization like China. China would not have been so successful over the past three or four decades if it had not been smart and intelligent enough to take advantage of globalization.

Grzegorz W. Kolodko, director of TIGER, Transformation, Integration and Globalization Economic Research, at Kozminski University, former deputy prime minister and minister of finance of Poland



The "small courtyard with high walls" strategy of the United States has not only failed to stop, but instead spurred the innovative spirit of Chinese enterprises. The wave of technological innovation and revolution in China is slowly on the rise and is poised to erupt suddenly someday.

Yu Yongding, academic member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences



To meet its development needs, Africa needs the same type of growth that China has experienced over the last 40 years, the type of double-digit growth. To make this happen, the multilateral development banks need to play a much bigger role than what we have seen. There is a huge opportunity to get investors, especially from China, to collaborate and help with technology transfer, skill transfer, and investment in integrating Africa into the global energy value chains.

Hanan Morsy, deputy executive secretary and chief economist of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa



The rise of China is undoubtedly the most important geopolitical development in the last three decades. But there are also countries like India, Indonesia, Brazil and others, and they should not be underestimated. It is extremely important that we (China and India) must pull out of the current downward drift and stabilize relations, because without India and China working together, none of the major transnational challenges, whether it be climate change or terrorism, can be meaningfully addressed.

Ashok K. Kantha, former Indian ambassador to China



A guest poses a question to experts during a session of the Global Strategic Dialogue in Beijing. WANG ZHUANGFEI / CHINA DAILY

US inability to listen 'biggest danger'

By FANG AIQING
fangaiqing@chinadaily.com.cn

The biggest danger right now is that the United States has lost its capacity to listen to other countries and to accept the redlines of other nations, according to renowned economist Jeffrey Sachs.

Sachs, a professor at the School of Public Affairs at Columbia University in the US, was addressing via video link a session on diversity of civilizations and a harmonious world, during the Global Strategic Dialogue (2023), jointly organized by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and China Daily, in Beijing on Thursday.

He said, "we're in a new era where there's the desire that every part of the world be heard properly, and we don't have a shared view of how this new multipolar world is going to operate."

"Institutionalizing dialogue is much better than yelling or much better than ignoring the other side," he said.

Sachs said the actual processes of

listening to each other and institutional reform to strengthen the order operating under the UN Charter are urgently needed for a safer world.

He said he hoped that US officials understand this is not the time to intensify the rhetoric or the conflict with China.

Xing Guangcheng, director-general of the Institute of Chinese Borderland Studies, CASS, said apart from security and development, the Global Civilization Initiative is based upon the great importance attached to the understanding of civilization.

The initiative stands in opposition to the "clash of civilizations" theory of US political scientist Samuel Huntington, and is a key philosophical idea for solving the crucial and catastrophic problems facing humankind.

"We should respect each other, maintain inclusiveness and seek dialogue in dealing with differences between civilizations," Xing added.

Flexibility is much more important than any stable and unchangeable arrangements, and that is a

universal rule for all, Fyodor Lukyanov, chairman of the Presidium of the Council for Foreign and Defense Policy and research director of the Valdai Discussion Club in Russia, said in his speech via video link.

He stressed the importance of flexible multilateralism, primarily on the regional level, as "the global approach to solve global problems will be replaced by a regional approach with consequences of global problems for particular regions".

In these new situations the world will need to find ways to counter risk, he said.

Lukyanov said the China-Russia relationship, based on mutual interests and with no intention to impose their experiences on anybody else, is exemplary for all those who understand the need for a new system and are looking for models.

"It would be very useful for all in the world to study how the Russia-China relationship is being developed. ... I think many good lessons can be learned from this," he said.

Yuan Zhengqing, a senior fellow at the Institute of World Economics



Jeffrey Sachs, a professor at Columbia University's School of Public Affairs, speaks online during a session about building a harmonious world at the dialogue in Beijing on Thursday. WANG ZHUANGFEI / CHINA DAILY

and Politics, CASS, said that as an important force in the global governance system, China has maintained multiple identities as an emerging power, a developing country, and more.

The country is able to provide new solutions with more Chinese wisdom for the development of world civilization and plays an important role in reforming and perfecting its mechanisms. It also

has exchanges and cooperation with various countries based on the Chinese path to modernization, he said.

Yuan added that China will better practice mutual respect and trust in global governance, enhance cooperation with other countries through a global network of partnerships, and work with other countries to tackle various global challenges together with shared interests, rights and responsibilities.

Journalists overwhelmed by Tibetan wonders

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Autonomous region's development, culture showcased to international news agencies

Nearly 30 journalists from 22 countries concluded a five-day trip to Southwest China's Tibet autonomous region on Oct 7, during which they interviewed local residents and officials, and witnessed the region's robust development and diverse cultures.

The journalists were from news agencies, television companies, newspapers and news portals from countries including Pakistan, Nepal, Belarus, Ethiopia, Chile, Vanuatu and Turkmenistan.

The trip, which started on Oct 3, took the journalists to various places across the regional capital of Lhasa and the city of Nyingchi. They also attended an international cooperation forum from Oct 4-6.

In Xiga Monba village in the city of Manling — which is a part of Nyingchi, Catherine Gurua from the Muta-wall news portal in Georgia recorded the production of Tibetan paper by local craftsmen with traditional techniques.

She was informed that Xiga is a new settlement for residents relocated from Gade township in Metog county, which featured an adverse living environment.

Today, the new community is home to more than 300 residents in 83 households. Their current per capita disposable income is more than 70 times that of 20 years ago.

The production of Tibetan paper is just one of many revenue streams, locals told Gurua. Xiga now has specialized rural cooperatives for the production of Tibetan paper, Tibetan incense and *thangka* paintings, as well as sightseeing tourism, allowing locals to have jobs in their own community.

After completing a tour of the Cultural Heritage Museum for Southeast Tibet in Nyingchi, Marie-Noelle Waiane Kaltack from the Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation said: "One thing that I'm impressed with at the museum is how you preserve history by keeping every single detail of your history for the future generation."

The museum has preserved thousands of items showcasing cultural relics, ethnic costumes, hunting and farming culture, traditional Tibetan



Clockwise from top: Nyingchi, the host city of the third China Xizang Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation, is famous for its picturesque scenery. JIANG FAN / XINHUA Representatives of more than 40 countries, regions and international organizations attend the trans-Himalaya forum. PALDEN NYIMA / CHINA DAILY Attendees listen to a speaker during the forum. JIGME DORJIE / XINHUA

medicine, living customs, folk songs and dances, language and literature, handicrafts, sports competitions, festivals, religious beliefs and architectural arts.

The journalists also toured Lulang. The small town in Nyingchi's Dragyib district is the venue for the third China Xizang Trans-Himalaya Forum for International Cooperation.

Lulang, which literally means "the habitat of immortals", is located in a valley at an altitude of more than 3,000 meters.

Despite the high altitude, Lulang is a place featuring idyllic pastures, dense forests and a high content of oxygen, making it an ideal habitat for both humans and wildlife.

Hu Xiongying, a local official, told the journalists that what made this

hidden pearl shine was a tourism project jointly developed by the governments of Guangdong province and the Tibet autonomous region.

The project, with a total investment of 3.6 billion yuan (\$492 million) started in 2011 and was completed five years later. It has turned the small village into a booming sightseeing township known as the "Oriental Switzerland", featuring

enticing scenery and harmonious coexistence between human and nature.

"Not only is Tibet's ecology good, but the whole of China has done very well in environmental protection, and has made great efforts. Through this trip to Tibet, I deeply felt the harmony between man and nature," said Tofik Mamedov from the State Committee of Turkmenistan for Televi-

sion, Radio Broadcasting and Cinematography, when attending the trans-Himalaya forum.

Centered around the theme of "promoting the harmony of humans and nature, sharing the fruits of cooperation and development", representatives of more than 40 countries, regions and international organizations had an in-depth exchange of views on environmental cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, and reached a broad consensus.

Upon learning that Tibet has achieved overall carbon neutrality, Ueretan Bauro, editor of Uekera newspaper in Kiribati, said: "We are very happy as people from the lowest country in the world. We thank people here and of course the whole of China. We want to tell the world, especially those who produce too much greenhouse gas, to please lower their carbon release."

After the forum, the journalists took the high-speed train from Nyingchi to Lhasa, and visited the Tibet Museum, Potala Palace and Jokhang Temple.

"In Tibet, residents wear their own ethnic costumes, and almost all shops and signboards have the Tibetan language. Traditional culture is being inherited well," said Birat Gautam from Nepalpress.

"The Chinese government is spending a lot of money on development and social infrastructure here. People lead a very modern life," said Ali Abbas, a senior reporter with Pakistan's City News Network.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, and many journalists kept mentioning the BRI during their conversations with local residents.

"For me, the BRI is not just about construction. It is also connecting people, connecting culture," Abbas said.

"Most of the Latin American countries are part of the BRI. Chile was actually among the first batch of countries to have entered," said Maria Sanhueza from Chilean newspaper El Ciudadano.

"I think that the whole world is shifting toward another type of order. Call it multilateral," Sanhueza added.

Xinhua contributed to this story.

Tourism boosting residents' quality of living

By YUAN SHENGGAO



Known as "the habitat of immortals", Lulang is an emerging tourist destination in the east of Tibet. SHEN HONGBING / XINHUA

When tourists take a tour of Tibet from Sichuan province, via the famed National Highway 318, they will inevitably encounter the township of Lulang when they approach Nyingchi, the largest city in the east of Tibet.

The town is located in a valley to the east of Nyingchi's Dragyib district.

Hundreds of Tibetan-style houses are dotted throughout the valley, which features a bubbling stream, surrounded by blossoming grasses and shrubs, farmlands and thriving spruces. And far away, snow-capped mountains are visible, emerging through the dense mists.

Despite an altitude of more than 3,000 meters, this is a place ideal for living, farming and herding. Local Tibetans, who have been there for many centuries, usually refer to this place as "the habitat of immortals".

But today, tourism has been added to the traditional industries of farming and herding, resulting in drastically increasing revenues.

Phuntsog, a resident in Lulang's Trashingang village, was among the pioneers to operate a bed-and-breakfast business by the highway more than a decade ago, offering services to tourists and passengers with his rustic food and simple but clean lodgings. Fellow villagers began to follow suit in the years to come.

But, because of a large tourism development project in Lulang 10 years ago, Phuntsog has seen unexpected growth in both tourist numbers and revenue.

Hu Xiongying, an official of Lulang township, praised this development project as a significant move to "make this hidden pearl (of Lulang) shine".

"Trashigang, a village that mostly

relied on farming and herding, was just home to about a dozen households a decade ago," Hu said. "And now it has become one of the most prosperous parts of the Lulang International Tourism Town."

Planned by the Guangdong provincial government and the government of the Tibet autonomous region, the project involving a total investment of 3.6 billion yuan (\$492.12 million) started construction in 2011.

The project became operational in 2016. It immediately became an attractive tourist destination with natural landscapes, folk customs and cultures, and complete infrastructure.

Hu is from Guangdong, and was assigned to Lulang as an official for an aiding-Tibet program. Since he began working there 10 years ago, he has witnessed a tourism boom in Lulang.

"Since the Lulang International Tourism Town was built, almost every household has run a family homestay or other related operations. Local residents' incomes have increased year-by-year," Hu said.

The Lulang International Tourism Town has a main street stretching about 1 kilometer, which has gathered more than 100 homestays, dozens of eateries, stores and several star-rated hotels.

According to Hu, the tourism development has offered more than 2,000 jobs to locals. And more people are expected to join in this trade as the government has a plan to train more than 300 residents a year to help them master skills in operating tourism-related businesses.

Tenzin, 27, for instance, is a local

resident working with a five-star hotel in Lulang.

"I am paid more than 6,000 yuan a month," Tenzin said. "The hotel is close to my home, making it possible for me to manage my own homestay in my spare time."

Tenzin, who can now speak fluent Putonghua, or Mandarin, said he cherishes the opportunity to work with a premier hotel.

"The pay is good. And more importantly, I can learn advanced hotel management skills in my daily work, which are also applicable in operating my own homestay," Tenzin said.

Lulang has offered work and business opportunities not only for locals, but also for people from elsewhere.

Tang Haiyu, a tourist from Sichuan province, visited Lulang in 2017 with her husband. She said she fell in love with Lulang the first time she saw it and decided to settle there by renting a cowshed and upgrading it into a clean and cozy Tibetan-style house.

"We moved to the house in 2018, making it our residence and also a homestay to serve tourists," Tang said.

Hu said business opportunities in Lulang are not limited to tourism. There is also great development potential in sectors like animal husbandry, greenhouse farming and tea plantations.

Lulang is now home to a special industrial park for entrepreneurship, which is currently home to more than 80 enterprises invested in by businesses from Nyingchi and the rest of the country.

Xinhua contributed to this story.

A new home for traditional crafts

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Xiga, a village in the city of Manling under the administration of Nyingchi in the Tibet autonomous region, is a new settlement for residents moving from the neighboring county of Metog.

Far from the old settlement in Metog's Gade township, which featured an adverse living environment and difficulty in road connectivity, there are still things the relocated residents have never left behind — the traditional professions in making Tibetan paper, Tibetan incense and *thangka* paintings.

The professions involve skills that the residents and their ancestors have practiced for centuries in Gade, and are becoming important resources of revenue in Xiga.

The old trades are rapidly developing thanks to the establishment of several handicraft cooperatives.

One such cooperative is called Namjagbarwa Tongluogabu. It's named after the famed snow-capped mountain of Namjagbarwa near their hometown in Metog, and a plant called the Tongluogabu tree.

Tobden, head of the cooperative, is a master craftsman in making Tibetan paper. He said the paper, with its origin in the seventh century, is unique to Tibetan language-speaking regions. Made from wolfsbane and Tongluogabu bark, the paper is mainly used for printing Buddhist sutras and other documents.

The paper's production requires a complicated process of dozens of procedures. Tobden, with more than 40 years of experience, is one of the few who can master the entire pro-

cess and all the techniques.

In the past, Tobden said the work was completed in intervals between farming. But now it has become an occupation for the whole year.

"This is because of the increasing demand from tourists to the village and buyers throughout the country," Tobden said. He explained that some young people in the village have designed souvenirs based on Tibetan paper, like postcards, notebooks, *thangka* paintings and lanterns.

Tsering Migyur is one such young man. He operates a printing studio as a part of the cooperative, printing visitors' photos on the Tibetan paper with modern scanning technology.

"Souvenirs like this are both novel and traditional," Tobden said. "They are sought-after as a token of Tibetan culture."

Xiga is now an emerging tourist destination. After tourists took them home, the products have become popular in the rest of country. "And we are receiving orders from places other than Tibet," Tobden said.

He said he is happy the cooperative is offering job opportunities and a revenue stream to local residents. "More than 200 people have learned the Tibetan paper-making skills from me and most of them have got rich," Tobden said.

Tibetan incense is another major product of the cooperative. The product is getting popular throughout the country as it is evolving into a health product from its original application in religious occasions, according to Rinchen Lhamo, a member of the cooperative.

"Our incense is made from more

than 30 varieties of locally growing medical herbs," Rinchen Lhamo said. "Lighting incense can aid one's sleep and repel mosquitoes."

