Xi Jinping unanimously elected president

Experts: Reform will boost sci-tech self-reliance

At two sessions, a whole-process democracy displayed

China's aid spurs global development

Nations' aid spurs global development

By ZHANG ZHENDAO
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China's revamped Ministry of Science and Technology would allow the country's sci-tech administrations to be more efficient in supporting basic sciences and using innovation to promote economic growth, and achieve quality self-reliance in science and technology at a faster rate, experts said.

According to a proposed government restructuring plan released Thursday by the State Council, China's Cabinet, the science ministry will undergo a massive revamp that would delegate many of its existing functions to other government bodies. The country will also establish a central organization for sci-tech, whose responsibilities would also lie in the areas of disciplines and science ministry.

Organizing and formulating plans for promoting scientific and technological development in agriculture and rural areas will be transferred from the science ministry to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

The agricultural ministry will also operate the China Rural Technology Development Center. The science ministry's responsibilities for crafting plans and policies to promote social progress using science and technology will be allocated to other ministry-level bodies, such as the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, the National Natural Science Foundation of China, and more.

After the restructuring, the Ministry of Science and Technology will retain many critical duties such as administering the nation's basic research, science administration, and major science projects; building systems for technology transfer; counseling scientific findings supervision and evaluation of science technology; promoting academic integrity, international cooperation, and the quality of China's scientific workforce.

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"This kind of restructuring makes sense, and it is in line with China's great emphasis on basic research in recent years," said Li Fang, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Institute of Science and Technology, adding that the reorganization would optimize the management of science and technological undertakings across the board.

"We need to enhance the overall capacity and effect of macro-managing the country's science and technology sector. The future priority of the Ministry of Science and Technology should be to focus on finding resources nationwide and focus on tackling key bottleneck issues in the future," he said.

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"We are accustomed to this story.
Movie industry roars back with robust recovery

Receive records in the wake of the Spring Festival holiday signal a turnaround for the sector. Xu Fan reports.

By William Kao, executive editor from the United States and has been playing in Chinese cinema and TV series, was increasingly busy, thanks to China's revitalized film industry.

Opening with a record-breaking Spring Festival box-office bonanza in January, the domestic movie market saw a rise in movie viewings, which resulted in a slowdown that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic.

As of March, the country's total box-office income reached 2.24 billion yuan (U.S. $330 million), almost half last year's 4.62 billion yuan, according to Fan, a film information aggregator.

The month following the Spring Festival holiday was traditionally considered a slow time because of the lack of major movie releases. However, the period from Jan 19 to Feb 30 grossed 3.58 billion yuan, the highest for the month since the pandemic ended, according to Fan.

That means Kao is reaching more job offers. Currently juggling two projects, the veteran actor has been working between Shanghai and Los Angeles, a small city in the northeastern province of Shandong, spending a few days in each location while shooting the two different films.

One is director Yao Xiaogang's spy thriller *Chen Xing* (Chen Xing) starring Yao and Huang Xiaoming, who portrayed a German military officer in The Great Wall, a film released two years ago. The other is the action movie *Goodbye China* (Goodbye China), directed by director Zhao Wei (Zhai Wei), who won the Golden Horse Awards for Best New Director.

"China's film industry is back in business. Cynically, it's all — it is going boom again," Kao said.

For movie insiders, the Year of the Ox has been a promising start. Statistics from the China Film Administration, the industry regulator, show that the domestic movie market hit a peak in the first month of the year, making this the greenest first month of all time.

With China optimizing its pandemic policies toward the end of last year, the domestic film industry, which was on a five-month break from March, is expected to see a better performance.

According to the director Zhang Yimou's historical epic film *The Great Wall* that grossed $141 million in its first two weeks, the domestic film industry is expected to see a gradual recovery. The film was released in 2017, but only now are tickets counting up.

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China Daily

TOP NEWS

Family’s diversity a reflection of ethnic harmony in Ningxia

By DUC DONGQIENG

Vinh Long, Vietnam

Like most rare flowers, Ma Huan and her loved one gather around the family table to enjoy the sweet taste of a home-cooked meal of Lam Dong fruit in the first month of the lunar year.

They always prepare a feast of homemade dumplings, fish, meat and vegetables from dried fish piping hot on a plate.

The plump dumplings, stuffed with Ma’s home-cooked meat and vegetables, are enjoyed together under the shining light of the family’s closest leaving but also the ethnic achievements in the heart of China’s Ningxia Hui autonomous region.

Ma, 46, is a member of the Kangxi ethnic group, the left her birthplace, more than 3,200 kilometers away in the Yining city, Xinjiang, to become a dome of the family’s happiness.

