

Unity, peace high on Xi's SCO agenda

Central Asian visit expected to build up shared future

By ZHANG YUNBI
zhangyunbi@chinadaily.com.cn

Beijing looks to work for fresh consensus and greater solidarity, peace and prosperity among the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, as President Xi Jinping is set to start his Central Asia tour on Tuesday and attend the SCO Summit in Astana, Kazakhstan, officials and experts said.

The upcoming summit in the Kazakh capital is the most important event within the framework of the SCO this year.

During the gathering, Xi will have an in-depth exchange of views with the leaders of the participating countries on deepening cooperation in various fields in the new context, as well as on major international and regional issues, and the summit will map out plans for the SCO's development in the near future.

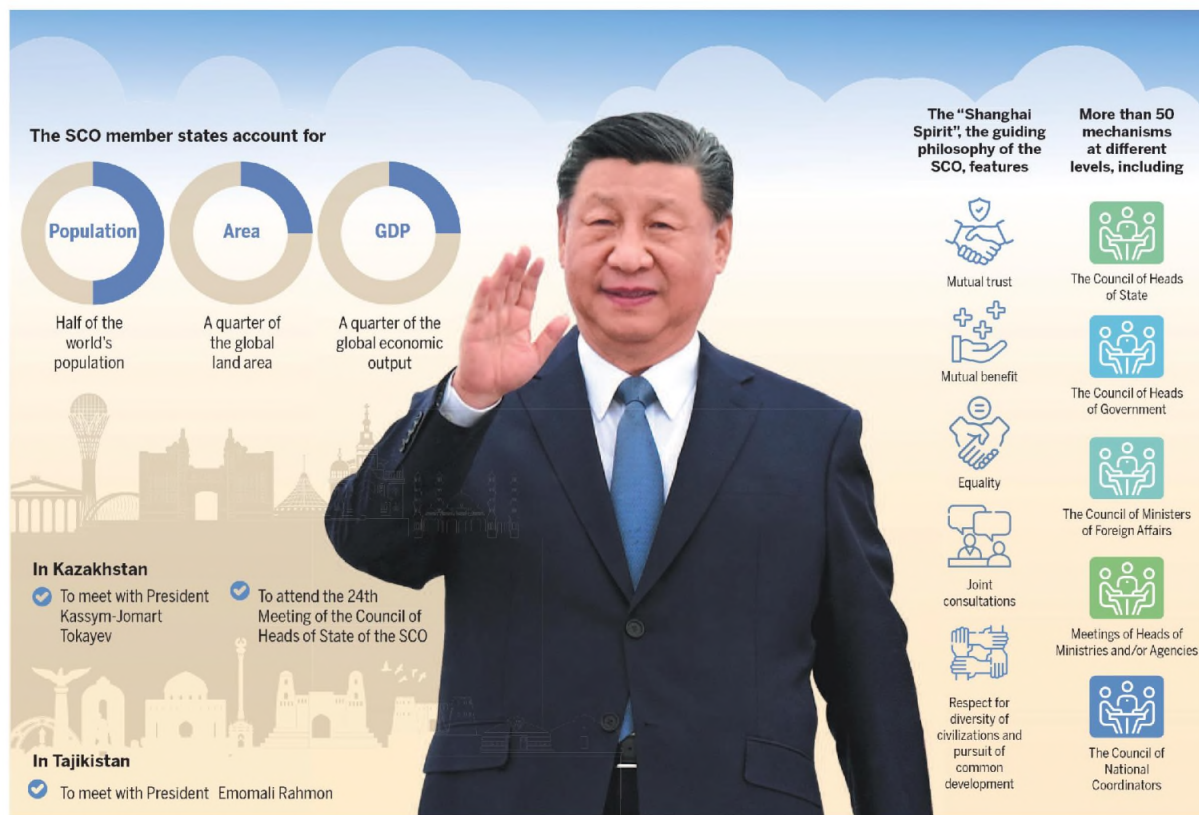
"China believes that this summit will help build more consensus, open up a new chapter of cooperation and contribute to the security, stability, development and prosperity of all countries and to building a community with a shared future for mankind," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said on Monday.