She added that the production of Tibetan incense is becoming more efficient with the use of modern equipment and technologies.

While incense production is modernized, the making of *thangka* in Xiga is still a trade fervently adhering to traditional craftsmanship.

Gyaltsen, 28, is a veteran *thangka* painter despite his age. He began to learn the art when he was 14.

"To be a qualified *thangka* painter, you need a lot of practice and experience, as well as a keen insight into the art and extensive knowledge," Gyaltsen said. He said the art is often referred to as the "visual encyclopedia" in Tibetan language-speaking regions because of its rich expressions with multiple themes in religion, history, cultures and life.

Gyaltsen operates a studio in the village. The *thangka* paintings there are also popular among tourists. "Some have come here to buy and some have come to learn," Gyaltsen said.

Tseyang Lhamo is one of the youngsters who came to learn and her talent was soon recognized by Gyaltsen. "I believe the gifted girl can become an excellent painter after years of persistent practice," Gyaltsen said.

He added that operating a *thangka* studio is the best choice for him. "You can pass down the centuries-old heritage and you can make a fortune," Gyaltsen said.

Xinhua contributed to this story.



From left: A Xiga resident makes Tibetan paper at the Namjagbarwa Tongluogabu cooperative. A worker of the cooperative prints visitors' photos on the Tibetan paper. PHOTOS BY SUN FEI / XINHUA

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GLOBAL LENS



A resident of the Bailuwan area in Wulian county of Rizhao, Shandong province, takes her dog on a summer stroll in a field of the development project that includes housing, fruit orchards, social spaces and cultural amenities in line with sustainable practices. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Growing on the ground

Rural revitalization reaps real benefits

Every four days a week, baker Chen Yan takes out trays packed with piping hot bread from a wood-fired oven for crowds of customers who crave her European-style rolls.

For the past eight years, Chen, 40, has been making at least 5,000 yuan (\$685) a month training and working in the bakery, a significant amount compared with the farming she had previously subsisted on from the family plot of less than 0.2 hectares.

"Our village is nearby and it's very convenient," Chen said. "My husband also works here, driving an excavator."

Chen is one of more than 500 workers, most of them local residents, of the Bailuwan area in Wulian county of Rizhao, East China's Shandong province. Covering more than 600 hectares, Bailuwan is a comprehensive development project encompassing residential zones, farming and public spaces that strive to provide cultural and social amenities and facilities such as museums, libraries, fruit orchards and gardens, under a major sustainable approach in the county fueling rural revitalization.

Sun Qian, a director of the project, said partnerships and cooperatives with the villagers help drive inclusive development, becoming a major draw for Bailuwan's residents.

Wang Andong, deputy secretary of the Party committee of Wulian's Chaohe town, said Bailuwan offers a model for rural revitalization, complementing the pillar agricultural sector.

"Young residents are also increasingly returning to do their part,"

Wang said. "We're tapping their enthusiasm, energy and enterprise moving forward," he said.

Unlike many of his peers who chose to advance their careers in the big city, Hou Chuanlong, 34, leveraged local knowledge in tea cultivation, helping to set up more than 23 hectares of tea farmland and over 1,500 square meters of advanced tea processing plants, with products delivered nationwide.

Cooperatives for local tea cultivation include workers from nine surrounding villages, all helping to churn out 15 tons of processed tea leaves a year, Hou said.

"The villagers are important partners. We have up to 80 people a day who help pick the tea leaves in peak periods, even as we invest in automation and advanced technology to stay ahead of the sector," he said.

Wang Yan, secretary of the Party branch committee of Houweijia village who also heads a major sweet potato processing cooperative, said local villagers form the backbone and main beneficiaries of an industry that reflects the rich bounty of the area.

"Advanced processing facilities help us double production to at least 300,000 kilograms a year," said Wang, 44.

"We're also riding on digital trends, such as livestreaming, with online sales comprising up to half of our total sales," she said.

"In winter, when there's not much to be done in the fields, the villagers can help process and pack the dried sweet potato slices. All of us reap the rewards of development and progress together."

The villagers are important partners. We have up to 80 people a day who help pick the tea leaves in peak periods, even as we invest in automation and advanced technology to stay ahead of the sector."

Hou Chuanlong, entrepreneur



Above: Tourists in Bailuwan enjoy outdoor amenities of the development project in summer. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Right: Bailuwan residents view cultural performances in spring. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Clockwise from top left: Children take part in a cultural performance in the Bailuwan area of Wulian county of Rizhao in summer. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY Baker Chen Yan at work in her Bailuwan outlet on Sept 5. Wulian sweet potato farmers collect this year's autumn yield. Wang Yan, who heads a sweet potato cooperative, hands part of this year's autumn harvest to a local farmer. PHOTOS BY WANG HAORAN / CHINA DAILY

CHINA DAILY

WORLD

Hundreds look for Maine mass shooting suspect

Wide area locked down amid search for man suspected of killing 18 people

By AI HEPING in New York
aihaping@chinadailyusa.com

More than 74,000 residents in Lewiston, Maine, and surrounding areas remained in a lockdown Thursday with schools and business closed as law enforcement authorities searched on the ground, in the air and on water for a man suspected of killing 18 people and wounding 13 others Wednesday night at a bowling alley and a local bar in Lewiston, officials said.

Police have issued a warrant for the arrest of Robert Card, 40, for eight counts of murder — one for each victim identified so far. The shooting is the deadliest one in the United States this year and the eighth-deadliest attack since 2006.

More than 350 police officers are involved in the search, authorities said. US Senator Susan Collins of Maine said on Thursday that at least 80 FBI agents are looking for Card, along with the US Coast Guard and agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

A Coast Guard official told CBS News that it has deployed resources to search the Kennebec River for the suspect after a vehicle was found near a boat launch.

Card's family is cooperating with authorities, ABC News and CNN reported. Card's sister told investigators she thought that Card might have been looking for an ex-girlfriend at the shooting locations.

Ryan Card, the suspect's brother, told CNN via text, "There are many people hurting out there; please focus on them. This is many people's worst nightmare."

Maine officials haven't addressed a potential motive for the shootings but said during a media briefing Thursday that they are looking into Card's mental health.

Card allegedly threatened other soldiers with violence and was "command directed" to go to the Keller Army Community Hospital at the US Military Academy at West Point,



Law enforcement on patrol in Bowdoin, Maine, on Thursday, following Wednesday's mass shooting in Lewiston. SHANNON STAPLETON / REUTERS

New York, for medical evaluation, the official said. New York State Police transported Card to the hospital for a medical evaluation, the official said.

A police bulletin sent to law enforcement said Card had been in a mental health facility for two weeks in the summer and that he had reported "hearing voices and threats to shoot up" the military base.

No information was provided about Card's treatment or diagnosis. He received roughly two weeks of inpatient psychiatric treatment after making concerning comments, according to a person familiar with investigators' findings, The Associated Press reported.

In other developments, authorities found the suspect's white Subaru at a location in Lisbon, several miles southeast of Lewiston, late Wednesday, and recovered a firearm from

the vehicle, several law enforcement sources told ABC News.

Authorities are testing and tracing the gun to determine if it was involved in the shooting, according to the sources. The weapon used in the shootings was a semiautomatic rifle with an extended magazine and scope, CBS News reported.

Investigators found a note at Card's home on Thursday, law enforcement sources familiar with the case told ABC News, though they declined to describe its contents, length or relevance to the investigation.

The shooting unfolded in part during a youth night at a local bowling alley. Witnesses described a desperate scene where people hid behind benches and tables and even inside the bowling pin machine at the end of a lane.

Meghan Hutchinson was at the

bowling alley with her 10-year-old daughter Zoey Levesque, who was grazed by a bullet.

"I never thought I'd grow up and get a bullet in my leg," she said. "Like, why do people do this? I was more worried about, like, am I going to live and going to make it out of here? Like, what's going to happen? Are the cops going to come?"

Leroy Walker told NBC Nightly News that his son Joseph had used a butcher's knife to try to fight Card. Joseph was the manager at Schemengees Bar and Grille, the second place that police said Card opened fire at on Wednesday evening.

Walker said state police told him that his son "tried to go at the gunman to stop him from shooting anybody else. The gunman shot him twice through the stomach."

Walker, a City Council member in

Auburn, Maine, also told MSNBC that it took nearly 14 hours to get an update about his son, and he and his family are now "suffering and dying in a nightmare we don't understand."

Among those who were wounded was Jessica Karcher's 23-year-old son. She told The Washington Post that he was hit at the bar and grille, the other location where the gunman opened fire.

She said he was hit four times, underwent emergency surgery and remains in critical condition. Doctors have to "keep resuscitating him," she said. "He's not out of the woods."

Chad Vincent told The New York Times that he was in the fifth frame of his weekly bowling league game at Just-In-Time Recreation on Wednesday night when he heard a loud sound. But then, perhaps five seconds later, came another bang: "One of my

Some gun-related cases in US this year

Sept 17: A couple and their two young children are fatally shot in their Romeoville, Illinois, home.

Aug 24: Five members of a family are found dead at their home in Lake Township, Ohio, by police officers.

July 4: Multiple people are believed to have exchanged gunfire at an Independence Day party in Shreveport, Louisiana, with four killed.

June 15: A 48-year-old man is thought to be responsible for killing himself and five others in Sequatchie, Tennessee.

May 6: A man shoots eight people dead at a shopping center in Texas.

April 30: Four people are found fatally shot in a Mojave Desert community in California.

March 27: A 28-year-old fatally shoots three children and three adults at a school in Nashville, Tennessee.

Feb 17: A 52-year-old man kills six people in Arkabutla, Mississippi.

Jan 21: A 72-year-old man opens fire on a crowd, killing 11 people in Monterey Park, California.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

bowling partners said, "Hey, that's a gun! That's gunshots!"

Vincent, 45, ran toward the back exit. As he was escaping, he called 911. He and most of the other members of the league made it out of the building and through the woods to an Italian restaurant, Vincent said. They locked themselves in for maybe five to 10 minutes before their loved ones started arriving to pick them up.

As he and others fled, he said they were in disbelief.

"We're going: 'This is Maine,'" he said. "This is not happening. This stuff doesn't happen in Maine. Everybody's nice. We usually don't have problems."

Agencies contributed to this story.

Indonesia to see three-way race in presidential polls

By PRIME SARMIENTO in Hong Kong and LEONARDUS JEGHO in Jakarta

The campaign for Indonesia's presidential election is in full swing, with three candidates vying to be the next leader of Southeast Asia's biggest economy.

Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto, 72, on Wednesday registered as a candidate for the election. The former army lieutenant general named Gibran Rakabuming Raka, the former mayor of Surakarta city and eldest son of President Joko Widodo, as his running mate.

While Subianto is leading the early opinion polls, he faces stiff competition from Ganjar Pranowo, the former governor of Central Java and candidate for the ruling Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle.

Anies Rasyid Baswedan, the



A woman takes a selfie with Indonesia election mascots in Bandung on Thursday. ALGI FEBRI SUGITA / REUTERS

former governor of the capital Jakarta, is considered the dark horse in the three-way race.

Over 200 million people will be eligible to vote, with one-third of them under the age of 30.

Mustafa Izzuddin, a visiting professor at the Islamic University of

Indonesia, said the cost of living is one of the key election issues.

James Chin, a professor of Asian Studies at the University of Tasmania in Australia, said given Indonesia's young population, the issues that will dominate the February 2024 elections are economic growth, job creation, and income disparity.

Punchada Sirivunnabod, an associate professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Mahidol University in Thailand, said what matters most for voters is whether the candidates can sustain Indonesia's economic gains made under Widodo. Marsel Muja, an entrepreneur in Jakarta, told China Daily the next president should continue Widodo's plan to build more infrastructure as it will improve people's welfare.

Louisa Maria, owner of a beauty salon in the province of Papua, said

she has noticed how the start of the campaign season has sparked interest in the election in her community.

This is the voter base that both Subianto and Pranowo are appealing to. Both are promising to continue Widodo's programs of infrastructure development and mineral "downstreaming" — the shift from just exporting raw materials to processing them domestically.

Widodo, who has served as president for two consecutive terms, cannot run for a third term.

Indonesia's presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled for Feb 14.

Leonardus Jegho is a freelance journalist for China Daily.

Contact the writers at prime@chinadailyapac.com.

CHINA DAILY USA

NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS

1500 Broadway, Suite 2800,
New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212-537-8888

Fax: 212-537-8898

editor@chinadailyusa.com

readers@chinadailyusa.com

Subscription: 212-537-8899

Advertising: 212-537-8916

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WASHINGTON

National Press Bldg, Suite 1108 529 14th Street

NW

Washington, DC 20045

Tel: 202-662-7249

Fax: 202-662-7247

SAN FRANCISCO

235 Montgomery Street, Suite 900

San Francisco, CA 94104

Tel: 415-348-8288

Fax: 415-348-8388

SEATTLE

800 Fifth Ave, Suite 4100

Seattle, WA 98104

Tel: 206-922-2868

HOUSTON

1001 South Dairy Ashford Suite 100

Houston, TX 77077

Tel: 713-595-7660

CANADA | TORONTO

4711 Yonge Street, 10th Floor

Toronto, Ontario, M2N 6K8

Tel: 416-481-5706

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Mexico clears up wreckage of Storm Otis

MEXICO CITY, Mexico — Mexican soldiers and rescue workers on Thursday scrambled to clear up the chaos and devastation wrought by Hurricane Otis in Acapulco as the government worked to bring relief to the battered southern beach resort.

Otis on Wednesday slammed into Acapulco in the state of Guerrero as one of the strongest hurricanes to ever hit Mexico's Pacific coast, flooding streets, ripping roofs off homes and hotels, and severing communications, road and air access.

The toll remains unclear as downed phone service and electricity lines have made it hard to assess the extent of the damage, with no immediate reports of fatalities as of Wednesday evening.

Nearly 8,400 members of Mexi-



People help each other on a highway hit by Hurricane Otis near Acapulco, Mexico, on Wednesday. MARCO UGARTE / ASSOCIATED PRESS

co's army, air force and national guard were deployed in and near Acapulco to assist in cleanup efforts, the defense ministry said.

Classes were canceled for students across the state for a second day, and Governor Evelyn Salgado said on social media that authorities were working to restore electricity and reactivate drinking water pumps in Acapulco.

Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador arrived in the

seaside city late on Wednesday, after his convoy found roads blocked by landslides and other debris, forcing the president and others to abandon their vehicles and walk the final distance.

Mexico's state power utility CFE had over 1,300 employees working to restore power, it said on Wednesday evening, when some 300,000 people remained without electricity.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

Kenya research center set to boost TCM

By WANG XIAODONG

in Nairobi, Kenya

wangxiaodong@chinadaily.com.cn

A new joint traditional medical and drug research center bringing together expertise from China and Kenya is set to boost R&D in the growing field, analysts said.

The center, in Kenyatta University of Kenya's capital Nairobi, will involve the research of traditional medicine in Kenya, the development of related drugs and the promotion of local pharmaceutical industries, Li Kejian, president of China's Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, said during a ceremony unveiling the center on Wednesday.

Researchers from the center will also intensify the study of traditional Chinese drugs in Kenya and promote traditional Chinese medicine, in cooperation with local pharmaceutical companies so that TCM benefits more locals, he said.