Ma’s extended family consists of a snapshot of the country’s ethnic diversity and the way people of different ethnicities in China live harmoniously together.

Her husband is ethnic Hui, while her mother-in-law, also ethnic Hui, was born in Yining, where she (Ma) also worked as a cook in 2000 and returned home, earned his living as a cook and is skilled at making and eating noodles and rice, and is skilled at making and eating noodles and rice.

In Ma’s hometown, they are known to be a happy family and they have a special bond with each other.

After going back to Yining, Ma was always willing to help the local government organization helping with families, and she often went to help the local community to help with the new house and neighborhood.

They gave their daily meals such as a quick and cooking oil, to one of their local households, and her mother would invite her for dinner on weekends, and they were always cleaned up the local neighborhoods.

Ma eventually married Liu, who was also an employee and had a daughter, Li Jin, who is now in her twenties.

She stayed in their new home, where her mother and sister would visit her and invite her to dinner on weekends, and sometimes they would even help clean up the local neighborhoods.

Aid: Deeper engagement in global governance seen

The agency was established in 2010 as a result of efforts in what Liu called “putting patriotism first” and “implementing action-oriented international cooperation”.

Over the past three years, China has sent teams to help deal with CPI and other crises, including natural disasters, and has made a number of contributions to the global community.

In October 2015, the country announced that it would provide $30 billion in new funds for the global fund to help developing countries in 2016.

The agency has also launched a number of initiatives, including a $1 billion fund to support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries.

China Daily

Legal measures fortified to protect environment

Judiciary boosts efforts to help nation achieve green targets, strategy

China will step up judicial protection to provide stronger legal support for maintaining harmonious between people and nature, a senior official said Sunday.

Minister-in-charge of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and secretary of the Political and Legislative Bureau of the Communist Party of China’s Ningxia Hui autonomous region, Li Jun, said the legal protection and law enforcement of environmental crimes will be strengthened.

He said that greater efforts will be made to serve the people for regional and rural benefits.

Deeper engagement in global governance

Due to rapidly changing and conflicting socioeconomic realities, many countries’ leaders and political figures have been focusing on improving citizens’ lives, creating jobs and protecting the environment.

China has been a key player in this global effort, working closely with other countries to develop and promote environmentally sustainable solutions.

In 2016, China announced its commitment to achieving the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, including eradicating extreme poverty, improving access to clean water and sanitation, and ensuring sustainable development.

China’s efforts have been recognized and celebrated globally, with the country being hailed as a leader in promoting sustainable development.

In addition to its own initiatives, China has also been a strong advocate for international cooperation on environmental issues.

The country has actively participated in global environmental conferences and has advocated for the establishment of new international environmental frameworks.

China’s strong leadership in global environmental governance has been acknowledged by other countries, with many expressing hope for continued cooperation and collaboration.

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Delegate sees new multimedia as vital to Xinjiang

Xinjiang is China’s largest province, covering an area of 1.6 million square kilometers. It is home to a diverse population, including the Han, Uyghur, and other ethnic groups. Xinjiang is known for its stunning natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and important role in China’s economic development. It is also a key region in China’s Belt and Road Initiative, which aims to promote economic cooperation and connectivity between China and other countries.

The delegation’s visit to Xinjiang highlights China’s efforts to promote economic development, social progress, and cultural diversity in the region. The multimedia platform, meanwhile, serves as a tool to promote Xinjiang’s image and showcase its achievements.

We hope this visit will further enhance the understanding and cooperation between China and the United States on important issues. It is a positive step towards building a更加美好的未来. (Photo by Washington Post)
Unmanned strike aircraft demonstrates its mettle

BY ZHAO LEE
China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp, a leading defense contractor, has completed a night flight in January 2023 for WZ-500 prototypes that can carry cruise missiles, drop bombs and provide close air support.

The WZ-500 prototypes have been developed by the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (Avic), according to a report on the flight on Thursday.

These prototypes can carry cruise missiles and drop bombs, all of which are longer than 3 meters, a report said. The prototypes can provide close air support and are expected to have good night-flying capabilities.

Aviation experts said the WZ-500 prototypes are highly advanced, and it is possible that they have already been equipped with the most advanced avionics and electronic systems in the world. The WZ-500 prototypes are expected to be used in air-to-ground and air-to-air combat missions.

The WZ-500 prototypes have a wingspan of 7.5 meters and a length of 9.4 meters, and their maximum takeoff weight is 6.8 tons. The WZ-500 prototypes are equipped with a powerful engine that can provide high thrust and high maneuverability. The WZ-500 prototypes can fly at high speeds and altitudes, allowing them to reach their targets quickly.