The SCO keeps its doors open to the outside world, and its cooperation is not directed against third parties, said Sun Zhuangzhi, director of the Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

"It creates conditions for the economic development of the region and the resumption of international exchanges in the post-pandemic era," he added.

In the wake of the Astana summit, China will take over the rotating presidency of the SCO for 2024-25, seven years since the nation was the SCO chair the last time.

"China attaches great importance to the presidency and has fully begun preparations," Mao said, adding that China is willing to work with various parties to deepen cooperation and promote the grouping's high-quality development.



The goal is to "bring more benefits to the people of the region and contribute more to lasting peace and common prosperity in the world", she said.

During his tour, which will run through Saturday, Xi will also make state visits to two of China's Central Asian neighbors — Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

During the state visits, Xi will hold talks with the two heads of state and have in-depth exchanges of views on respective bilateral relations, cooperation in priority areas, as well as the international and regional situation.

The China-Kazakhstan relationship is in its best shape since the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries more than 30 years ago, with the two heads of state maintaining regular interactions, observers noted.

The upcoming state visit marks Xi's

fifth trip to Kazakhstan as president.

"It is believed that President Xi Jinping's visit will further promote the quality and upgrading of China-Kazakhstan relations, enrich the connotation of high-quality cooperation between the two countries in building the Belt and Road, and further improve the well-being of the two peoples," said Mao, the spokeswoman.

In the meantime, China has been Kazakhstan's top trade partner. Trade between the two countries has reached record highs, with the annual trade volume reaching \$41 billion last year, up 32 percent year-on-year.

"Based on the trade data for the first quarter of 2024, both sides are very optimistic in their projections for trade growth this year," Kazakhstan's Ambassador to China Shakhmat Nuryshev said in a recent

interview with People's Daily.

Zhang Xiao, Chinese ambassador to Kazakhstan, said that President Xi's visit to Kazakhstan will boost the traditional friendship, consolidate their relationship as good neighbors, strengthen political mutual trust, enhance mutually beneficial cooperation and open up a better future.

"It will surely inject strong driving force into the development of Sino-Kazakh relations and regional stability and prosperity," he said.

Tajikistan is a friendly neighbor and comprehensive strategic partner of China, and the upcoming trip to Tajikistan will be Xi's second state visit to the country in five years.

In May last year, Xi and Tajik President Emomali Rahmon held talks in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, and jointly announced the plan to build a China-Tajikistan community with a shared

future, featuring everlasting friendship, solidarity, mutual support and mutual benefit.

"China looks forward to working with Tajikistan to take this visit as an opportunity to further consolidate political mutual trust, deepen high-quality cooperation in the joint building of the Belt and Road, and promote people-to-people bonds," Mao said.

Chinese Ambassador to Tajikistan Ji Shumin said that over the more than 30 years since the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations, the ties "have always maintained sound and stable development" in the face of an ever-changing international situation.

Inside

- See more, **page 3**
- Editorial, **page 11**
- Comment, **page 12**

HK, Macao hail new entry policy for expats to mainland

By ATLAS SHAO and LI BINGCUN in Hong Kong

The Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions welcomed the nation's decision to allow non-Chinese permanent residents in the two cities to enter the Chinese mainland with a card-type document starting on July 10.

The policy was announced by the nation's Exit and Entry Administration on Monday, which marked the 27th anniversary of the Hong Kong Special

Administrative Region's establishment.

The document will enable non-Chinese permanent residents in Hong Kong and Macao to make multiple trips to and from the mainland during its five-year validity period, with each stay not exceeding 90 days. It will save them the need to apply for travel endorsements during the period.

In addition, cardholders can also enjoy self-service clearance, significantly enhancing efficiency.