The two universities also plan to jointly establish a clinical center in traditional medicine at Kenyatta University Hospital, Li said.

"As far as we know, traditional medicine is widely adopted in Kenya, and herbal drugs contribute more than 70 percent to the treatment of diseases in some tribes," Li said.

The center will boost TCM research that is closely linked with Kenya's traditional medicine, Li said, adding that some TCM drugs used in China originated in Kenya.

Cooperation welcomed

Paul Wainaina, Kenyatta University's vice-chancellor, said that the cooperation between the two universities comes at the right time.

"We used to have a small laboratory where we would analyze the efficacy of various herbal concoctions but the laboratory was inadequate," he said. "We want to be able to commercialize what we have. We are looking

forward to looking at the herbal resources we have in Kenya and what the Chinese partners can contribute with a view of working together to produce supplementary medicine."

Nicholas Gikonyo, an associate professor in the School of Medicine at Kenyatta University, said personnel training and exchanges will also be an important part of the collaboration.

"We want our students to go to China for training in specialized Chinese medicine as traditional Chinese medicine is very unique," he said. "We also want to build capacity by having experts from the university in Shandong come here to train our staff."

TCM has been used in at least 196 countries and regions, providing healthcare to more than one-third of the world's population, according to China's National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Otiato Opali in Nairobi contributed to this story.

BUSINESS

Tax benefits lift Xinghua's condiments business

By HAN RONGHUA and ZHUANG QIANGE

In Xinghua, a county-level city in Jiangsu province known as the "home of condiments", businessman Que Jiahua was grateful that he could get enough in tax refunds to help boost his company's condiment production.

Que, CEO of Jiahao Food Co Ltd, which holds some 30 patents, said his plant saved 1.45 million yuan (\$198,117) from tax reductions last year. The company then imported a Tetra Pak high-end production line in March to up its manufacturing of chicken seasoning and broth.

With 178 locally registered condiment enterprises, Xinghua aims to build an industry cluster that is "the sole center in China and No 1 in the world". Famous domestic brands have gathered in the city, with an input of over 400 million yuan.

The city's taxation authority, part of the State Administration of Taxation, is following the country's arrangement of reducing "six taxes and two fees" to help enterprises affected by the COVID-19 pandemic tide over the impact.

"The tax-relief aid is of great help to us," said Que, adding that as part of Huabao Group, a multinational conglomerate focusing on flavors, fragrances and condiments, his company has set up the Oriental Flavor Research Center in joint efforts with Jiangnan University, and embarked on a path of industry-university partnership.

"We will expand our production line by importing more advanced



An employee of Dingfu Food Technology (Jiangsu) Co Ltd (second from right) answers queries from staffers from the Xinghua Municipal Bureau of Taxation in Jiangsu province. FAN WEILONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

equipment to meet market gaps," Que said.

Chinese taxpayers are enjoying benefits from reductions in resource taxes, urban maintenance and construction taxes, real estate taxes, urban land use taxes and stamp taxes, as well as slashes to education surcharges and local education surcharges, said Ma Jianhui from the Xinghua Municipal Bureau of Taxation.

"Tax and fee incentives can help boost the city's condiments production to allow it to develop a healthy food industry reaching a scale of 100 billion yuan, she said.

Her colleague Chen Jing noted that their research shows that global condiment sales hit some \$218 billion a year — about 10 percent of the food industry — but China's condiments industry only makes a value of about \$20 billion, less than 10 percent of the world's total condiments market.

"These small products have a big market to develop," Chen said.

Jiang Heng, general manager of

Taizhou Co Ltd — part of publicly listed Anjoy Food — agreed.

By relying on Xinghua's unique advantages in agricultural products, aquatic products, and livestock and poultry breeding, Jiang's company has developed new products such as crab roe tofu, "lion's head" meatballs, fragrant fried lotus root strips and fried lotus root chips.

"Our rapid development could not come without the timely service of the tax department," he said, noting that a tax and fee relief of nearly 16 million yuan for his company not only alleviated its financial pressure, but added confidence for it to develop new projects.

Zhu Xiaoxiang, business manager at Dingfu Food Technology (Jiangsu) Co Ltd stationed at Xinghua Seasoning Industrial Park, also stressed that the tax and fee relief has helped it open new sales channels and usher in a new way of development.

Dingfu, a latecomer yet a rising star, independently produces various compound seasonings and is well-received locally. Yet, due to

market changes, it faced such challenges as financial pressures for equipment upgrading, adjustments in product structure and sales reorientation.

"We not only enjoyed a 70,000 yuan reduction from education surcharges and local education surcharges this year but got timely care and guidance on production from the tax authority," Zhu said.

"So far, we have reached cooperation with well-known catering brands and opened online sales channels, which provide a new path for development," he said.

Since the beginning of this year, the Xinghua Municipal Bureau of Taxation has continued to optimize the taxation environment for local businesses and established a workshop called "Promoting Taxes through Good Negotiation", in a bid to strengthen the bond between taxpayers and the tax department.

Contact the writers at zhuangqiange@chinadaily.com.cn

Elsevier hails China's efforts in research

Academic publisher says generative AI tools to be at forefront of change

By MA SI masi@chinadaily.com.cn



The quality of the research coming out of China has increased significantly in the last four decades."

Kumsal Bayazit, CEO of Elsevier

Netherlands-based academic publishing company Elsevier is strengthening efforts to partner with Chinese scientists and engineers in the field of generative artificial intelligence, the latest tech frontier that has taken the world by storm, on the back of China's emergence as a scientific research powerhouse.

Elsevier owns more than 2,800 top academic journals in the world, including Lancet and Cell.

"The quality of the research coming out of China has increased significantly in the last four decades," Kumsal Bayazit, CEO of Elsevier, told China Daily in an exclusive interview. "And if we take the research from the last five years, Chinese research was 10 percent higher in quality than the world average."

Elsevier, which has been in China for 20 years, has offices in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong province's Shenzhen.

The company, Bayazit said, has a large team to serve local scientific communities in the country.

"We work with all the leading academic and government institutions, serving over 500 of them in China. Last year, we worked with 700,000 Chinese authors, 150,000 Chinese peer reviewers, and 14,000 Chinese editors. We would like to see all of those numbers grow," she said.

Despite increased rhetoric about tech "decoupling" between China and the United States, Bayazit said global cooperation in science is very critical.

"Now, the US and China are the two largest scientific producers in the world. They both produce approximately 20 percent of the scientific articles. China is the US' No 1 partner in terms of international research collaborations and the US is China's number one partner," Bayazit said.

"If we look at the impact index of the articles that come from China-US collaborations, it is twice as high as the world average, which is not surprising, because if you bring two very powerful countries who are very powerful science communities working together, the findings are very impactful," she added.

Elsevier has established an AI technology center in Shanghai, which will deepen cooperation with universities and enterprises in Shanghai.

"Generative AI will bring two potential benefits that I'm very excited about," Bayazit said. First, it can play a big role in pushing forward interdisciplinary research.

"If you look at some of the significant global challenges we have, like climate change, food security, and zero hunger, they're really going to be solved by interdisciplinary research," Bayazit said.

"Meanwhile, with generative AI, we can create simple summaries of the scientific findings to the public and to students and to children, and the more the general public learns about science, the faster the progress will be that we can make as a whole world," she said.

The company launched its first alpha generative AI product called Scopus AI in August. It is now in the testing phase with about 10,000 researchers around the globe.

Jerry Liu, head of China internet research at UBS, said a new computing cycle will emerge every 10 or 15 years, and AI-generated content will be the beginning of the next cycle.

"China has more users of generative AI and more data compared to other economies, so I believe there are many opportunities here," Liu said.

Goldman Sachs Research has forecast that breakthroughs in generative AI could drive a 7 percent, or almost \$7 trillion, increase in global GDP and lift productivity growth by 1.5 percentage points over a 10-year period.

Guangdong eyes Dongguan hub for cross-Strait sci-tech ties

By ZHENG CAIXIONG and LI WENFANG in Guangzhou

Guangdong province will continuously explore new cooperative models and optimize the development environment for Taiwan investors, and build Dongguan into an area of deepening innovative collaboration across the Taiwan Strait, said a senior government official of the province.

The local government will make Dongguan, a major global production center, a new base for scientific and technological innovation cooperation between the Chinese mainland and Taiwan province, creating a new engine for industrial innovation and development across the Taiwan Strait in the coming months, said Zhu Wei, deputy director of the Guangdong Provincial Development and Reform Commission.

Zhu made the remarks at a news conference in Guangzhou, the provincial capital, on Wednesday.

He said Dongguan will also be developed into a hub for people-to-people and cultural exchanges, and a platform for exchange and cooperation among the mainland, Taiwan, and the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions.

"The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is one of the regions with the highest degree of openness and strongest development vitality in the mainland, and Dongguan is a core city in the GBA," he said.

Building a demonstration platform in the GBA for Taiwan companies to integrate into the new development pattern and participate in high-quality development in the GBA is conducive to integrating the advantageous resources of exchange and cooperation with Taiwan, he said. This will allow Taiwan compatriots to share the significant opportunities of GBAs rapid devel-

opment and jointly construct a bright future for the GBA, he added.

Lyu Chengxi, mayor of Dongguan, said the city government has always been committed to promoting innovation and entrepreneurship for people from Taiwan, especially youngsters, to make them feel like they belong there.

Dongguan fully implements equal treatment for Taiwan compatriots, allowing them to participate in and enjoy the local social security welfare and benefits.

"Meanwhile, students from Taiwan can enjoy the same compulsory education treatment as registered resident students and Taiwan residents who work in Dongguan can also purchase commercial housing in the city," Lyu said.

Fang Tao, deputy director of the provincial office of Taiwan affairs, said Guangdong has attracted more than 33,000 Taiwan-funded compa-

nies, with contract investment of more than \$93 billion and actual investment valued at more than \$71 billion, as of the end of July.

In the first half, the trade volume between Guangdong and Taiwan reached more than 281 billion yuan (\$40 billion), and Taiwan achieved a trade surplus of more than 197 billion yuan with Guangdong.

The total trade volume between Guangdong and Taiwan has ranked first among the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities in the mainland for many years to represent more than one-third of the mainland's total.

And 17 Taiwan firms have been listed on the mainland capital market, while more than 660 Taiwan companies have been recognized as new and high-tech enterprises, he said.

Contact the writers at zhengcaixiong@chinadaily.com.cn



Q&A WITH CEO

Editor's note: With strong policy support, unremitting technological innovation and industrial upgrading, China's economic recovery continued to gather steam in the third quarter, with its GDP expanding by 4.9 percent from a year earlier, leading to a 5.2-percent year-on-year

growth in the first three quarters. China Daily presents a series of Q&As with top multinational corporation executives, discussing their perspectives on the Chinese economy and how they will position future business in China.

China's economy to rebound with huge mkt potential



Ginger Cheng
CEO of DBS China



Kevin Chor
CEO of AXA Tianping



Ronen Mense
president and managing director of
AppsFlyer Asia-Pacific



Jeffrey Lou
president and chairman of
BASF Greater China



Denis Depoux
global managing director of
Roland Berger

Q1 Given the complex current global economic and geopolitical situations, how do you position the Chinese market in your overall global business radar? What's your outlook for China's economy and your company's operations in the country for this year and next?

CHENG: There are global concerns about China's economic growth following its COVID-19 response optimization. However, I believe that the current pace of economic growth is temporary. With the government's latest announcements to stimulate the economy, I believe a lot more stimulus measures will be rolled out. We expect to see in the second part of this year and in 2024 a rebound of the economy. We will further tap Singapore's experience as an international financial center and DBS Group's resources to support China and the businesses here. At DBS China, we will continue to support the country's real economy and its high-quality growth. We will beef up our support to China's inbound and outbound flows and capitalize on existing and emerging opportunities. We will also expand, deepen and sharpen our coverage in focused industries and segments. DBS will continue to actively support Chinese enterprises to go global, especially in response to the Belt and Road Initiative and/or under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, supporting them in infrastructure construction and project financing in related regions and markets, and helping them set up a regional headquarters or treasury center in Singapore to further expand their business network to Southeast Asia.

CHOR: As the world's second-largest economy, China's huge market and strong consumer demand continue to provide vast market opportunities for businesses across the globe. The continued opening-up of China's financial market is a valuable opportunity for foreign-owned insurers like AXA Tianping to explore more business development opportunities. The establishment of the Shanghai Reinsurance Hub is a prime example and we are glad to be a part of this milestone. On Aug 14, AXA Tianping Shanghai Reinsurance Operation Center received approval from the National Administration of Financial Regulation, making us one of the first insurers to have a presence in the International Reinsurance Trading Center in Lingang New Area (in Shanghai). The AXA Tianping Center officially launched on Aug 20. Looking ahead, AXA Tianping will move the reinsurance functions of the group office to Shanghai. We will also consolidate reinsurance resources and functions across various departments, including finance and business, to take full advantage of a centralized platform to improve operational efficiency and streamline workflows. We strive to help promote the high-quality development of China's insurance and reinsurance industry in areas such as risk management, underwriting capacity and service level, thus contributing to social prosperity and stability.

MENSE: China has been a miracle story in its meteoric rise to become an economic superpower. Many companies, foreign and domestic alike, have become highly successful in finding the right model to fit the demanding Chinese consumers. At AppsFlyer, we have established a unique market position of helping domestic Chinese consumer brands bring their services to the world in the global app economy for over a decade now. I would say that the population benefit of China did not fade away, because the advantage right now is favorable toward China and the position that it is in. It has always been in AppsFlyer's DNA to help our customers understand the markets that they are interested in, how they should navigate those markets, and how they should make the right decisions so that they can be even more successful. Our job was, is, and will always be, to help our partners be successful. AppsFlyer is very much committed to this long-term partnership.

LOU: The Chinese market is of strategic significance to BASF. Today, China accounts for half of global chemical production, making China BASF's second-largest market. Our investments in China are in line with BASF's strategy of producing where our customers are and where there is market growth. As one of the largest foreign investors in the Chinese chemical industry, BASF has invested over 13 billion euros (\$13.7 billion) in China with its partners over the past decades. We have a firm belief in the market potential of China. Our large manufacturing footprint, our leading position in sustainability, and growing innovation capabilities in China provide an excellent foundation to grow and develop with our value chain partners.

DEPOUX: The Chinese government announced a modest target of China's GDP at around 5 percent in early 2023, which signaled challenges in the current conditions. The Chinese economy fared well under the huge and combined pressures of trade frictions, the pandemic, fluctuations of global demand and the geopolitically driven "de-risking". Thanks to improved productivity, broad industrial clusters and well-established infrastructure, China was, is, and will remain the factory of the world. The combination of a broad local market and a strong legacy export base makes China difficult to replace. We believe that China's fundamentals remain strong despite a difficult transition in the short term. That global factory is producing more added value now thanks to the massive industrial modernization effort. China is an important market for Roland Berger. Changing market conditions and uncertainty fuel the need for performance, agility, competitiveness and innovation, which we are helping our Chinese and multinational clients to achieve. Moreover, China is an important source of global innovation in multiple fields, from payment, retail and e-commerce to the electric vehicle value chain and energy transition. Operating in China is a source of global competitiveness.

Q2 China's economic policymakers have assured greater efforts to attract foreign capital, widen market access and ensure a level playing field for both domestic and foreign companies. In this context, what new policy measures do you expect from Chinese authorities in the near future?