The WZ-500 prototypes are equipped with advanced avionics and electronic systems that can provide real-time information and support for pilots. The WZ-500 prototypes are also equipped with advanced weapon systems, including cruise missiles and drop bombs.

The WZ-500 prototypes are expected to be in service by the end of 2023, and they are expected to be a key component of the Chinese air force. The WZ-500 prototypes are expected to be used in air-to-ground and air-to-air combat missions, and they are expected to have a significant impact on the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region.

The WZ-500 prototypes are the latest in a series of advanced unmanned strike aircraft developed by China. The WZ-500 prototypes are expected to be a key component of the Chinese air force, and they are expected to have a significant impact on the balance of power in the Asia-Pacific region.

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Chinese has a strategic position in (regard to) the world’s security, not only due to its huge population, but also due to the economic status and political role that it has enjoyed at the global level.

Brunei seeks sustainable growth path

By PRIME SARMENTO

In September, Brunei Darussalam celebrated its 30th anniversary as an independent state. The country has been praised for its stability, peacefulness, and successful management of its resources. Brunei has a small population of about 400,000 people, but it is rich in natural gas and oil reserves. The government has invested heavily in infrastructure and social services, and the country has a high standard of living. However, the country also faces challenges, such as water pollution and deforestation.

French upper house votes to raise retirement age to 64

By JONATHAN POWELL

In France, the upper house of parliament has approved a bill that raises the retirement age from 60 to 62 years old. The bill was introduced by President Emmanuel Macron as part of his government’s efforts to modernize the country’s pension system. The bill will now go to the lower house of parliament for a final vote before being signed into law.

Outrage, grief grip Palestinians after deadly attack

RAMALLAH/GAZA/BERLIN — Outrage and grief gripped the Palestinian territories this week after a deadly attack. At least three Palestinian teenagers were killed in a shooting in the West Bank city of Hebron on Thursday. The West Bank attack was one of a series of violent incidents that have shaken the region in recent weeks. The Palestinian Authority has condemned the attack and called for the Palestinian people to stand united in the face of such violence.
Guterres seeks extension of Black Sea grain deal

By SENJU QI at Kyiv

UNITED NATIONS Security Council voted unanimously on Wednesday to extend the United Nations (UN) supervision of the Black Sea Grain Deal for another 90 days, with all states concerned voting in favor.

The so-called Black Sea Grain Deal (BSGD) was signed in Istanbul last year and went into effect on August 25, 2022. The deal, which is also known as the UN-led Black Sea Grain Initiative, is aimed at facilitating the export of over 20 million tons of wheat, sunflower seed oil, and other food aid from Ukraine to devastated countries in Africa and Asia.

The BSGD aimed to mitigate the global food crisis by providing a safe corridor for Ukrainian grain exports to reach international markets.

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The UN Security Council vote was a strong signal of support for the global effort to address the food crisis, and it was hailed by international community leaders as a significant step forward.

Pandemic costs cited as 11m fewer students sought higher education from 2019 to 2022

By MINXIE CHANG in New York

A new study released on Wednesday showed that the number of students seeking higher education in the United States has declined significantly from 2019 to 2022, with 11 million fewer students enrolling in colleges.

The report, based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics, found that the number of college-bound high school graduates in the United States fell from 4.1 million in 2019 to 3.6 million in 2022. The decline was most pronounced in STEM fields, with a 16% drop in enrollment in physics and a 20% drop in enrollment in engineering.

The report also highlighted the pandemic's impact on college enrollment. In 2020, 3.7 million high school graduates did not enroll in college, according to the report, with many choosing to delay or forego college.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on college enrollment, with many students choosing to delay or forego college due to economic concerns and the uncertainty of the job market.

Latest theory on pipeline explosions questioned

By KIMBERLY Phillips

The latest theory on the cause of the pipeline explosions in Saudi Arabia has been disputed, with some experts suggesting that the explosions were likely caused by a Yemeni Houthi group.

A coalition of experts, including nuclear physicists and former intelligence officials, has questioned the Saudi government's claims that the explosions were caused by a drone attack.

The experts argue that the size and complexity of the explosions suggest a more sophisticated operation, and that the Saudi government's claims may be motivated by a desire to divert attention from its role in the Yemen conflict.
Nuclear to play more significant role with renewable power mix

By ZHENG XIN
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Nuclear power should play a more prominent role in achieving the country's carbon emission targets, and by more applications in emerging high-tech industries as a fundamental power source in the future, to help the country's clean energy, said political advisor on the economic reform agenda, Lu Qi, deputy director general of the National Council of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, at the 14th national political consultation sessions.