However, if non-Chinese holders

intend to work, study or engage in news reporting activities on the mainland, they need to apply for visas or residence permits in accordance with the law.

Expressing his appreciation for the central government's support, Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu noted that many non-Chinese Hong Kong permanent residents have deep family roots in the SAR and have been working hard, making notable contributions to the city's development.

Foreign professionals working in Hong Kong are also eager to seize the historic opportunities arising from the nation's rapid economic development and get more involved in making the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area a world-class region, he said.

The measure is not limited to any nationality or industry, fully reflecting Hong Kong's unique status under "one country, two systems", Lee said. It will greatly help the city maintain its international

character and diversity, providing a significant incentive for companies and professionals from around the world to settle in Hong Kong, he added.

Hong Kong lawmaker Holden Chow Ho-ting hailed the policy as a great gift for the HKSAR to better connect with the world.

According to Chow, this arrangement allows expatriates in Hong Kong to benefit from the city's international

See **Trip**, page 4

Celebrating the motherland



People wave at fishing boats during a parade organized by the Hong Kong Fishermen's Association at Victoria Harbour to commemorate the 27th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the motherland on Monday. EDMOND TANG / CHINA DAILY

DEMAND ESCALATES FOR TOUR GUIDES WITH FOREIGN-LANGUAGE SKILLS

Travel companies seek employees to deal with booming number of inbound international visitors

By CHENG SI
chengsi@chinadaily.com.cn

Our guides who can speak foreign languages have become some of the most sought-after employees in China, as the inbound tourism market continues its rapid recovery.

"It feels like I've been working every day and have no time to take



a short break," said Liu Yiling, a 31-year-old English-speaking tour guide in Beijing, who has worked in the tourism sector for six years. "My friend in Shanghai, who is also an English-speaking tour

guide and knows some French, has seen her daily pay surge to 1,500 yuan (\$206) from around late April," he added.

In 2021, when the tourism industry was hard hit by the COVID-19 epidemic, Liu switched jobs from being a tour guide to a preschool teacher.

See **Tourism**, page 2

WORLD WATCH
By Shakeel Ahmad Ramay

Principles of peaceful coexistence have been thriving for over 70 years

On June 28 and 29, 1954, China issued two joint statements with India and Myanmar, respectively, confirming their commitment to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

A year earlier, then Chinese premier Zhou Enlai had summarized the Chinese traditions of "peace is most precious," "harmony without uniformity" and "universal love and nonaggression" and put forward the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual nonaggression, mutual noninterference in internal affairs, equality and cooperation, and peaceful coexistence.

Then Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru said, "If these principles were recognized in the mutual relations of all countries, then indeed there would hardly be any conflict and certainly no war."

In the past 70 years, the five principles have flourished and become the basic norm governing international relations, though not all countries have implemented them in spirit. China itself has defined, developed and observed the principles to the full, injecting constant hope in the world's pursuit of sovereign equity, common security and development, fairness and justice.

The principles are well rooted in international law largely because they embody the values of sovereignty, justice, democracy and rule of law, in a departure from the divisive mentality of bloc alliances, avoiding zero-sum game of losers and winners, and encouraging win-win cooperation.

At the Bandung Conference in 1955, developing countries wove the five principles into the Ten Bandung Principles of the non-aligned movement, guiding the Global South onto the paths of sovereign independence, equity and common development, away from the bullying and bloc confrontation mindset.

Throughout the decades, China has remained committed to the principles, adhering to them and making them the cornerstone of its foreign policy. It has emphasized the principles on multiple occasions and at different national, regional and global forums.