CHENG: I expect near-term policy measures will revolve around boosting consumption, ensuring cross-border supply chain resilience, stabilizing investments and supporting technological development. We intend to focus on these areas of opportunity. One area would be the further internationalization of the RMB, where we see ourselves being able to play an important role. For instance, DBS is among the first batch of banks selected to participate in China's cross-border international payment system. Improving the financial infrastructure for the internationalization of the RMB is essential, and the launch of CIPS will bring China closer to having a major currency for both trade and investment purposes. We look forward to combining CIPS with financial innovation to provide greater convenience and a wider variety of RMB products for our clients. DBS' participation in CIPS demonstrates our commitment to being at the forefront of transaction banking to provide clients with connectivity to the latest payment services and market infrastructure.

CHOR: As the largest wholly foreign-owned P&C insurer in China, AXA Tianping has benefited from close economic ties between China and France and a favorable investment environment for foreign enterprises in China. The Sino-French relationship provides a solid foundation for the steady development of AXA Tianping, and creates confidence and stability in the local market. Recently, we became one of the first insurers to have a presence in the International Reinsurance Trading Center in Shanghai. To enhance the infrastructure and operation of the reinsurance market, the center is dedicated to developing a new forward-looking reinsurance transaction system through digitalization and utilizing the reinsurance registration, clearing, and settlement platform. To expand supply and deepen innovation of reinsurance products, it is crucial to establish a data exchange and resource integration system that will improve reinsurance underwriting capabilities and service quality. We expect more supportive policies to be introduced for the center to enhance its position as a global reinsurance hub equipped with advanced technology, capital and talent.

MENSE: China is the most tech-savvy country and offers immense opportunities for businesses in the e-commerce, fintech, digital payment and other digital services sectors. It's important to understand and establish your market niche, be ahead of the innovation curve in order to provide your customers with cutting-edge, mission-critical technology to help make them successful.

We realized early on that it is difficult to navigate this complex market that can be challenging due to cultural differences, regulatory changes, and competition. So, we focused on what we know best — to continue to help some of the greatest brands of our time to adapt to the changing global landscape and navigate stringent privacy regulations. In more ways than one, China is shaping the future of the global technological landscape. With China's unrivaled leadership, we look forward to continuing to revolutionize marketing technology on an international playing field. AppsFlyer is a tech company and we hope for more technological and innovation support. China has been actively promoting technological innovation and development in areas such as artificial intelligence, digital economy, clean energy, and high-tech manufacturing. More policies supporting these can be expected in the coming days.

LOU: BASF is very much encouraged by China's shift toward a high-quality, eco-friendly development model. We support the formulation and implementation of comprehensive and transparent regulations, and standards that govern carbon management. Furthermore, we advocate for policies that favor low-carbon technologies and products, thereby expediting the development and commercialization of our advanced product solutions. Policy plays a pivotal role in this energy transition. We hope that the Chinese government will establish a regulatory framework that provides market-driven incentive schemes for companies to accomplish the low-carbon transformation.

DEPOUX: China's FDI figures slumped sharply in the second quarter of 2023. In fact, this is a consequence of a rocky 2022, with COVID-19-related disruptions that were not very conducive to making investment decisions. Clarity, certainty and predictability are highly important to rebuild confidence and restore the interest of foreign businesses in China. Communication, explanation, clarifying the purpose of policies and creating a transparent framework always help achieve more confidence. Most importantly, FDI is a function of attractiveness combined with growth and profitability potential. Structural reform is needed to accelerate the transformation of the Chinese economy and ensure its long-term vitality. Foreign and Chinese companies are in the same boat and expect a stable growth perspective, driven by favorable fundamentals.

Q3 As China continues to pursue high-quality development through a homegrown path to modernization, what is the vision for your company's business in the country over the long run? What business opportunities do you foresee emerging as part of the process of Chinese modernization?

CHENG: To prioritize "quality" economic growth and drive "green" and "sustainable" development, one crucial opportunity is decarbonization. We see net-zero as one of the key themes of the future. This is also in line with China's climate goals. Many of our clients share the same philosophy and are developing and implementing robust plans to decarbonize and transition. We expect that these plans will inevitably involve financing and investments, be it in new lines of low-carbon businesses and technologies, proactive retirement of carbon-intensive assets at the risk of being stranded or made obsolete, or reconfiguring the supply and distribution chains. This paradigm shift will affect all industries in the coming decades and will require massive investment. As estimated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2021, this would amount to an additional \$3.5 trillion investment annually.

CHOR: Currently, China's insurance penetration is far lower than the level of developed countries. The overall business structure of the insurance industry continues to undergo optimization. This means that the Chinese market has broad growth prospects and can be expected to maintain good development potential. At the policy level, the government has increased its support for the insurance industry and introduced a series of measures to encourage innovative development and improve service quality, bringing new development opportunities to relevant insurance types. China's continued reform and opening-up have presented an invaluable opportunity for AXA Group to deepen its presence in the country. AXA Tianping will make full use of China's constantly improving business environment and explore the full potential of the enormous market. We look forward to contributing our share in establishing the new development pattern so that more Chinese consumers have the opportunity to enjoy innovative, high-quality protection solutions.

MENSE: China's path to modernization is most exemplified when stepping into a city like Shenzhen — what was once a grid of factories, laborers and pollution-spewing trucks has become a city of skyscrapers, a melting pot of entrepreneurial Chinese from every corner of the nation, and electric powered vehicles that move quietly across the wide roads. If this is an example of what China can become, then the future is bright and full of opportunity. Strong emphasis is placed on technological advancement and innovation, which is a key driver of modernization. In practically all aspects of modern-day technology, China has been leading the way. This is particularly true in our field of marketing measurement, where China remains the blueprint of economic success and ecosystem collaboration. Businesses that can offer cutting-edge technologies, research and development capabilities, and innovative solutions may find opportunities to partner with Chinese counterparts or supply to the domestic market. China has also proven to be committed to sustainable development and environmental protection, which creates opportunities for businesses specializing in renewable energy, green technologies, waste management, and other environmentally friendly solutions. This focus on the balance between progress and environmental well-being is noteworthy.

LOU: At BASF, we believe that innovation and sustainability are the two key drivers of modernization to achieve high-quality development. This aligns well with China's national development goals. For example, we are strengthening our positioning in battery materials in China to support the electric vehicle industry. Sustainability is another lever for our business development in China. We are continuously optimizing existing processes, replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources, and developing radically new low-emission technologies. We also see significant opportunities in providing sustainable and energy-efficient solutions. With our value chain partners and stakeholders in China, we are committed to driving the low-carbon transformation together.

DEPOUX: There are three key drivers leading China's future development: industrial modernization, energy transition and decarbonization, and transformation of domestic consumption. Technology and innovation are key to bringing disruptive changes to the Chinese economy. We have seen China leapfrogging in some new areas, such as EVs, energy storage, photovoltaic and wind power. In the area of decarbonization, technology is not everything, and services, activating specialized know-how are at least as important — providing strong potential for foreign companies to thrive in China. In the meantime, for our company, as well as many other foreign companies in China, it is important to focus on transformation and performance improvement that help us to succeed in a more competitive environment.

COMMENT

Editorials

Trip can help cement common ground on which to repair China-US relations

Despite being a reciprocal visit to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to China in June, Foreign Minister Wang Yi's ongoing trip to Washington is more than just diplomatic routine.

Wang has on his shoulders the task of stabilizing the volatile bilateral relations. Beijing wants the visit to help put the fraught ties "back on track". Something it has been constantly trying to do, despite the US side repeatedly seeming like-minded, only to then prove otherwise.

The two sides have differences over such dividing issues as the Ukraine crisis and the Palestinian question. But more fundamentally, Beijing is convinced Washington is doing whatever it can to contain China, while Washington on its part believes Beijing is doing everything in its capacity to undermine US global leadership.

Both sides are aware of the dangerous potential of the current state of affairs, and the need to keep the simmering tensions in check. Which is why they persist with the diplomatic dance. Wang's visit, to borrow the words of a US official, is part of the efforts by the two sides to "responsibly manage" their competition. The unnamed official was correct in saying that "direct face-to-face diplomacy is the best way to raise challenging issues, address misperception and miscommunication".

In his "in-depth exchanges of views with US lead-

ers", Wang will convey China's principles and positions and legitimate concerns about China-US relations, as the Foreign Ministry spokesperson said. Likewise, the White House has said that during Wang's meetings with Blinken and National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, the US side will focus on challenges, misunderstandings and misjudgments between the two countries, as well as potential cooperation where their interests intersect.

Wang's trip is seen as having additional significance as it is widely expected to be aimed at paving the way for a meeting between leaders of the two countries during the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in San Francisco in November. Wang's visit is nevertheless being interpreted as another sign of a shared interest in making it happen.

Wang met with visiting California Governor Gavin Newsom in Beijing before departing for Washington on Wednesday, and told Newsom his China visit is an "ice-breaking journey". A journey that he hopes "solidifies the foundation, sows hope, and opens up the future" for Sino-US relations.

Yet given how fraught China-US relations have become, it is a wishful thinking to believe they can be improved overnight. But considering the high stakes as well as high hopes expressed by both sides, there are grounds for hope that high-level interactions will at least be able to stabilize them, so that there is a solid foundation on which to repair them.

European Union's 'Global Gateway' anything but

While the European Union may not openly admit it, the Global Gateway strategy that it launched in December 2021, and which it has accelerated this year, is a move to "counterbalance" China's global influence, at the behest of the United States.

Or more exactly, to "counterbalance" China's Belt and Road Initiative. The Belt and Road Initiative was launched in 2013 to boost connectivity, and Chinese enterprises are working around the world to help developing countries do that.

With the achievements of the Belt and Road cooperation readily apparent, the EU has also set out to "boost smart, clean and secure links in digital, energy and transport sectors".

The EU's purpose of trying to limit China's influence and take a share out of its cake could not be clearer. Yet the freshly announced list of a Business Advisory Committee for the Global Gateway in September might serve to embarrass it, because on the list there is the Energias de Portugal, whose largest shareholder, according to its official website, is China's Three Gorges Group. France-based Eutelsat also has a Chinese company, China Investment Corporation, as one of its shareholders.

It's increasingly clear that while it may strengthen global infrastructure, the Global Gateway's purpose is not that, but rather to "contain" China.

Which is why some European Parliament mem-

bers have been voicing concerns about China's presence in the advisory committee. Center-right lawmaker Miriam Lexmann tweeted: "The Global Gateway was established to address Chinese influence, not further it." President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyden made this clear as well when she said that the EU "will support smart investments in quality infrastructure, respecting the highest social and environmental standards, in line with the EU's values and standards."

Talk of values and standards always accompanies such efforts by the US and its allies, since they not only seek to present themselves in a favorable light — and China in a bad one — but also set themselves up as the countries best able to write the "rules". Rules with which they hope to curb China's development and influence, despite the claims they repeatedly make that they are trying to do no such thing.

Some politicians in the EU have been raising their voices clamoring for the bloc to "decouple" from China, or as they sugarcoat it now, pursue "de-risking". But the cooperation of Chinese and European companies for mutual benefit shows such political designs are built on sand.

The Belt and Road Initiative is an open platform that seeks to benefit all participants, including the EU and the US. Similar initiatives such as the Global Gateway should be intended for the same purpose, rather than being wolves in sheep's clothing.

Washington real obstacle to cease-fire

Why have the multiple attempts of the international community to bring an end to the Israel-Palestine conflict under the framework of the United Nations failed to materialize into action?

The answer is clear. It is the United States that has been obstructing the peace process by abusing its veto power in the UN Security Council, turning it into another arena for Washington's geopolitical games.

For instance, a proposed resolution, focusing on the humanitarian situation and the protection of civilians, which was supported by an overwhelming majority of UN Security Council members, failed to be adopted on Wednesday due to the US vetoing it.

The US introduced a draft resolution on Saturday that set aside the consensus of the UN Security Council members and included many elements that were deeply divisive. Many UN Security Council members, including China, Russia and Brazil, proposed amendments to the draft text. However, the US, ignoring the concerns of the council members, made only cosmetic changes to the draft before putting it to a hasty vote.

As China's ambassador to the UN, Zhang Jun, said, the resolution was presented in haste and did not reflect the world's calls. The proposed resolution was patently not in a position to be adopted. Yet, rather than acknowledging that truth, the US is trying to smear China and other countries by claiming that in voting against the resolution they are thwarting UN actions and being indifferent to the humanitarian situation. That shameful calling black white shows the US' intention of dividing the world body and diverting attention from the conflict between Israel

and Palestine to the one it is trying to fabricate between a so-called "democratic world" and China.

All genuine efforts that contribute to peace will receive China's staunch support. Any endeavor that facilitates Palestine-Israel reconciliation will be pursued by China with all-out efforts. But with two aircraft carrier strike groups in the Middle East, it is clear that the US wants its ally to carry out its "self-defense" campaign carefree and for as long as it likes.

The position of China, and the many other countries voting against the US-proposed draft resolution, is based on facts, law and conscience. What they oppose is that the draft is evasive on the most urgent issue of ending the immediate hostilities. That is not only irresponsible but also dangerous. It is tantamount to paving the way for large-scale military actions and giving the green light to further escalation of the conflict.

The draft resolution did not call on the parties concerned to stop the indiscriminate and asymmetrical use of force. Such an evasive and ineffectual resolution would do nothing to ease the plight of the people in Gaza. Indeed, it would only worsen their predicament.

It is clear that the US is seeking to establish a new narrative on the Palestinian question by ignoring the fact that the Palestinian territory has been occupied for a long time, and evading the fundamental issue of independent statehood for the Palestinian people.

It is worth being vigilant as the resolution presented by the US departs from the spirit of previous UN resolutions and embeds the dangerous logic of "clash of civilizations" and the justification of war and use of force. If adopted, it would have completely dashed the prospects of the two-state solution.

Zhai Haijun



Opinion Line

The fall of Japanese economy is becoming an irreversible trend

The World Economic Outlook released by the International Monetary Fund in early October predicts that in 2023 Japan's nominal gross domestic product will be overtaken by Germany and the Japanese economy will slip from third to fourth place in the world, before falling to fifth when India surpasses it in 2026.

Nominal GDP refers to GDP without deducting inflation, which reflects the level of economic activity in a country or region, and is often used as an indicator to measure the size of an economy.

From 1968, when its GDP surpassed that of West Germany, to 2000, Japan's economy ranked second in the world, reaching a peak of \$4.97 trillion, 2.5 times the size of

Germany and 4.1 times that of China. In 2010, China overtook Japan to become the second-largest economy. If the IMF's forecast is verified, it would be Japan's lowest nominal GDP ranking since 2000.

Many economists believe that the sluggish growth of Japan's nominal GDP reflects Japan's failed efforts to revive the economy after Abenomics faltered, as well as its difficulty in returning the economy to an upward trajectory in the face of a declining population growth and dampened domestic consumption and exports.

The Kyodo News Agency quoted sources at the IMF as saying that after a new adjustment of the equity quota of IMF member countries at the end of this year, the share of

Japan's voting power at the IMF may fall from the current second place, right behind the United States, to fifth place behind the US, China, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Japan had tried to ask the IMF to adjust the capital of member states in a way that it does not affect their existing voting power ranking, even eyeing the US' support on this. However, China and other emerging market countries want the voting power ratio to reflect the size of the economy.