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A Tianlong energy storage works as a battery production facility in Hainan, Zhejiang province. 

By LIU YUKUN
liuyukun@chinadaily.com.cn

Stronger efforts are needed in promoting the development of the energy storage sector, with an emphasis on developing new battery types, as China demands more flexible power adjustment capacity, a deputy said at a 14th National People’s Congress.

Zhang Tianran, also chairman of China’s battery maker Tianlong Group, suggested the national legislative body encourage the development of safer and more cost-effective lead-carbon batteries and lead-free batteries.

He also called for encouraging technological innovation in areas of compressed air energy storage, flow batteries, and sodium sulfur batteries.

Zhang said “energy storage is a key component of building a new energy system as China moves toward a more sustainable energy mix with renewables taking up an increasing share.”

“By fruitful power generated from new energy for later use, the system can help solve the intermittency issue that has been a major challenge in the widespread adoption of renewables, help increase its consumption rate and reduce waste of such energy.”

“The energy storage system can also ensure the power grid’s stability and provide backup to the grid. If the power grid fails, energy storage systems can be used to rescue the grid. This can also promote the efficient use of renewable resources and improve energy conservation and carbon reduction in key areas.”

Zhang said that the report reiterated the importance of developing a new energy system, in which energy storage plays an essential role. The report proposed high requirements for battery makers, highlighting that the government will step up efforts in research and development of high-performance, long-life, carbon-free batteries, hydrogen fuel cells and sodium sulfur batteries, and build an industrial chain that can cover the entire process from factory R&D to recycling.

It is anticipated that the new measures will be an opportunity for the energy storage industry, the development of multi-energy complementary storage systems, and the recycling of energy storage batteries, according to the report.

**Duty-free biz seen as key to building Hainan FTP**

By ZHU WENJIAN
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Continued efforts to promote the building of the Hainan Free Trade Port as an international tourism consumption center, with a focus on improving the international competitiveness of its offshore duty-free sales, will help the island’s international tourism earnings.

After China approved its COVID-19 vaccination measures and resumed cross-border travel in January after nearly three months of disruption, Chinese consumers have shown a growing demand for travel abroad.

“With China opening its tourism market, Chinese consumer travel confidence is rising rapidly, and many overseas destinations have introduced favorable measures to attract Chinese tourists,” said Chen Xia, president of China Tourism Group and a member of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference.

“In this context, the building of Hainan as an international tourism consumption center may face some challenges for the future. We expect that Hainan will continue to strengthen its attractiveness of offshore duty-free shopping by expanding the scale, launching more brands, upgrading offline sales channels and improving services,” Chen said.

Since the opening of the first duty-free shopping store in Hainan, China in 2011, (for total sales revenue of duty-free products in the province of 10 billion yuan ($1.5 billion, or $1.6 billion), and the average annual growth rate of sales revenue in excess of 100 percent), Hainan’s tourism has enjoyed rapid growth.

This has led the local government to promote the implementation of offshore duty-free shopping policies in Hainan, a top vacation resort and shopping paradise, detailed rules have been adopted eight times, promoting duty-free shopping a golden ticket for Hainan.

Meanwhile, Chen supported that policies should be encouraged to establish a presence of offshore duty-free stores and further expand the branch building process of China’s duty-free enterprises globally, which will help further strengthen Hainan’s attractiveness to its tourists.

Chen also suggested that to further explore inbound travel and tourism consumption to Hainan, the government may accelerate the implementation of the total opening of the Seventh Freedom of the Air for passenger and freight transport in the province.

By then, Hainan will be at the highest level that each traffic hub in the country is linked to major airports, making the implementation of FTP plan will further stimulate tourism consumption, Chen said.

Not only should tourism consumption be further stimulated, but the government should also launch efforts to strengthen the development of the island’s tourism market, and explore tourism consumption in Hainan.

Major duty-free operators have expanded or increased their duties to boost Hainan’s tourism market, including duty-free companies, duty-free enterprises, and duty-free outlets.

“With China’s duty-free business independently running in Hainan, the number of outlets has increased from zero to 153 in the last year, and the total duty-free sales revenue is expected to reach at least 30 billion yuan ($4.3 billion),” said Li Shanglin, president of the Chinese Tourism Organization Group, opened a new duty-free shop in Hainan, the provincial capital of Hainan.

Li said, “The number of duty-free outlet chains is beginning to expand, having high-end brands in the island province and further improving the construction of urban rail transit systems. By proposing to the full policy to the national level, the Makino International Duty-Free Shopping Complex has been built, which combines tourism, art performances, entertainment, and duty-free shopping and futuristic consumption.”