See **Equality**, page 4

INSIDE
Cherishing diversity
Global Views, page 13

www.chinadailyglobal.com

A member of ANN CHINA DAILY GLOBAL ©2024 All Rights Reserved

Newsstand prices:
US \$1 Canada C\$1
UK £1 EU 1€
Kenya 50 Kenya Shilling
Asia Pacific: Thailand 120
Philippines 120 phps Myanmar 2000 kyats
Japan 210 yen Dubai 10 dirhams Pakistan 300 rupees

PAGE TWO

Tourism: Improved pay, status key issues

From page 1

"My career had bleak prospects and I transferred to the education sector," he said. "But I still loved being a tour guide, because the human touch and person-to-person communication are really attractive to me. So I decided to return to the tourism industry in February."

The must-see Beijing attractions for foreign visitors are the cultural and historical highlights of the Palace Museum, the Great Wall, and the Summer Palace, he said.

"We tour guides are like multitaskers who are responsible for interpretation work, managing foreigners' accommodation and itineraries, and more importantly, explaining to them China's customs and culture," Liu said.

His current monthly pay is 15,000 to 20,000 yuan, and he is confident about the tourism market's performance this summer — the traditional peak season.

Inbound rebound

This year's inbound tourism boom has been fueled by authorities allowing visa-free entry for ordinary passport-holders from more than a dozen countries — including France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Ireland, Switzerland and Malaysia — and China's enhanced image as a global tourism destination.

Central authorities also released a series of policies to make it easier for foreign visitors to use their bank cards in China and e-payment apps on their phone.

These moves have seen encouraging results.

The National Immigration Administration said it issued 466,000 visas to international travelers in the first quarter of 2024, up almost 120 percent year-on-year. Nearly 2 million visits were made to the mainland by visa-exempt foreign nationals in the first quarter, up 266 percent year-on-year.

In the first quarter, inbound travel bookings registered three-fold growth year-on-year, with most of the visitors coming from Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, the United States and Australia, said travel portal Trip.com Group.

Among the top city destinations for international travelers were Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong province, the group said.

The Chinese mainland saw a surge in international travelers during the May Day holiday, with Ministry of Culture and Tourism figures showing 1.76 million inbound trips during the five-day period.

This success, however, has raised concerns about tourism industry workers lacking the foreign-language skills to cope with the rapidly expanding number of international visitors.

The mainland has 650,000 certified tour guides, according to Ministry of Culture and Tourism statistics. Of those, 93 percent speak Mandarin, 6 percent English, and only 1 percent another language such as German or Spanish.

Xu Xiaolei, chief brand officer of CYTS Tours Holding Co in Beijing, said that the employment market for tour guides often fluctuates. This is due to occasional understaffing problems and seasonal demands, for example during peak periods when guides who speak a less-widely used language are required, and other issues.

"The industry has had a problem of staff



A group of foreign tourists poses for a photo at the Palace Museum in Beijing, on April 25. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

shortages, and many foreign-language speaking guides switched their jobs to other industries due to the epidemic or the impacts of the tourism industry upgrading itself. Unsatisfactory pay and the lower social status of the job may also discourage new college graduates entering the industry," he said.

Every tourism industry job, whether in an office or outside, is hard work and high pressure and requires workers who are passionate and energetic and possess good general knowledge and linguistic skills, he added.

"Tour guides, especially those handling international travelers, are usually all-rounders, as they have to interpret and explain China's history, culture and geography to foreigners. He or she should have the ability to keep learning and be alert to political and cultural differences," he added. "It's a challenging job."

Sharing culture

Jin Zhengwen, 31, has worked as a tour guide for nearly six years. He holds a Mandarin-language tour guide license, but can speak fluent Korean. Jin said what he cares about most is the satisfaction he gets from his work, and explaining China's cultural heritage to visitors.

"I worked in South Korea from 2016 and returned to Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture in Northeast China's Jilin province around 2018," he said. "I'm from a Korean ethnic group, but spoke very poor Korean before I went to South Korea and honed my language skills there."

Jin said a good tour guide needs to connect with his or her clients. "From my experience, it's of great importance to resonate with foreign travelers and get to learn their real needs," he said.

The travel agency he works for has about four tour guides who speak Korean. However, in peak season it is in dire need of temporary staff who can speak Korean, he said.