The decline in Japan's economic strength has been determined by a number of factors, and this trend will be difficult to change for a considerable period of time.

— BEIJING NEWS

Regulation to make online world safe for minors

A new regulation on protecting minors in cyberspace will come into effect from Jan 1, marking further improvement in China's cyberspace governance system.

The regulation stresses enhancing minors' internet literacy, while guiding them to distinguish between good and harmful content online. The regulation authorizes the education departments and cyberspace administration departments to jointly develop evaluation indicators for minors' internet literacy, and to introduce internet literacy at schools.

Besides, schools, libraries and youth centers should provide a safe and healthy online environment

while companies are encouraged to develop minor modes and minor zones, accord to the regulation. It is necessary for all sectors of society to build a good filter to screen out bad and illegal content for the minors. The regulation clarifies that no organization or individual shall use text, pictures, audio and video, and other media in a way that constitutes insult, slander, threat or subjects minors to online bullying. Also, functional modules should be put in place to limit the single-day cumulative expenditures spent on online games by the minors in order to prevent them from getting addicted to network games.

The regulation specifically

includes a chapter on protecting personal information under the personal information protection law. While admitting to the need for personal information processors to collect and process minors' personal information, it also stipulates that the processors shall not force minors or their guardians to agree to nonessential personal information processing behavior, and use the "minimum authorization principle" to limit the range of personnel who can access this kind of information and avoid internal employees leaking it.

Overall, the approval of the regulation marks a new stage in China's protection of minors in cyberspace.

— JCRB.COM

What They Say

New broom has work cut out to clean up soccer

Senior sports official Song Kai was elected president of the Chinese Football Association in Beijing last week. The 58-year-old Song, head of the Administration of Sport in Northeast China's Liaoning province, has been working as deputy head of the preparatory group for the CFA election since June, as the majority of the previous CFA board members were probed for graft, including former CFA president Chen Xu Yuan.

Another four people, including Sun Wen, Chinese women's football legend, were elected vice-presidents of the CFA at the same time. Sun was the only vice-president of the previous board who remains in that position.

The investigation into the CFA corruption also implicated Du Zhaocai, former deputy head of the General Administration of Sport of China, who was sacked earlier this year and put under investigation for taking bribes and power abuses. It remains unknown whether more senior officials will be caught in the net of the probe.

Notably, in his first meeting with the CFA members and the media outlets as CFA chair on Wednesday,

Song defined the guideline for the new board with five words — stability, accuracy, strictness, innovation and pragmatism — and vowed to do more field research to make the regulations and policies more scientific and reasonable than before.

The veteran sports official apparently wants to adopt a more pragmatic working style. But few people think that the problems with Chinese soccer can be resolved by reshuffling the CFA board. Most of the problems are structural and systemic that are related to not only the blurred boundaries between the soccer market and the administration, but also the overall backwardness of soccer structure, particularly youth training and the professionalization of the sport, which has arguably the most fans in China among all countries.

Since most of the new CFA board members are from the sport administration system, rather than clubs or other sectors related to the soccer market as before, as is the case in almost all countries that are strong in soccer, it seems to be a sign that the country is prepared to re-embrace the former State-run soccer system after the market reform of Chinese soccer

since 1994 has proved to be a failure.

A pressing problem is that most of the clubs are already on the verge of bankruptcy due to the downward pressure on the economy, particularly the fall of the real estate industry that used to be a main source of funding for clubs over the past decade.

During that period of time, a host of foreign players and coaches flocked to China, keen to join the gold rush. The pursuit of quick returns meant youth training was largely ignored as buying foreign players, and naturalizing them in the case of the national team, was believed to be a shortcut to success. But that model is comparable to pulling up seedlings to help them grow.

Will local governments, which also face grave debt issues themselves, take over these clubs after their sponsors' withdrawal, as required by a State-run system? Who will pay for the huge historical debts of the clubs, not to mention the rebuilding of a national youth training system? Such are the questions Song and his colleagues will have to find answers to before implementing their "five-word" guideline.

— LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

CHINA DAILY WORLDWIDE

Contact us at:

China Daily
15 Huxin Dongle Chaoyang District,
Beijing 100029
News: +86 (0) 10 6491-8366
editor@chinadaily.com.cn
Advertisement: +86 (0) 10 6491-8631
ads@chinadaily.com.cn
Subscription: +86 400-699-0203
subscription.chinadaily.com.cn
App: www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/tdaily/html

China Daily UK
90 Cannon St, London EC4N 6HA, UK
+44 (0) 207 398 8270
editor@chinadailyuk.com

China Daily Asia Pacific
China Daily Hong Kong
Unit 1818, Hing Wai Centre, 7 Tin Wan
Praya Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong
+852 2518 5111
editor@chinadailyhk.com
editor@chinadailyasia.com

China Daily USA
1500 Broadway, Suite 2800,
New York, NY 10036
+1 212 537 8888
editor@chinadailyusa.com

China Daily Africa
P.O. Box 27281-00100, Nairobi, Kenya
+254 (0) 20 242 8589 (Nairobi)
enquiries@chinadailyafrica.com
subscription@chinadailyafrica.com

COMMENT

Yang Yuguang

Shenzhou XVII a step toward manned lunar mission

The launch of the Shenzhou XVII manned spaceship on Thursday was successful. The launch came just a few days after China celebrated the 20th anniversary of its first manned mission. On Oct 15, 2003, Yang Liwei, China's space hero, fulfilled the country's dream of accessing outer space.

In an interview with a major media outlet, Yang, currently deputy chief designer of China's manned space program, said all Chinese astronauts selected for the manned missions to the moon must have the experience of traveling to the Tiangong space station. This is an important criterion for the selection of "moon walkers". The Shenzhou XVII mission can therefore be described as an important stage of the preparation for China's manned lunar mission.

The Shenzhou XVII mission and its crew have many firsts. The crew is the youngest of all manned missions of China. It is also the first to have a combination of second-batch and third-batch astronauts. Tang Hongbo, a veteran astronaut who completed his first space flight about two years ago, is poised to be the first space traveler to revisit China's Tiangong space station.

The Shenzhou XVII crew is very young. Astronauts Jiang Xinlin and Tang Shengjie are two of China's third-generation astronauts, and were born in 1988 and 1989 respectively. As they are on their first space mission at such a young age, they will get plenty of opportunities to join more space missions.

In 2021, the program was still in the "technology demonstration and verification phase". A series of new technologies needs to be tested and mastered before being applied to space

missions. For instance, during Shenzhou XII mission, China tested the regenerative environmental-control and life-support system. This system is much more complex than the non-regenerative systems used in all Shenzhou spaceships and the Tiangong-1 and Tiangong-2 space laboratories.

But mastering the technologies of regenerative environmental control and the life-support system is a prerequisite for operating a space station, otherwise many resources would be wasted in providing water, oxygen and other resupplies to the astronauts.

Since the major purpose of building the Tiangong Space Station is to conduct all scientific research, we need to reduce the amount of resupplies to the space station to the lowest possible level.

During the Shenzhou XII mission, Tang and his two colleagues tested the oxygen production system, water recovery system, urine processing system, hazardous gas removal system, carbon dioxide removal system, and CO2 recovery system. These six sub-systems form the regenerative system, and the three-month operation of these systems during the Shenzhou XII mission gave China

valuable experience and knowledge on how they work. Tang played an important role in accomplishing this task.

Since Tang is familiar with the regenerative environmental-control and life-support systems, and since the corresponding system in the Wentian laboratory module has the same specification and design as the Tianhe-1 core module, he can ensure the normal functioning of these important systems during the six-month stay at the Tiangong Space Station. More importantly, his experience will also be helpful for China's future manned lunar missions.

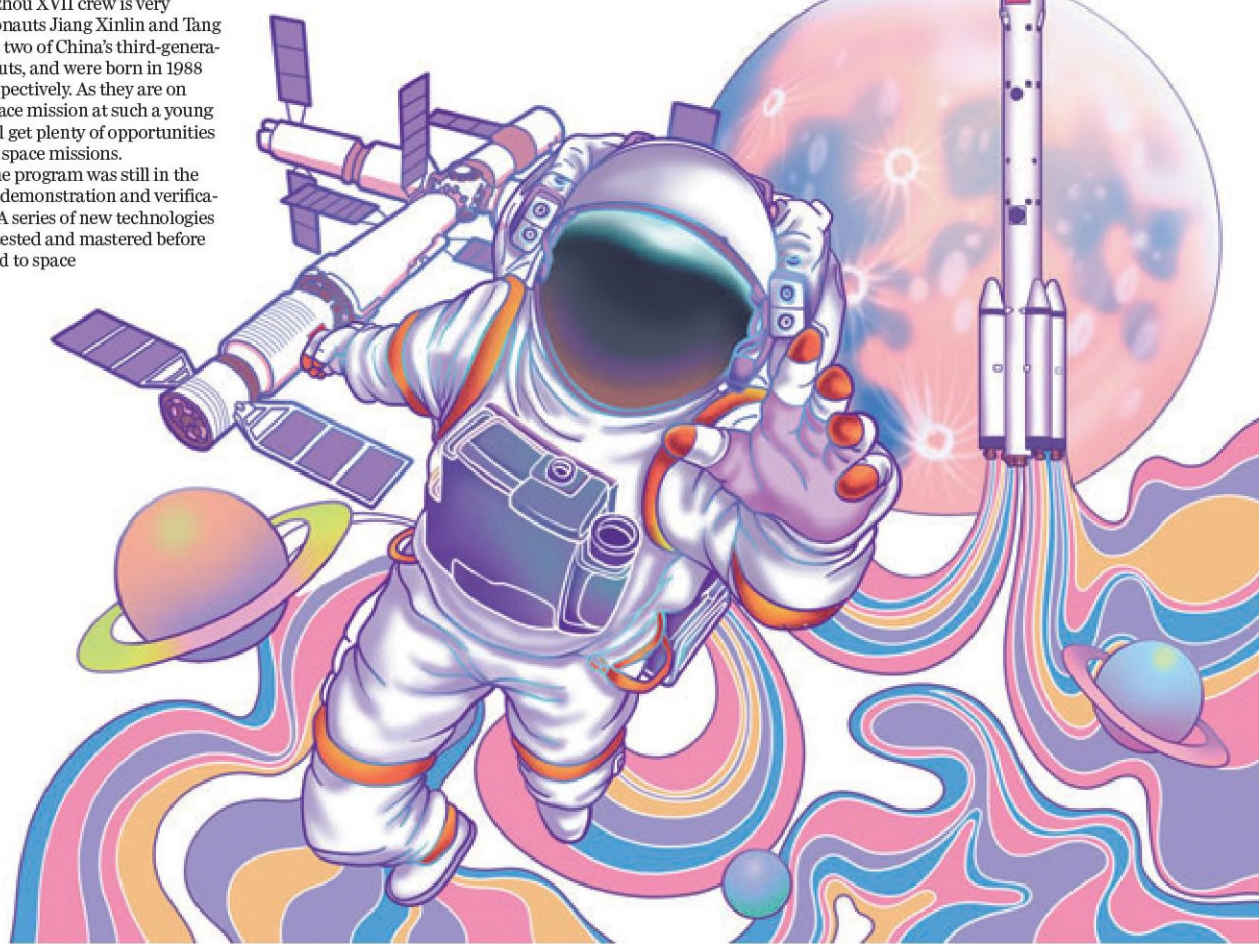
As Zhang Hailian, deputy chief designer of China's manned space program said, China will use two Long March-10 heavy launch vehicles to launch a lunar-lander and spaceship to trans-lunar orbit respectively. The two spacecrafts will rendezvous and dock in circumlunar orbit, following which two of the three crew members will transfer from the spaceship to the lunar-lander to explore the lunar surface, collect samples, return to the lunar orbit and re-dock at the spaceship, before being carried back to Earth.

The "Lunar Orbit Rendezvous" is so complicated that even the smallest error could cause disaster. Thus the astronauts have to be doubly sure about everything they do. That's why their experience at the Tiangong Space Station is very important. All this can be described as a warm-up exercise for the lunar missions.

The young astronauts Tang Shengjie and Jiang Xinlin are in perfect physical condition and could handle abnormal situations. Being trained as pilot-astronauts, we hope these young people get the chance of leading space missions in the future.

Having its astronauts walk on the moon is part of China's space dream, and the Shenzhou XVII manned mission could be a very important step toward China realizing that dream.

The author is vice chair of International Astronautical Federation Space Transportation Committee. The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.



JIN DING / CHINA DAILY

Lu Shanbing

Invoking Shanghai spirit in Bishkek to build a shared future

Addressing the 23rd meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization via video conference in July, President Xi Jinping had called for practicing multilateralism, upholding international fairness and justice, and building an SCO community with a shared future.

Meanwhile, Premier Li Qiang is attending the 22nd Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan, while on an official visit to the Central Asian country from Oct 24 to 27.

It is of great significance to promoting the development of Sino-Kyrgyz relations, deepening practical cooperation and building closer ties between the two peoples given that Li's visit is the first by a Chinese premier there in seven years.

Since China and Kyrgyzstan established diplomatic relations 31 years ago, the two countries have always adhered to the principles of mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, and promoted the leapfrog development of bilateral relations.

The two countries have always moved forward on the road to good neighborliness and mutually beneficial cooperation. They have set an example of a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, equal cooperation and the benefit of all. The development of China-Kyrgyzstan relations not only ben-

The two countries' enterprises have gained experience from traditional cooperative fields to extend it to new fields such as renewable energy sources, digital economy and green finance.

efits the two countries and their peoples, but also contributes to peace and stability in Central Asia.

China and Kyrgyzstan have deep political mutual trust. They established diplomatic relations in 1992 and became comprehensive strategic partners in 2018. In May, President Xi met Kyrgyz President Sadyr Zhaparov, who was on a state visit to China. They vowed to build a China-Kyrgyzstan community with a shared future, featuring good neighborliness and common prosperity. Both leaders also witnessed the signing of multiple cooperation agreements in the fields of economy and trade, industry, investment, customs, agriculture, cultural and people-to-people exchanges, opening a new chapter for the two sides' friendship.

In the past 31 years, leapfrog development of the bilateral relationship has laid a solid foundation for the two coun-

tries' trade and investment cooperation. Kyrgyzstan, which boasts of abundant natural resources with immense investment potential, has been cooperating with Chinese enterprises for years.

China remains Kyrgyzstan's largest trading partner and exporter. Data from the General Administration of Customs show that their trade hit a record high of \$15.5 billion in 2022, up 105.6 percent year-on-year. Two-way trade between China and Kyrgyzstan in the first eight months of this year reached \$12 billion, with a year-on-year increase of 27.9 percent.

Further, the two countries have been making joint efforts to strengthen cooperation and scale up trade in newly-emerged fields including the digital economy. They boost service trade and optimize trade structure to promote the balanced development of beneficial cooperation.

China and Kyrgyzstan have also made great achievements in projects under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. Kyrgyzstan is one of the first countries to support the initiative and is a model zone of infrastructure projects of transportation and energy, such as the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan Railway.