“Duty-free shopping is not only to continue to play a crucial role in boosting the local economy and the development of offshore duty-free businesses, but also to develop good business, with stable sales in the international market, and duty-free shopping and future consumption. Major duty-free operators have expanded or increased their duties to boost Hainan’s tourism market, including duty-free companies, duty-free enterprises, and duty-free outlets.”

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A BRIDGE IN THE CLOUDS

Situated on the border between Southwest China’s Yunnan and Guizhou provinces, the four-lane Beipanjiang Bridge has a total length of 1,941.4 meters and a 720-meter crossing. Soaring 555 meters over the Beipan River — equivalent to a 200-story skyscraper — it’s the world’s highest completed bridge. The structure significantly slashes travel time from one side of the river to the other.

**HIGHEST WIND FARM PROJECT**
Zheng Wind Farm
Located at an altitude between 4,800 and 5,000 meters in the northern foothills of the Himalayas, the world’s highest wind farm — Zheng Wind Farm in Yushu county, Tibet autonomous region — completed building of all power units in October 2021. With a total installed capacity of 22 megawatts, the project has set an example for global ultra-high-altitude wind power scientific research.

**HIGHEST AIRPORT**
Daxingcheng Yading Airport
Located on Mati Mountain — Daocheng county, Sichuan province, and at an altitude of 4,411 meters, it is not only the highest airport in China, but also the highest in the world. Mati Mountain, a sacred spiritual holy land in the minds of the local Tibetan people, is situated on the southwestern slope of the mountain.

**HIGHEST HIGH-SPEED RAILWAY STATION**
Shandan Jaminchang Station
At an elevation of 3,108 meters, Shandan Jaminchang Station is the highest point on the Canon (Luzhou–Shijian) High-speed Railway and the highest high-speed railway station in the world. The annual average temperature is around -5°C, and the oxygen content of the ambient air is lower than 80 percent of that found at sea level.

**112 pairs of cables on both sides of bridge towers support nearly 30,000 metric tons of total weight**
New regulatory body to make financial system more perfect

CHIPS Act hurts allies and foes alike

What They Say

Australian newspapers squirm in their squares
China's COVID policy a failure? No!

Khalid Taimur Akram

China has succeeded, more than any other country, in mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Scientists can better explain where China implemented the strictest pandemic prevention and control measures. But one thing is certain – that the restrictive measures were almost at subsidizing the lives and health of the Chinese people.

China has left no stone unturned in minimizing the effects of the pandemic, including those during the typhoon that damaged the country at the end of last year and early this year. It is the reason for the prominent measures that paved the way for China to “re-open” itself to the world and enable their people to travel freely.

That China’s COVID-19 vitality rate is among the lowest in the world shows the effectiveness of the country’s strict anti-COVID-19 measures. Accordingly, China’s scientific planning for the postphase of COVID-19 vaccination continues.

Despite the economic and pandemics, China continues to live.

Zhou Xiaozhi

Private sector can accelerate policy with accessible power

The Chinese economy’s recovery is expected to pick up this year. According to China’s National Economic and Social Development daily report, China’s manufacturing enterprises playing an important role in the country. The country’s real GDP is expected to grow at about 6 percent. The official manufacturing of China, the country’s major trading partner, has also been on the rise. Moreover, the country is heavily investing in small and medium-sized enterprises to drive its economy.

First, private enterprises are key drivers of the Chinese economy. According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China, in the first five months of 2022, the country’s manufacturing enterprises, the manufacturing power of the world’s largest economies, increased by 5.8 percent, while other enterprises increased by 2 percent.

Second, private enterprises play a crucial role in the economy. In 2021, China’s total output was 11 trillion yuan, while that of small and medium-sized enterprises was 10 trillion yuan, which accounts for 86 percent of the country’s GDP and 44 percent of the nation’s total consumption.

Third, private enterprises also inject new vitality into the Chinese economy. Because they are closer to the market and more sensitive to market changes, they experience changes at a relatively small scale. Due to their relatively simple management structure, they can respond to the market changes and adjust their production and operation strategies more quickly. They are also able to adapt to the changing business environment, which helps increase the market share, thereby boosting the businesses of SMEs in the country.

Due to the generally low credit level of private enterprises, it is difficult for them to obtain loans. Since the government should expand various financing channels, improve the financing system for private SMEs, and explore different methods to gain access to capital markets.

Local governments need to improve the local business environment at the institutional level, and refrain from taking improper actions.

Therefore, local governments need to improve the local business environment at the institutional level, and refrain from taking improper actions.

Chen Wei

‘Wolf warriors’ needed to fight more hysterical Western ‘hyenas’

The author is the chief of China Daily EU Bureau based on Brussels.