"A foreign-language speaking guide might have been a good money-making job 10 or 20 years ago, but things have changed in recent years. The job is not that



Korean tourists take a boat ride in Zhangjiajie Scenic Area in Hunan province. CHEN ZHENHAI / XINHUA



Tourists take selfies at the Terracotta Warriors in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, on June 10. ZHANG TIANZHU / FOR CHINA DAILY



Visitors take photos of Terracotta Warriors on June 23. ZHANG TIANZHU / FOR CHINA DAILY

stable, and many of my peers work outside the prefecture or in big cities for higher pay," he added.

Song Xueyan is a 43-year-old Russian-language tour guide who started his career in 2008 in Hunchun, Jilin, which shares a border with Russia.

"Russian was my college major. I thought my language skills would return to zero if didn't use them for a long time, so I decided to be a Russian-language tour guide," he said.

"It's not an easy job because I need to be on call 24 hours in case the travelers have some emergencies."

Seasonal fluctuations mean the pay is not steady, Song said.

"In peak season, I earn about 400 yuan a day guiding a tour group, while the payment falls to 200 or 300 a day in the slack season," he said. "I usually head to Sanya, the coastal city in southern province of Hainan during the slack season."

Around 2020, amid the COVID-19 epidemic, he started operating his own social media account to teach Russian free of charge. During that period he also began foreign trading and gained a teaching certification.

"I'm always grateful that my language skills gained me a place in society. Foreigners are no different from us, and communication can help us understand each other," he said.

Looking for recruits

With the boom in the inbound tourism market, travel companies are seeking to hire more foreign-language graduates and talented young people.

The number of jobs in the tourism and leisure industries has increased continuously from the second quarter of 2023 after the nation loosened travel policies earlier that year, the latest figures from recruitment platform Zhaopin show.

Jobs in the sector surged 96.3 percent year-on-year in the second quarter, 53.6 percent in the third quarter, and 83.4 percent in the final quarter.

The market's recruitment needs for

tourism talent increased 32.1 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of this year, according to Zhaopin.

"We have been recruiting tour guides who speak fluent Russian for quite a long time. We now have about 15 full-time Russian-language guides and hire temporary workers over the summer, usually college students for part-time jobs," said Li Yao, general manager of Heihe Youth Travel Services Co in northeastern Heilongjiang province.

The company mainly operates cross-border tourism services between China and Russia.

He said it's not easy to pass the exam and get a national permit to operate as a tour guide. The pay of tour guides is also dependent on the economic situation of the province a tour guide works in, Li added.

"Many tourism companies in southern or eastern provinces may offer higher salaries than us in the northern provinces; 3,000 to 4,000 yuan per month is what we can usually offer. So it's harder for us to hire guides who speak foreign languages," he said.

Yu Zikang, 22, who majors in German at Changshu Institute of Technology in Jiangsu province and just graduated in June, said that language is a basic skill for a tour guide, and people who are extroverted may be more suited for the job.

Yu's friend Zhou Keying, who also studies German, said she wouldn't mind trying her hand working as a tour guide, though it's not her first choice of career.

"I may be not be competitive in finding a job in the industry because my spoken German is not that good," she said.

"Being a tour guide involves a lot of pressure handling possible emergencies every day, and paying attention to cultural differences when dealing with international travelers in case of any offensive words or behavior."

"I love traveling and I wouldn't mind trying to be a tour guide if I got the opportunity," she said.

Greater efforts should be made to boost the job status and pay of tourism industry workers to attract more college graduates and talented young people, experts said.

"Based on our survey, we found that except for the pay, young people also care about work-life balance, a fair and friendly company culture, and good career prospects," said Li Qiang, vice president of Zhaopin.

"So tourism companies can use more flexible work schedules and develop thorough training and promotion plans for young people who show a willingness to join the industry."