These projects not only boost economic development, but also benefit local people. The two countries' enterprises have gained experience from traditional cooperative fields to extend it to new fields such as renewable energy sources, digital economy and green finance. They

can promote the high-quality development of the BRI with complementary advantages and allocate resources efficiently.

Cultural exchange is an important component of the bilateral relationship between China and Kyrgyzstan, which enjoy close people-to-people ties. The two countries have more than 23 pairs of friendship cities and four Confucius Institutes have opened in Kyrgyzstan. Some Kyrgyz universities have set up Confucius classes and departments of Chinese language.

This year the Northwest University in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, established a Research Center of Kyrgyz Studies and signed a memorandum of cooperation with the National Institute of Strategic Studies under the Kyrgyz president. It is worth noting that I am the supervisor of a smart and diligent Kyrgyz PhD candidate. So personally, I too have contributed to people-to-people exchange between China and Kyrgyzstan.

Bilateral ties are at a historic high. Hopefully, the two sides can strengthen strategic docking and policy coordination to promote the high-quality development of the BRI and build a closer community with a shared future for China-Central Asia.

The author is dean of the Central Asia Studies Institute of Northwest University, Xi'an, Shaanxi province. The views don't necessarily represent those of China Daily.



Chen Weihua

The author is chief of China Daily EU Bureau based in Brussels. chenweihua@chinadaily.com.cn

Double standard and hypocrisy on full display in the Gaza Strip

The catastrophic civilian casualties and sufferings on both sides of the Israel-Palestine conflict have shocked the entire world. What is also appalling is the hypocrisy and double standard exhibited by many Western leaders and media outlets.

US officials have continued to advocate Israel's right to defend itself regardless of the high civilian death toll in Gaza — it has crossed 6,500, including more than 2,300 children.

While Western leaders have condemned Hamas' Oct 7 attacks on Israel, they have not condemned Israel's indiscriminate attacks on Gaza. That the Israeli attacks have killed many United Nations aid workers and more than 20 journalists has not made any difference to the Western leaders.

Western politicians who didn't throw away any opportunity to accuse other countries of committing genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity suddenly don't know how to describe the slaughtering of thousands of innocent civilians despite the tragedy being played out in front of media cameras.

After Israel announced a siege of the Gaza Strip, cutting off water, food, fuel and electricity supply to the enclave, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen was reminded of her tweet on Oct 19, 2022, in which she wrote that "Russia's attacks against civilian infrastructure, especially electricity, are war crimes. Cutting off men, women, children of water, electricity and heating with winter coming, these are acts of pure terror".

Some Western pundits have even said the West has lost its credibility and global public opinion this time.

In a tweet on Oct 15, she claimed that civilians in Gaza are also victims of Hamas. But when I asked a European Commission spokesman whether Hamas should be held responsible for the deaths of thousands of Palestinian civilians in Gaza, he simply dodged the question.

German foreign minister Annalena Baerbock blatantly lied when she said on Oct 21 that "Israel does care about the people of Gaza, the Palestinians". Besides the high death toll, more than 1.4 million Palestinians have been displaced thanks to the conflict since Oct 7 according to the United Nations. All this prompted UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres to tell the UN Security Council on Tuesday that "the attacks by Hamas did not happen in a vacuum, the Palestinian people have been subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation".

The hypocrisy and double standard have infuriated people across the world. Some 850 European Union officials signed a letter to von der Leyen on Oct 21 to challenge her pledge of "unconditional" support to Israel and her failure to say that Israel must abide by international humanitarian law in its military operations.

The usually pro-EU Euronews cited Europeans as saying that "they are ashamed to be Europeans now" due to the indifference of their political leaders toward the Palestinians.

Most mainstream US and EU news outlets have failed to objectively report on the conflict. CNN has told numerous personal stories of Israeli civilians attacked by Hamas, sometimes with anchors weeping. But they have shown no interest in such stories among Palestinian victims in Gaza, a bid to dehumanize the Palestinians.

In a story last week, a BBC reporter said 1,400 Israelis were "massacred" and 4,000 Palestinians were "killed", a bias reflected in her choice of words.

Manipulating information has long been a favorite task of Western politicians and news media. Such manipulation is reflected in their reckless smear campaigns against China. But they have failed miserably to fool people this time. Some Western pundits have even said the West has lost its credibility and global public opinion this time.

Some US and EU politicians and news outlets have tried to slightly modify their rhetoric and tactics over the past few days, but their bias is so deep-rooted and has indeed become an obstacle to finding a peaceful, two-state solution for the Israel-Palestine problem.

The US vetoing a UN Security Council resolution moved by Brazil last week calling for a cease-fire is an apt example of Western leaders' doublespeak. It is akin to endorsing more killings of people on both sides, including women and children, and worsening the sufferings of Palestinian people in Gaza. No amount of humanitarian aid by Washington can make up for the suffering of Palestinians caused by its veto.

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.

XU XIUJUN

A time for Eurasia

To fully cash in on opportunities, these regional economies should engage in international rule-making, develop the green and digital economies and reduce dependence on the dollar

The profound restructuring of the world economy has given rise to many new trends.

Diverse emerging markets have generally outpaced developed economies, despite the severe impact of the 2008 international financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic since 2020. There has been widespread efforts in countries worldwide to go digital and green. New



industries, business segments and business models have arisen and are driving rapid growth of the digital economy and trade, while high on the agenda of development is to cut the consumption of high-carbon energy, such as coal and oil, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through technological innovation, institutional reform and business transformation.

At the same time, prevalent protectionism and unilateralism has brought unprecedented challenges to economic globalization, leading to sluggish growth in global trade and investment. Some developed economies tend to view international economic and trade relations through the lens of geopolitics and national security. Their abuse of security reviews and economic sanctions have severely disrupted normal economic and trade cooperation. It's not hard to explain that an increasing number of countries are calling for de-dollarization and have initiated or planned measures to promote diversification in the international monetary system.

In this context, the Eurasian region is experiencing a deteriorating external environment. Economic growth faces strong pressures

overall and shows a trend toward divergence.

According to the International Monetary Fund, growth of emerging markets and developing economies in Europe is projected to rise to 2.4 percent in 2023, which is 1.6 percentage points higher than the previous year but 0.6 percentage points lower than global growth for the same period. Growth in the Middle East and Central Asia is projected at 2 percent, 3.6 percentage points below that in the previous year. Asian emerging markets and developing economies perform relatively better, with an expected growth of 5.2 percent in 2023, up by 0.7 percentage points from the previous year.

It is noteworthy that, driven by the Belt and Road Initiative and various regional cooperation mechanisms, the Eurasian region's economic integration continues to develop positively. For example, despite multiple sanctions imposed on Russia, integration among members of the Eurasian Economic Union has continued to advance. According to the Eurasian Economic Integration report published by the Russian government in August, from 2015 to 2022, trade between the EAEU member countries grew by 87 percent, from \$44.5 billion to \$83.3 billion, and significant cooperation progress has been made in energy, transportation, financial markets, agriculture, healthcare, international cooperation and digitization.

Currently, the Eurasian economy still faces significant external challenges, including unresolved geopolitical hotspots, as well as economic sanctions and pressure from major developed countries. To fully leverage the opportunities presented by global economic trends and tap



LI MIN / CHINA DAILY

into the potential of the Eurasian economy, Eurasian countries should promote cooperation through the following approaches.

First, leading South-South economic cooperation through Eurasian economic collaboration. In the foreseeable future, emerging markets and developing countries will remain the main drivers of global economic growth.

On the one hand, countries in the Eurasian region should harness their economic potential, accelerate the implementation of the 2030

Sustainable Development Agenda, and promote cooperation in areas such as poverty alleviation, food security, pandemic response, vaccine distribution, development finance, climate change, green development, industrialization, digital economy and connectivity. On the other hand, Eurasian countries should strengthen cooperation with emerging markets and developing countries in other regions to share opportunities and contribute to economic globalization.

Second, actively engaging in

international rule-making and enhancing institutional influence. In recent years, Eurasian countries have strengthened alignment with each other and with international standards and rules. However, it is necessary to recognize that in emerging areas such as digital and low-carbon sectors, which define the future of economic cooperation, governance rules are still in the making.

Eurasian countries should participate in the establishment of relevant rules, collectively uphold the multilateral trading system, and promote the creation of a high-standard free trade zone network accessible to all, providing more effective institutional safeguards for global economic cooperation.

Third, creating an efficient e-commerce platform to promote development of the digital economy. With continuous breakthroughs and applications of digital technology, countries in the Eurasian region have introduced new measures to promote the digital economy transformation, covering the construction of digital infrastructure, the development of digital industries, business digital transformation, digital governance and international digital cooperation.

Currently, cross-border e-commerce has become a major driver for economic and trade cooperation in Eurasian countries. To promote the development of the data economy and create a more efficient model of economic and trade cooperation, countries in Eurasia should align goals and demands for e-commerce development and work together to build an efficient e-commerce platform.

Fourth, driving green development and deepening low-carbon economic cooperation. After the pandemic, countries in Eurasia

have increased efforts in environmental protection, creating new opportunities for key industries such as ecological protection and clean energy.

Eurasian countries have been deepening cooperation in new energy, energy conservation, and the new infrastructure construction, creating significant room for development in trade and investment cooperation. Low-carbon trade and green investment are becoming important avenues for Eurasian countries to tap into the potential of economic and trade cooperation and enhance its quality.

Fifth, strengthening local currency settlement cooperation to promote currency diversification in the international monetary system. The United States, driven by its own interests, has adopted a radical interest rate policy and poses huge financial risks to Eurasian countries. At the same time, it is leveraging the US dollar's dominant position to abuse financial sanctions, causing instability in the Eurasian financial markets.

To mitigate the negative spillover effects of monetary policies from developed economies and reduce reliance on the US dollar, Eurasian countries should promote the use of local currency settlement in cross-border trade and investment as a breakthrough. Monetary cooperation should be further deepened to provide more options in the international monetary system.

The author is a senior research fellow of the Institute of World Economics and Politics at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the National Institute for Global Strategy at the CASS. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

SHAO YUWEI AND GUO HONGYU

Green bonding

Developing countries are going toward a low-carbon, resilient and inclusive development through BRI cooperation

As climate crisis poses a great threat to global economic, financial, social and ecological systems, developing countries are faced with policy, financial and technical challenges in achieving sustainable development.

At the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in Beijing on Oct 17 and 18, conducting practical investment cooperation, promoting green development and strengthening international cooperation mechanisms were three of the eight actions that were considered vis-a-vis shared development in the next decade, driven by the Belt and Road Initiative. This serves as a continued role of supporting developing countries to achieve green, low-carbon and climate resilient growth in the critical decade.

Managing climate risk and promoting financing for low-carbon and climate-resilient areas are critical for developing countries to achieve sustainable development goals in the decade ahead.

Most Belt and Road countries are developing countries, which are highly vulnerable to climate change. They have limited resources and capacity for climate risks assessment, early warning, and

planning such as formulating National Adaptation Plans. This makes it challenging for them to estimate the financial, technical demand for international financial support. Providing technical, financial, and social support is critical for their green, low-carbon, resilient and inclusive development.

The confluence of global crises and lack of financial support exacerbate the challenges faced by developing countries in addressing climate change and achieving sustainable development goals. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, the estimated financial needs for climate adaptation alone can reach \$71 billion annually by 2030. Additionally, while global climate finance and investment have increased in recent years, 71 percent of public climate finance is provided as loans rather than grants. This could potentially increase the debt burden of developing countries. In 2021, 27.5 percent of low- and middle-income countries' budgets were spent on debt service, which was twice the amount spent on education, four times that on health and nearly 12 times that on social protection.

The BRI, launched in 2013, has been playing an important role in promoting South-South cooperation with developing countries based on their national circumstances and demands. Over the past decade, the BRI has mobilized \$1 trillion of investments globally, supported more than 3,000 projects and created over 420,000 jobs for participating countries. The BRI is committed to open, green, and

clean cooperation toward inclusive and sustainable development, and cooperation under the BRI should be people-centered and conducive to improving people's livelihood. In addition to the construction of infrastructure, China launches small-scale yet impactful projects through foreign aid, benefiting people's lives. By 2030, the BRI is expected to increase global real income by 0.7 percent to 2.9 percent, lifting 7.6 million people out of extreme poverty (those earning less than \$1.9/day) and 32 million people out of moderate poverty (those earning less than \$3.2/day).

During the third Belt and Road forum, 369 practical collaboration projects prioritizing renewable energy development, financial cooperation and livelihood improvement were signed. The China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China will each set up a 350-billion-yuan (\$47.85 billion) financing window. An additional 80 billion yuan will be injected into the Silk Road Fund and 1,000 small-scale livelihood assistance projects will be carried out. In the next decade, to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss, and to improve resilience and sustainability, the BRI can further help developing countries in areas of renewable energies, energy efficiency, climate adaptation, and green finance, with a development perspective.

Investment in renewable energy, especially in small-scale yet impactful projects such as decentralized renewable energy solutions, needs to be increased. Southeast Asia, Central Asia and Africa are all rich

in solar and wind energy resources, and have high requirements for livelihood improvement. Renewables could translate investments in electricity connections into higher incomes, local jobs, greater adaptive capacity and overall well-being. Achieving such change requires not only the deployment of decentralized systems, but also the improvement of the policy, financing, capacity and skills, and market access.

The improvement of energy efficiency in BRI developing countries needs to be prioritized. BRI countries consumed about 50 percent of the world's total energy but produced 30 percent of the global GDP. The BRI can further strengthen knowledge sharing on ecological and environmental policies, enhance industrial-capacity cooperation mechanisms and platforms and promote investment in technological advancements to improve energy efficiency.

South-South cooperation on building climate resilience needs to be further deepened. The Beijing Declaration released at the Belt and Road Ministerial Forum for International Cooperation in Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Management stated that China would, together with other countries, "reinforce disaster prevention measures and scale up effective early warning systems, strengthen the monitoring and early warning of disaster risks and translate into early action including for hard-to-reach and remote populations". By strengthening the implementation of adaptation projects, dialogues, exchanges, and cooperation, and



SHI YU / CHINA DAILY

providing technology and supplies, China can help developing countries enhance their climate adaptation capacity, thereby helping them with the formulation of National Adaptation Plans.

Policy exchanges and investment cooperation in green finance needs to be accelerated. The BRI can deepen knowledge sharing on green finance policies, standards, incentives, and financial innovation with stakeholders of participating countries, and jointly develop information disclosure and public participation tools; carry out cooperation on harmonizing the common standards of green finance and transition finance; and provide capacity building for financial institutions, project developers and relevant authorities.

An enabling environment for high-quality overseas investment needs to be improved. The BRI can strengthen and refine requirements for environmental, climate-related and nature-related risk management, further improve foreign investment grievance redressal systems, and conduct climate benefits evaluation for overseas investment, combined with incentives to encourage low-carbon and climate-resilient overseas investment.

Shao Yuwei is a program officer at the Greenovation Hub. Guo Hongyu is deputy director of the Greenovation Hub. The authors contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

LIFE

Over eight decades ago, the artistic odyssey of Zao Wou-Ki, the internationally acclaimed Chinese-French painter, began in the enchanting city of Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, where his creativity took root and blossomed.

Now, on the 10th anniversary of his death, Zao's masterpieces have found their way back to their rightful home.