It has been the fastest-growing major economy for years and can overtake the United States in terms of economic scale. Perhaps this is why the US and EU is determined to check China’s peaceful rise.

Many Western media outlets continue to assail China in a false light. China does not fire-up or outmaneuver others, but rather “progresses” with others. China does not grant advantages to special groups, nor does it provide preferential policies to developing countries, but is “trapped” in a false light. China does not “monopolize” to supply COVID-19 vaccines to the world, but is “dominated” by developed countries. These are some examples of some Western media outlets writing about China.

Moreover, some Western media outlets deliberately distorting the facts while ignoring the real truth about China’s anti-COVID-19 measures, including the largest vaccine player in the world, and making ungrounded accusations against China’s pandemic fight.

But these lies are untenable. More than 1.6 million passenger trips were made by China’s Spring Festival holidays this year, and about 500 trains cross the country every day for business. With the drastic increase in bookings for domestic flights and hotels, China’s anti-COVID-19 measures have been tightened to make efforts to reverse false production.

The Communist Party of China, guided by the philosophy of “praying for the people,” has proved the love and health of the people to other countries to ensure the economic and social development of the country, thus ensuring China’s moderate development, stable when it comes to dealing with emergencies, including pandemics.

The author is the executive director of the Pakistan Research Center for a Community with Shared Future, Islamabad. The views don’t necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

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Westward pivot

The fear of being abandoned has prompted Japan to stabilize its alliance with the US.

As the US policy toward China has shifted from uncertainty, the Trump-era bid to sideline China, Japan has a clear strategic tendency following working together with the US to contain China and it is taking a tough stance against China.

Japan’s military, a noticeable change from its position as a "sleeping giant", is showing signs of an awakening as it reviews its defense and military policies in the wake of the US-South Korea "adjustment" agreement, which has underscored the importance of a strong US-Japan alliance. This is particularly concerning recently in the wake of the US poll showing that China is becoming an increasingly major threat to US national security interests.

The US-Japan alliance, which is seen as a cornerstone of the US military presence in East Asia, is facing renewed scrutiny in light of the US administration’s efforts to strengthen its relationship with China. This has led to increased tensions between the two countries, with Japan expressing concern that it may be excluded from important discussions.

In this context, Japan’s military buildup and increased defense spending are seen as part of a broader strategy to maintain its role as a key ally of the US in the Indo-Pacific region. This is particularly relevant given the growing uncertainty in the region, with China’s rise and the strategic rivalry between the US and China.

While China is strictly following the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, Japan and the US are building up their military so as to Intervene in the Taiwan question. It is they that are the greatest challenge to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Japan’s economy has been stagnant for nearly 30 years, yet it still has ambitions to be a military superpower.
A 4-year-old boy wanted to be a photographer when he was 36 years old, Zhang Jianjun and Huoyan decided it was time to give his dream in formal suits, they are finally ready for their wedding photos.

The photographer, lighting operator and makeup artist are from the younger generation. They communicate with the elderly couple to help them overcome nervousness to enjoy good photos.

They are all students from Wuhan University of Engineering Science, in Hubei province, and they are taking wedding photos for those who had no chance to do so when they were young, as a form of community service.

"I'm grateful I've realized my dream to wear wedding dresses," says Qin Shuyun, from Hubei University, Hubei province. "Our love is not discriminated type, but we believe it's important to keep such company.

While young people today would likely travel to a picturesque destination to have their wedding photos taken by a professional photographer, the elderly generation hope their biggest single — weddings around the 90s often only took a black-and-white photo as a momento.

It was not until the early 80s that professional wedding photo studios started to spring up in the Chinese mainland, as the economic booming. Based on that reality, Yu Jianwen, 22, a counsellor from the university, initiated the ambitious project in 2019.

It is also because of his grandpa. When he passed away in 2019, the family searched for a decent photo of him but could not find one and had to use the photo on the ID card to identify the body. It became his promise to do something for those who have no chance to take such moments.

"Young people who have the ability of earning money should pay more attention to seniors, as many of them are too shy to express their demands," he says.

A program for seniors
Over 100 students from the university have taken 20,000 wedding photos of about 600 elderly couples in various places around Wuhan. They develop the film, frame the photos and deliver them on time.

Students are trained and organized with tasks in accordance with their expertise. They often choose a subject of conversation that appeals to the elderly, such as asking about their previous occupation.

In recent years, they started to record the wedding-like stories of the elderly and post them on social media. Some volunteers continue the ad program after graduation.

They have different themes every year. For example, in 2019 they shot wedding photos for retired soldiers while Wuhan was holding the Military World Games.

The public-spirited program recently won the first prize of the sixth Chinese Volunteer Services Project Competition.

"Deals of how the elderly couples got along with each other have touched the students, who get to know about love from another perspective," Yu says.

He says the elderly were from many different walks of life. Students have learned greatly from them, and each exposure is a great lesson for them, as they get to know about different societies themselves.

"The older generation share their own life experiences, rather than

OLD AND YOUNG

Top: More than 600 student volunteers have taken 50,000 wedding photos of about 600 elderly couples, who had no chance to do so when they were young. Above: Retired soldier Liu Dening, 69, and his wife Shen Lian, 65, from Shenzhounan, Hubei province, have their wedding photos taken for the first time.

It brought back sweet memories of when we were young. Also, it has developed the ability of these students, who used to have knowledge in visual arts, to perform social services in real cases.

Zhao served in the navy for 12 years while he looked after their son and daughter. He believed he should repay her by taking care of her when she was old.

He says the secret to a good marriage is to respect each other.

"The idea, the couple should be tolerant with and cherish each other. It is natural to have quarrels and couples need time to get along after."

"Our love is very simple. We are just an ordinary couple, and we believe that this is how couples should be," he says.

Volunteer Zhao Chen, 16, who visited the country last year, mentions chatting with the duo for about two hours and was greatly touched by their story.

"At my age, some young people would love to lead fast food, roaming and going online, and some have no idea what love is," she says.

Zhao says, "The elderly couple love is about being with each other, and offering mutual help and relief in times of difficulty."

He says these old couples all have wonderful life stories, which are waiting to be discovered by volunteers. The elderly generation’s systematic attitude toward love and work is worth learning.

He was also impressed by another couple that the team helped. They smiled happily and renewed their wedding vows.

"We are very happy and wish to renew our vows with our children," she recalls, "I firmly believe that the glimpses just had about these couples left before war would take their lives," he says.

Tackling difficulties
Yu says, "As a student, the program encountered many difficulties only when students start."

There are good-old learners who fit perfectly into the program. They smiled happily and renewed their wedding vows.

"Though those students, 50s, have some other donations, most kinds are raised by students to their own enrollment lesson in the same market on campus, the post-time jobs and pay their own expenses.

Volunteer students organize the community to talk to the elderly. Many students who did not have the ability to pay that was a fraud for money.

Now, the program has been expanded. Through some communities, students wish to bedome the elderly and some people who used to have no friends, who have problems talking with the students.

Yu says, "We are very happy and wish to renew our vows with our children," she recalls, "I firmly believe that the glimpses just had about these couples left before war would take their lives," he says.

It brought back sweet memories of when we were young. Also, it has developed the ability of these students, who used to have knowledge in visual arts, to perform social services in real cases.
Phantom returns to thrill audiences again

Two productions will bring popular tale set against an opera backdrop to the stage, reflecting the buzzing entertainment scene. Zhang Run reports.

Art center's musical program is noteworthy attraction

The Shanghai Oriental Art Center announced its spring and summer offer, starting March 5 and running through Aug. 31. Performances will be staged, including a number of international projects.

A scene from Anna Karenina by the Shanghai Grand Theatre and Ballet Theatre. It will be presented from June 20 to July 1.

On June 21, the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra will perform an Alexei Slavin conducted by the orchestra's artistic director Dmitry Khvorostovsky. The conductor has performed with the orchestra more than 20 times in Shanghai.

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Biotec expert
pursues dream in Hainan

More than a grain of
determination

Scientist dedicates himself to developing new strains of rice to ensure food security for future generations of Chinese, Wang Zexingwei reports.

China's No 1 Central Document, which is the state policy statement released by the Communist Party of China central authorities each year, puts an emphasis on agricultural and rural development for 2023. This is also the 20th No Central Document of this century to focus on agricultural and rural affairs.

Dedicated himself to agricultural development based on scientific research, Zhou Lei, 60, aspires to make sure that Chinese people not only get enough to eat, but also eat well, solving one of the most important tasks in the No Central Document — strengthening agriculture through science and technology.

A researcher at the Chinese Academy of Post-Crops, Hainan Academy of Agricultural and Cultural Sciences, Zhou, is a familiar name to many young Chinese people — he has made major progress in the genetic breeding of rice and application research over the years. So far, he has cultivated 16 new varieties of rice, increasing grain production by more than 1.5 billion kilograms, which ensures China has enough grains to feed its people.

Zhou is working with a group of highly educated and skilled young people, most of whom hold doctorate degrees. According to Zhou, it usually takes people more than 10 years of academic training to become qualified for the research job. Zhou has been offered numerous opportunities to go abroad and exchange experiences with peers overseas. An academic visit to the United States made Zhou realize that, even though China was playing a leading role in global rice research, its agri-cultural industry lagged behind rel-evant overseas countries.