The Way Is Infinite: Centennial Retrospective Exhibition of Zao Wou-Ki opened at the Art Museum of China Academy of Art in Hangzhou last month, and will run until Feb 20.

Divided into six sections, the exhibition displays around 200 of Zao's most important works, including oil paintings, Chinese ink-wash paintings, watercolors, lithographs, painted porcelain and works of literature.

As a significant cultural program, held as part of the 19th Asian Games Hangzhou, the exhibition is also linked with the 2024 China-France Year of Culture and Tourism, and a key project sponsored by the Zhejiang Culture and Art Development Fund.

It is hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and the Zhejiang people's government, and specially supported by the embassy of France in China, the embassy of China in France and the embassy of China in Switzerland.

A forum, *The Way Is Infinite: Zao Wou-Ki's World of Art* and a symposium, *The Dream Quest of West Lake - Zao Wou-Ki 85 Workshop*, were held at the China Academy of Art.

Gao Shiming, general planner of the exhibition and president of the China Academy of Art, says that Zao is not just a towering figure in the academy's lineage, but also a shining star of modern art history.

"His work bridges the gap between Eastern and Western cultural traditions, creating a modernist Eastern style that allows the underlying spirit of Chinese culture to flourish in the fertile ground of modern painting," Gao says.

Zao's work has found a prominent place in the collections of 150 major museums and art galleries around the world, including the Centre Pompidou in France, the Tate Modern in the United Kingdom, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in the United States.

In 2017, Zao's *29.01.64* (1964) was sold for around HK\$200 million (US\$25.6 million) at Christie's in Hong Kong, setting a new record for his works and the world record for an oil painting by an Asian artist.

A year later, the insatiable enthusiasm for Zao once again astonished, driven by the auction success of his largest masterpiece to date.

His *Juin-Octobre 1985*, which is 280 centimeters by 1,000 cm in size, sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong, with the final price, after commissions, reaching a staggering HK\$510 million.

This historic sale not only shattered the previous record for the most valuable painting ever sold at a Hong Kong auction, but also obliterated the world auction record for an oil painting by an Asian artist.

Born in Beijing in 1920, Zao gained admission to the Hangzhou National College of Art (now known as the China Academy of Art) in 1935, and following his graduation

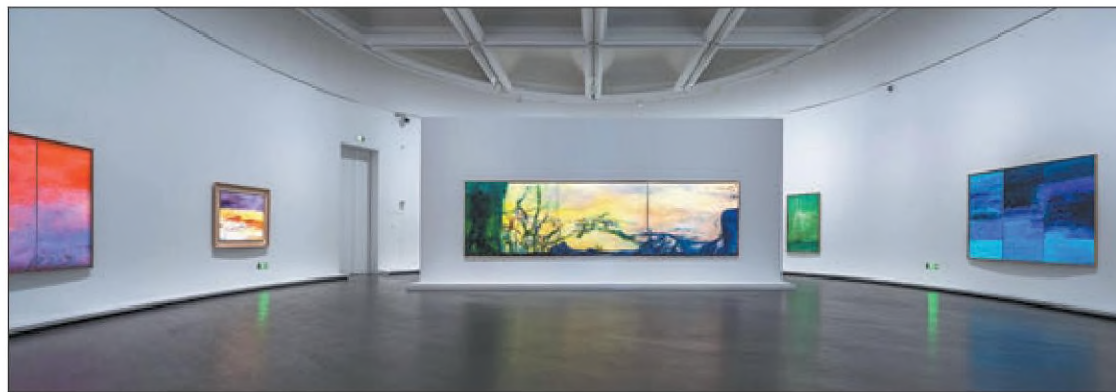


From left: Zao Wou-Ki (front) teaches at his painting workshop in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, in 1985. A group photo of Zao and those attending his workshop. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Home is where the art is

Retrospective exhibition of Zao Wou-Ki's oeuvre opens in Hangzhou, the city where his passion for painting first bloomed, **Li Yingxue** reports.



Top: A view of *The Way Is Infinite: Centennial Retrospective Exhibition of Zao Wou-Ki*, an ongoing exhibition at the Art Museum of China Academy of Art in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province. Above left: *My Home in Hangzhou* (1947, oil on canvas), a painting by Zao. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY Above right: *Untitled (Still Life With Apples)*, (1935-36, oil on canvas), by Zao. ANTOINE MERCIER / FOR CHINA DAILY



in 1941, took up a role as an instructor at the institution.

He received a traditional Chinese education and training in calligraphy from childhood. While studying at the Hangzhou National College of Art, he embraced the artistic principles of Lin Fengmian and Wu Dayu, which blended Eastern and Western influences, and was deeply influenced by impressionism, as well as paintings by Cezanne, Matisse and Picasso.

"I sought to express movement, its slow, haunting motion, or its



“Painting was as natural and indispensable to him as breathing.”

Gao Shiming, general planner of the exhibition, also president of the China Academy of Art

A poster for the exhibition.

dazzling flashes. I wanted to make the surface of the canvas vibrate thanks to contrast, or the quivering of a single color," Zao once said.

In 1948, he left for France to pursue further studies. When he arrived in Paris, his paintings were still expressions of life memories. However, in 1951, while living in Switzerland, he saw the paintings of Paul Klee, which led to an epiphany about the creative potential of traditional Chinese culture. Inspired by oracle bone scripts and bronze inscriptions, he used imaginary

characters as compositional elements to create form and space in his paintings.

In 1985, the Ministry of Culture invited Zao to return to his alma mater to host the Zao Wou-Ki Painting Workshop, which enabled him to pass on his painting experience and insight, contributing to contemporary Chinese art and art education.

Xu Jiang, general adviser of the exhibition, recalls that, in the summer of 1985, he studied with Zao at his workshop for a month.

Reminiscing about his time spent at the workshop, Xu says he will cherish the candid conversations students shared with Zao, while seated around him during the breaks between sketching sessions.

"He was a man of few words, but the main point he tried to make was that we needed to learn from the outstanding traditions of our nation, from the first-rate masters across the world, and that we should combine both aspects and inject our own individual traits. Only in this way would we be able to naturally integrate every aspect in order to form our own style, which should not be local, but rather global," Xu says.

He remembers that Zao once said, "When you start to paint, you might as well forget everything, just like when meditating. Allow your emotions and personality to rise to the surface and connect to the painting through your hands. A painting needs to breathe just as much as a person."

Since 1958, Zao's works were mostly titled by the date they were completed. Xu thinks they can be seen as journals of his circumstances. "There was homesickness, bereavement, anxiety and despair in these works," Xu says.

In the spring of 1989, Xu and several classmates from the academy workshop paid Zao a visit at his Parisian home.

"Zao pointed at his well-insulated studio and told us that he was always caught up in a struggle there," Xu says.

"Sometimes, a large painting fell on him, which trapped and 'buried' him for as long as 10 minutes," Xu recalls, adding that Zao's sincere pursuit of great art was "a kind of indulgence during the journey of his soul".

In recognition of his exceptional contribution, Zao was honored with lifelong membership of the Academie des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 2002. He passed away in Switzerland in 2013.

For Gao, Zao's later work became more unadulterated, similar to the purity that modernist poets advocated. "In his later years, Zao's free, optimistic and careless state of mind manifested itself in a more tranquil, spiritual, glorious and noble expression in his paintings," he says.

Gao recalls that Zao once said that everybody is bonded by one tradition, while he, by two. "His art embodies Chinese and Western cultural traditions," Gao explains, adding that Zao deftly navigated the waters of ancient, modern, Eastern and Western art, serving as a cultural bridge between Chinese classics and Western modernity.

"Painting was as natural and indispensable to him as breathing," Gao says.

Contact the writer at liyingsxue@chinadaily.com.cn

Photo week frames culture in the big picture

By CHENG YUEZHU chengyuezhu@chinadaily.com.cn

Photo Beijing 2023, the 11th iteration of the annual photography week, kicked off at the China Millennium Monument in Beijing on Saturday, with a red carpet, speeches, signing ceremonies and live performances.

Co-hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the People's Government of Beijing Municipality, this year's events include 11 exhibitions displaying more than 2,000 photos, and 13 forums, all of which run until Sunday.

Under the theme of "Image: Countryside - Symbiosis", Photo Beijing 2023 focuses on nine main topics, including rural development, the coordinated development of the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, and the Belt and Road Initiative.

Yang Yuanxing, president of Photo Beijing 2023's organizing committee and honorary president of the China Artistic Photography

Society, introduced this year's key activities in his speech at the opening ceremony.

According to Yang, from its initiation, Photo Beijing has organized 440 exhibitions and more than 240 forums, attracting in excess of 15,000 photographers and 270 organizations from nearly 100 countries and regions to participate, as well as reaching an audience of over 300 million people.

"Over the past decade, with the China Millennium Monument as its main venue, Photo Beijing has collaborated with domestic and international cultural institutions, making full use of its geographic, platform, content, and communication advantages to plan and organize a series of excellent photography-based cultural events," Yang says.

"From 2023, standardization, market orientation and high-quality implementation have become the new key objectives for Photo Beijing." The recurring exhibitions, such as



“From 2023, standardization, market orientation and high-quality implementation have become the new key objectives for Photo Beijing.”

Yang Yuanxing, president of Photo Beijing 2023's organizing committee

the *Silk Road Youth International Photography Exhibition* and the *Exhibitions of Presidents of Photography Societies From Ten Countries*, have enjoyed a wider global reach, receiving increasing submissions.

This year, with the goal of preserving traditional Chinese culture, the *Exhibition of Chinese Rice-Farming Culture Images* was launched to showcase China's agricultural heritage and its role in promoting tourism development.

An exhibition, *Cultural Heritage in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region*, was hosted earlier this year to support the area's coordinated development.

To facilitate cultural exchange and communication among photographers, the *Cross-Strait Invitational Exhibition of Prominent Photographers* has been opened to the public as part of Photo Beijing.

Another key section of the event is its serial forum discussions that aim to enhance international academic exchange in photography and

explore the new trends in photography art and its relevant industries.

This year's forums continue to combine in-person events with livestreams. Photography artists, curators, experts and scholars are invited to engage in discussions on topics including visual arts, rural vitalization, integration of culture and tourism, global cultural and agricultural heritage, as well as aesthetic education for teenagers.

Representatives from The International Federation of Photographic Art, which has collaborated with Photo Beijing for a decade, attended the opening ceremony.

The organization's president Riccardo Busi said in his speech that the themed exhibitions curated by Photo Beijing, especially those centered on world heritage and youth in countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative, help promote cultural understanding and bridge communities from diverse backgrounds, reflecting the event's international vision.

"Given the profound synergy and shared vision between our organizations, I genuinely hope and anticipate that our collaboration will persist for many more years. Through the evocative power of images, we aspire to further the growth of photography and nurture friendships among photographers across the globe," Busi says.

The opening ceremony also included signing ceremonies for cooperation agreements among Photo Beijing and international photography organizations, as well as an agreement to jointly promote the cultural heritage in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.

Certificates were given out to the event's expert consultants and curators, as well as artists invited to participate in the 2023 *Silk Road Youth International Photography Exhibition*, *Young Artists Invitation Exhibition* and the *Cross-Strait Invitational Exhibition of Prominent Photographers*.

Zhao Yingxin, artistic director of the event's organizing committee, announced that the theme for Photo Beijing 2024 is "Image: Life - Eternity", which will call for submissions in nine sections, including world heritage and urban landmarks.

LIFESHANGHAI

Russian singer is lyrical about audiences

Vitas will perform in Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou, **Zhang Kun** reports in Shanghai.



Vitas, the Russian singer known for his five-octave falsetto, performed to a full house at the National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai on Saturday.

The concert featured his most celebrated repertoire including *Opera #2* and *The 7th Element*, as well as a popular Chinese folk song *The Tibetan Plateau*.

Vitas, Vitaliy Vladasovich Grachyov, is arguably the most well-known Russian singer in China. His rise to fame started in 2006 when he was invited by China Central Television to participate in a gala show in celebration of the Year of Russia in China.

During the show, his incredibly high vocal range and eclectic musical style that combines genres like opera, techno and folk, as well as a falsetto floored the audience and won him the nickname "prince of the dolphin tones".

Vitas, who last performed in China four years ago, will tour other cities including Beijing, Wuhan, Hubei province, and Guangzhou, Guangdong province, following the Shanghai leg.

"I have lost track of my shows in China, but the total number is definitely more than 150," the singer tells China Daily.

Vitas says his frequent visits to the country have allowed him to feel at home, and that he has been most impressed by the "charming etiquette" of Chinese audiences, who have been "kind, helpful, and are always smiling".

Earlier this year China and Russia reintroduced visa-free travel for group tourists in some border cities, and the singer is happy about that.

"The two countries are like brothers and family and this new policy will bring us even closer. I read about Russians crossing the border to have breakfast in China. I love Chinese food, too! Chinese food is delicious, and I hope the friendship



Scenes from the concert of Russian singer Vitas, who is famous for his unique five-octave falsetto, at the National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai on Oct 21.

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

between our two people will go on forever," he says.

Born in Latvia in 1979, the singer, who has Russian, Lithuanian and Jewish roots moved to Odessa, Ukraine, with his family when he was a child. He took on the name Vitas in his teenage years because he found his original name to be too long.

The start of his music career was difficult. After he was rejected by a musical college in Odessa, Vitas resorted to performing covers of Michael Jackson hits at night clubs. He was performing at an experimental theater when he was discovered by the Russian producer Sergey Pudovkin.

He was working for a youth television channel when his music video for *Opera #2*, in which the singer was portrayed as a lonely fish-human hybrid wearing artificial gills, premiered and garnered wide attention. This, he recalls, was the starting point of his series of successful concert tours in Russia and abroad.

During his tour of China in 2008, Vitas auctioned off some of his personal belongings and donated the proceeds to the regions affected by the earthquake in Sichuan province. He has also worked as an actor and appeared in several Chinese movies and TV shows.

Over the past few years, the singer has shifted his focus to family life.

"I spent a lot of time taking care of my baby daughter, our third child. Now that she has started talking, I hope to turn my attention back to my career, so the children can be proud of me," says the singer. To protect his voice, Vitas abstains from alcohol and drinks lots of juice.

"I have learned in China to always drink beverages warm. This prevents the coldness entering your body. It has proved very effective," he says.

Contact the writer at zhangkun@chinadaily.com.cn

Iconic artist's exhibition showcases his evolution

By ZHANG KUN in Shanghai



Portrait of Zeng Fanzhi, a photograph by Li Zhenhua.

LI ZHENHUA / FOR CHINA DAILY

If you go

Zeng Fanzhi: Old and New (Paintings 1988-2023)

Sept 27-March 8, 2024, Monday-Sunday, 10 am-9 pm (last admission at 8 pm).

Museum of Art Pudong, 2777 Binjiang Avenue, Pudong New Area, Shanghai. 400-820-8771.

The exhibition at Shanghai's Museum of Art Pudong, *Zeng Fanzhi: Old and New (Paintings 1988-2023)*, is showcasing the important phases in the evolution of the artist, considered one of the most important oil painters in the country's contemporary art scene.

More than 60 of Zeng's most iconic creations from the past 35 years have been chosen for the exhibition, which has four interrelated yet distinctive sections. The exhibition opened on Sept 27 and will run until March 8, 2024.

Zeng was born in Wuhan, Hubei province, in 1964. Since graduating from the Hubei Fine Arts Academy in the 1980s, the 59-year-old has become a very influential living artist in China and is widely recognized for his keen observations and exceptional painting techniques, and the distinctive artistic style he uses to document the overall social landscape and personal emotional experiences, according to the chief curator of the show, Fabrice Hergott.

Hergott is also the director of Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, where Zeng held a major retrospective exhibition titled *Zeng Fanzhi* in 2013.

The exhibition at the Pudong museum consists of his most iconic *Mask* series from the 1990s, the

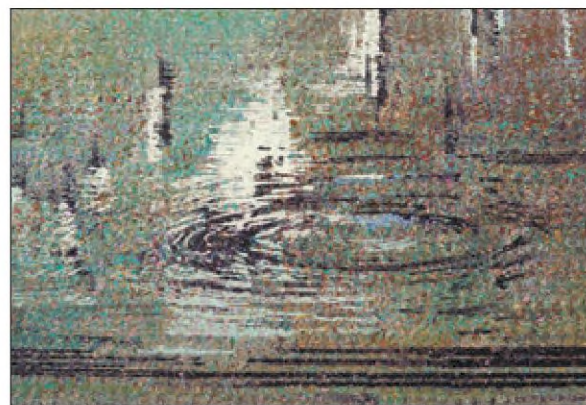


From left: Two of Zeng Fanzhi's works *Portrait*, 2004, oil on canvas; and *Sparkling Paintings - Water V*, 2019-2023, oil on canvas. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Abstract Landscape series from the 2000s, as well as the first public showcase of his latest creation since 2019, the *Sparkling Paintings*.

Li Minkun, the director of the museum, says that his museum had made special arrangements for *Sparkling Paintings* to be showcased in an exhibition hall and positioned the series to take advantage of natural light so that visitors will be able to view different expressions of its colors according to the time of the day.

During the exhibition's prepara-



tion phase from Sept 16 to 17, Zeng created an oil painting, titled *Abstract Landscapes - Red*, at the museum, marking the first time he has painted live at a museum. The painting is being presented alongside most of the sketches and rough drawings he made on site during the process.

The exhibition starts on the ground floor of the museum, where the first section, *The Early Years*, chronicles the significant junctures in Zeng's initial career.

Standing in front of a portrait he

did for friends and schoolmates in Wuhan, the artist recalls his university years. In 1993, he moved to Beijing where he went through a period of depression and loneliness.

"I didn't know who I could communicate with, and was confused and emotionally unstable," he says. It was during the period that he started painting the *Mask* Series, which earned significant recognition around the world. He ended the series in 2004 because he "no longer felt that way".

The remaining three sections,

which are shown on the third floor, offer diverse perspectives on Zeng's continuous artistic exploration.

The second section, *Different Paths*, juxtaposes paintings of different types and themes, reflecting Zeng's experimentation with various genres in painting.

The third section, *Painting as Contemplation*, reflects the tranquil inner world of the artist, who reproduces his personal experiences on the canvas by repeatedly depicting a series of specific themes. Cheng Er, a renowned film director and friend, created visual and auditory add-ons to complement this segment of the show.

The final section, titled *The Monumentals*, is located in a bright exhibition hall at the museum. Featuring the monumental artworks Zeng created over the past decade, this section is designed to present a dynamic dialogue between the paintings and the natural light in the expansive space. Visitors can enjoy the details of these artworks from various distances, whether they move around them, or stand still in front of them, says Hergott.

The subject matter and visual elements portrayed by Zeng stem from his sensibility, visual experiences, and years of continuous exploration of different themes in the annals of global art history, says Hergott.

"As they are magnified several times over and then deconstructed, a new painterly vocabulary is formed, signifying the infinite space that painting continues to traverse in the contemporary context," he says.

SPORTS

For Para Games champ Di Dongdong, sound and touch are the keys to glory



Di Dongdong (center) and his guide, Lian Jiageng, speed to gold in the men's T11 final in a Games-record time of 11.23 seconds at the 4th Asian Para Games in Hangzhou on Tuesday. WEI XIAOHAO / CHINA DAILY

By XING WEN in Hangzhou
xingwen@chinadaily.com.cn

China's Di Dongdong has undoubtedly been one of the biggest stars of the athletics events at the ongoing Asian Para Games.

On Tuesday, he led a Chinese sweep of the podium places in the men's 100m T11 final at Huanglong Sports Centre Stadium, clocking 11.23 seconds, ahead of Zhao Pingan (11.33) and Ye Tao (11.45).

"I am the senior athlete among the three because I started in this sport a bit earlier than they did, and I am older. I was so proud to see three Chinese national flags raised at the medal ceremony, and I also hope they can perform even better," said Di, 30.

Just the day before, Di set a new Asian Para Games record in the long jump T11 final. He achieved the feat with his very first attempt, leaping to an impressive 6.65 meters, a 10-centimeter improvement on his personal best, and enough to secure gold.

"I felt good in this competition. After landing, I felt like I jumped pretty well, but 6.65 meters was really beyond my expectations as I rarely managed it in training," he said.

A leap of 6.47m secured Di the Paralympic title in the same event at the Tokyo Games in August 2021.

With the medal count quickly racking up, Di's next target is to break the world record.

"I set this goal at the very beginning of my long jump career, but at the moment it's quite challenging for me to achieve," he said.

In para sports, the T11 classification features athletes with visual impairment, typically indicating complete blindness or very limited light perception. These athletes often rely on guides or use auditory and tactile cues to compete in various sports. So, Di is never alone on the track.

In the long jump, athletes are required to complete their approach on a runway which is approximately a meter wide. This demands precision and stability as they count their strides and maintain a steady pace until they reach the takeoff board. Then, with the utmost determination, they leap forward, aiming for a clean landing in the sandpit.

Di's coach, Wang Lin, serves as his eyes in this complex sequence. Wang stands on the runway, near the takeoff board, issuing rhythmic calls that gradually increase in frequency, directing Di toward the

SENSING SUCCESS



Di Dongdong leaps to glory in the men's long jump T11 event at the 4th Asian Para Games in Hangzhou on Monday. An effort of 6.65 meters secured Di the title. WEI XIAOHAO / CHINA DAILY

sound. As Di gets closer, Wang steps away from the runway, his gaze locked onto Di. When Di reaches the takeoff area, Wang shouts "Go!", and, in an instant, Di leaps and Wang instinctively jumps, mirroring his actions.

The synchronization takes years of practice and teamwork.

If an athlete veers off course and lands outside the pit, injuries — sometimes serious spine and tail bone damage — can be sustained.

That's one of the reasons why Di is always so quick to pay tribute to his coach Wang. After his gold-medal heroics in Hangzhou, he said, "First of all, I want to thank my coach for all his hard work and dedication, for guiding me in the right direction and teaching me the essentials of every movement in every session. My coach has been a significant support in both my life and training."

On the sprinting track, guide Lian Jiageng is Di's right-hand man — although in actuality he is positioned to his left. Lian leads Di in the 100-meter races — starting, accelerating, and, at the end, slowing down to allow Di to be the first to cross the finish line.

"Supporting Di in his championship journey is a really fulfilling experience for me," said Lian.

"We've been working together for nearly six years."

Growing up in Liaoyang, Liaoning province in Northeast China, Di had a strong passion for running and jumping from a very young age.

Unfortunately, at 6, Di was diagnosed with severe glaucoma, which, despite treatment, left him with minimal vision in both eyes. Later in his childhood, he suffered a further setback when a ball struck his left eye, resulting in a detached retina.

Having lost the sight in both his eyes, Di, understandably, found his predicament extremely tough to deal with.

His outlook brightened, however, when, in 2013, his athletic potential was discovered by the local federation for individuals with disabilities.

"In the early days of my long jump training, I constantly felt as if there was an abyss in front of me, and I was too afraid to take that leap forward.

The most daunting part was the fear of running off course and landing on the hard ground outside the sandpit," he said. "Training could be tedious, and I did consider quitting, but during those moments, my family, teammates, guide and coach were unwavering in their encouragement, and I felt I couldn't give up."

UnionPay International expands and enhances European presence

By YUAN SHENGGAO

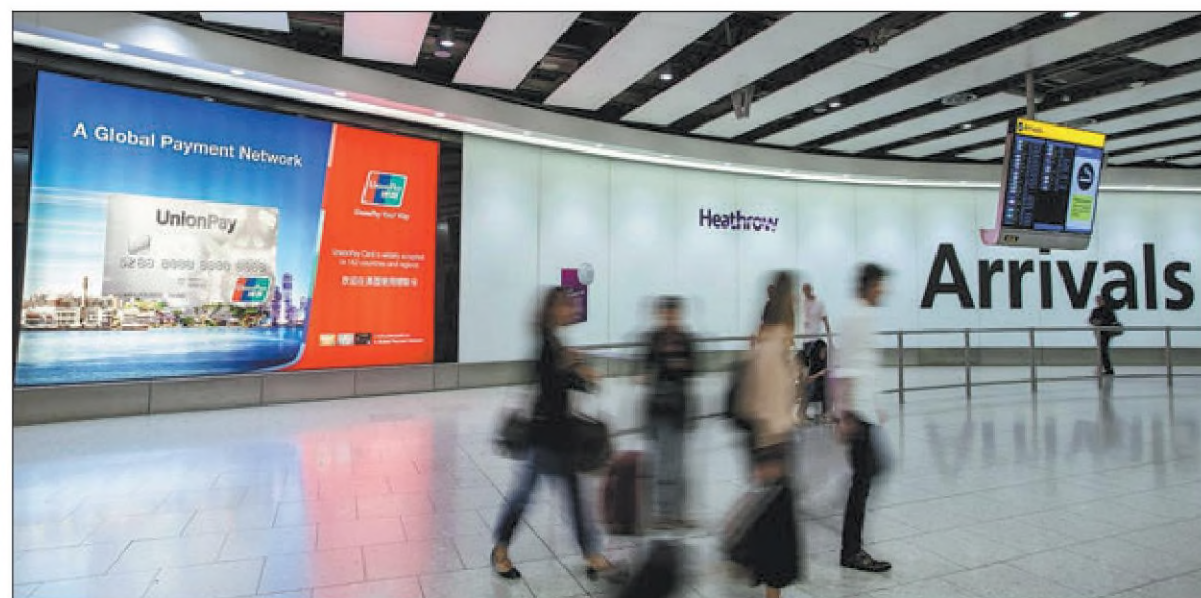
UnionPay International, or UPI, a global leader in the payment industry, is continuing to bolster its presence in the European market by delivering high-quality, efficient and secure cross-border payment services to international cardholders. With a focus on localized business development, UnionPay is expanding its comprehensive payment solutions in key European markets while offering broad acceptance and enhanced services to meet the evolving needs of consumers and businesses.

Currently, more than 90 percent of countries and regions in Europe accept UnionPay cards. The coverage of UnionPay payment products includes scenarios throughout Europe with a wide range of merchants from renowned brand stores and department stores to fast-food restaurants, supermarkets and hotels.

The European countries most frequently visited by Chinese tourists — the United Kingdom, France and Germany — are among those with widespread UnionPay acceptance. Moreover, at merchant point-of-sale, or POS, and ATM terminals in Italy and Spain, acceptance coverage is close to 100 percent.

In September, UnionPay partnered with Hungary's K&H Payment Services to launch a large-scale card acceptance deal covering Central Europe and expanding its card acceptance network in Hungary. Approximately 25,000 POS terminals across 12,000 merchants are now accessible for UnionPay cardholders — a collaboration that enhances consumer payment options and facilitates convenient and secure transactions.

With around 70 percent of merchants in Germany enabling UnionPay acceptance, UnionPay cards have become widely accepted in airports, business districts, shopping areas and more. UnionPay has expanded its payment options by partnering with major supermarket chain Aldi Süd, enabling UnionPay cards as a pay-



Currently, more than 90 percent of countries and regions in Europe accept UnionPay cards. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

ment tool in over 2,000 stores. Additionally, it has introduced QR code acceptance at Müller, a leading pharmacy and cosmetics chain store, providing both Chinese visitors and Chinese citizens living in the country with diverse and innovative payment experiences.

Nova Banka in the city of Banja Luka, in partnership with UnionPay, has rolled out UnionPay's virtual card solution in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through the TIZI e-wallet, customers of Nova Banka can make mobile contactless payments using their UnionPay virtual cards. This service is available on the TIZI wallet Android app, utilizing host card emulation technology.

With over 5 million merchant terminals accepting contactless services, residents of Bosnia and Herzegovina can enjoy the convenience of UnionPay virtual cards for their daily transactions, including groceries, gasoline and dining.

UnionPay has also made signifi-



A UnionPay advert on a bus passes the Musee de l'Armee in Paris.

cant strides in the Serbian market, deepening its localized business development. The country has established a wide-reaching UnionPay payment network, covering approximately 95 percent of the local market. In collaboration with DinaCard, the national payment card of Serbia, UnionPay

launched UnionPay-DinaCard co-branded cards, marking the debut of UnionPay in the country. With the support of the National Bank of Serbia, nearly 400,000 UnionPay cards have been issued, providing Serbian consumers with seamless payment experiences both locally and internationally.

On the Italian Peninsula, UnionPay Italy partnered with Nexi earlier this year to achieve enablement of 83,000 of new POS terminals. Additionally, 450,000 PaybyLink merchants have been enabled by Nexi, providing convenient and secure payment options for consumers.

Meanwhile, European payment institution BKN301 celebrated a significant milestone in its journey toward international markets by becoming a member of UnionPay in 2022 and integrating the international circuit into the San Marino Payment and Fintech Institute's offering. This enables San Marino merchants to accept online and offline payments. Moreover, San Marino UnionPay cardholders now enjoy the efficiency, convenience and security of cross-border payment services.

UnionPay cards have achieved widespread acceptance in Spain, with nearly 100 percent coverage at ATMs and over 90 percent cov-

erage at POS merchants. Cardholders can conveniently use them in shops, restaurants and hotels, as well as paying for transportation services. Over 65 percent of merchants accept UnionPay contactless payments, including cards and mobile payments.

UnionPay QR payment is also accepted in all El Corte Ingles stores in Spain. Additionally, more than 50 percent of the country's online merchants support UnionPay, making online shopping and tuition payments more convenient for cardholders.

Partnerships with key tourism partners, including Vueling Airlines, Renfe National Railway, and Paradores Hotel Group, enhance UnionPay's presence in the Spanish market. To boost convenience for Spanish travelers to China, UnionPay and Pecunpay have collaborated to introduce a debit card that is widely accepted across the country. To access this service, users simply need to download the Yi An app, available in Spanish, English and Mandarin, and apply for a physical or virtual debit card.

In Portugal, UnionPay cards are accepted at 80 percent of merchants and all ATMs. Cardholders can easily apply for UnionPay cards through Millennium bcp bank, which provides them with seamless payment experiences across the country.

Through partnerships and collaborations with local financial institutions and merchants, UnionPay strives to provide seamless and secure payment experiences to international cardholders. With its commitment to innovation and customer-centric solutions, UnionPay is well positioned to meet the evolving needs of the European market and contribute to the growth of the continent's payment industry.

In partnership with more than 2,500 institutions worldwide, UnionPay International has enabled card acceptance in 181 countries and regions, with issuance in 79 markets.