"With a smaller population and richer resources, the US has achieved the mechanization of the agricultural sector, resulting in higher yields per acre and lower costs. While Chinese researchers still have a lot to do," Zhou notes.

Upon returning to China, Zhou pledged to apply all he learned in solving the problems faced by the national agricultural industry. He and his team now work more than 300 days a year. They have created the "hardest nut" in rice-breeding technology — the cloning of cold-tolerant genes in rice — for the first time ever. Such breakthroughs effectively lower the risk of grain reduction.

"However, instead of relying on an air-conditioned office, grain experts like Zhou spend most of their time in the field. Usually, in the field, the whole team of Zhou's laboratory covers an area of about 200 hectares, while his team has over a hectares of field.

Eight people from the team spend at least seven to eight hours every day doing related on-site experiments. In order to develop a quality rice variety that has a good look, taste and texture, Zhou and his team have collected and selected wild parents for almost 15 years. Breeding is an arduous process, heavily affected by sunlight and temperature, and Zhou always tends his crops with round-the-clock care. We have to carefully protect them from being drowned in the water, or being eaten by birds and rats, just like caring for a newborn baby," Zhou says.

It is not always plain sailing, though. As Zhou has admitted, sometimes scientific research requires luck.

"In the past, some researchers might not be able to breed a new variety despite a lifetime of effort," adds Zhou, explaining that agriculture has always been sensitive to climate change throughout history. In August, southern China suffered from extremely high temperatures, which had a serious impact on the crops in Zhou's experimental field — some of them withered. Zhou, though, never got discouraged. Facing different unforeseen circumstances, Zhou believed he opened a window for him to study further. "Sometimes we just need to adapt high temperature to give the proper conditions, which help us select the one that suits us," Zhou says.

The hard work eventually paid off, after going through tens of thousands of crossbreeding combinations. Zhou and his team have successfully created a number of varieties to meet the demands of the population. Books making a breakthrough in crop yields and quality, Zhou has also developed a kind of "functional rice" — long-grain rice, which is rich in minerals and can't be drowned. Therefore, the world can turn into rice even if we were to fail Zhou explains.

We have to carefully protect them from being drowned in the water, or being eaten by birds and rats, just like caring for a newborn baby," Wang Zexingwei, researcher.

With the rising living standards, China's food market has also experienced a consumption upgrade. Noting Chinese people's great appetite for Dynasty, Zhou and his team have introduced the method of rice-seedling farming among young farmers. They help farmers raise high-quality rice paddy, which can triple the income of farmers and enrich peoples' dining tables at the same time.

As for Zhou, despite tough working conditions, the research work has brought him a sense of happiness and fulfillment.

"This just means that you can tune your own emotion and know that what you have done will benefit more people in the future," says Zhou.

After a hard day of work, Zhou loves to take a walk in the fields, enjoying the peace and tranquility while watching the beautiful sun-

That's the best reward for him.\n
Contact the author of this story at wang@dailyhainan.com.cn

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HAINAN — Fu Yong has recently cultivated Hainanese rice — a freshwater, starchy rice — in his daughter-in-law's Hainan province, and now plans to invest increasing to establish a factory there.

"China should be developing rice in this way," Fu says. "The rice will have a higher yield in the future.

In 1961, Fu was born in Hainan, the provincial capital. Forming among the Chinese students to study overseas during the coun-

I chose these majors because they are closely related to the main industries in Hainan,” Fu says.

In 2008, Biotechnological doctorate in biotechnology from the University of Hainan, and the National Research Institute of Bioenergy in Japan, later, Fu worked for Riso Development and Engineering and Japan Biogen.

"While I was in Japan, I constantly paid attention to the development of my own place. When I got a chance to go back home to work in 2009, I thought it was the right time to return," Fu says.

In Hainan, Fu acquired expertise in biotechnology-based Hainanese rice research and gained a thorough understanding of the cultivation process. Hainan and Kunming share similar warm climate, so Fu thought maybe the ails could be cultivated in Kunming.

"I look forward to future frequent technical exchanges with other scientists and expect to introduce overseas breeds, crating new rice varieties and improvement in quality and productivity to Hainan," Fu says.

In 2015, Hainan government launched a plan to build the whole of Hainan into a global influential and high-level FTZ by the end of the 12th five-year plan. Since then, a series of favorable policies have been introduced to support the development of the Hainan FTZ.

"I believe Hainan FTZ has a promising future. That's why I set up my company here in 2010, to supply quality products for my customers," Fu says.

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