It's also important to tighten the management of tour guide positions and crack down on improper or illegal behavior that encroaches on workers' rights in order to bolster the image of the industry, he added.

"Also, tourism companies can develop more new products that appeal to international travelers to let foreign-language speakers get greater personal satisfaction from the work," Li Qiang said.

Zhou Huiying in Harbin and Han Junhong in Changchun contributed to this story.

Contact the writer at chengsi@chinadaily.com.cn



A group of visitors from South Korea poses for a photo at Zhangjiajie Scenic Area on May 30. DENG DAOLI / FOR CHINA DAILY

XI'S VISIT

Astana summit to offer more 'SCO impetus'

Xi's state visit to Kazakhstan will expand cooperation, strengthen ties, envoy says

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

The upcoming state visit by President Xi Jinping to Kazakhstan demonstrates the high level and unique nature of Sino-Kazakh relations, said Chinese Ambassador to Kazakhstan Zhang Xiao.

The visit, at the invitation of Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, is Xi's second to the Central Asian country in less than two years.

From Tuesday to Saturday, Xi will attend the 24th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, in addition to making state visits to Kazakhstan and Tajikistan.

The Astana summit will surely contribute more "SCO impetus" to regional security, stability, development and revitalization,

Inside

Zhang said. The Chinese diplomat told China Daily that Xi and Tokayev will have an in-depth exchange of views on bilateral relations, cooperation in various fields, and international and regional issues of common interest, in order to guide the further development of the permanent comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries.

President Xi's visit to Kazakhstan will boost the traditional friendship, consolidate good-neighborliness, enhance political mutual trust, expand mutually beneficial cooperation and open up a better future, Zhang said.

"The visit will be a trip of friendship, peace and win-win cooperation. It will surely inject strong driving force into the development of Sino-Kazakh relations and regional stability and prosperity," he added.

According to the ambassador, the two heads of state have guided the path of bilateral ties, thanks to their fine working relationship and personal friendship.

Both China and Kazakhstan are founding members of the SCO as well as active advocates and promoters of, and contributors to, the SCO's development and cooperation in various fields."

Zhang Xiao, Chinese ambassador to Kazakhstan



President Tokayev visited China twice last year and attended the Boao Forum for Asia in March this year. Xi is about to start his second visit to Kazakhstan since September 2022. The frequent visits between the two leaders have set a record in the history of the two countries' relations.

China and Kazakhstan firmly support each other on issues concerning each other's core interests, support each other in safeguarding their respective sovereignty, security and development, and firmly oppose interference in other countries' internal affairs, Zhang said.

China is the largest trade partner of the Central Asian neighbor. In 2023, trade volume between the two countries reached \$41 billion, up 32 percent year-on-year. Bilateral trade volume in the first five months of 2024 hit \$17.62 billion, an 18 percent increase.

By the end of April, the number of China-Europe freight trains that operate from the Khorgos and Alashankou land ports in Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region and pass through Kazakhstan exceeded 5,000, and

the Lianyungang Logistics Center in Jiangsu province has played an important role in ensuring the stability of the transportation trade between the two countries and the global supply chain.

Besides bilateral cooperation, the two countries also have active interaction under the framework of multilateral mechanisms, such as the United Nations, the SCO, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, and the China-Central Asia Summit, Zhang said.

After 23 years, the SCO has become a regional cooperation organization with the largest territory, the largest population, and huge potential for development. It has become a barrier for security, a bridge of cooperation, a bond of friendship and a constructive force in the region, the ambassador said.

"Both China and Kazakhstan are founding members of the SCO as well as active advocates and promoters of, and contributors to, the SCO's development and cooperation in various fields," he noted.

Zhang said that China will work with other member states to continue to support Kazakhstan in fulfilling its responsibilities while holding the SCO's rotating presidency, and encourage the SCO to continue to uphold the Shanghai Spirit, strengthen institutional building and deepen cooperation in various fields, in order to play a more constructive role in promoting regional security, stability, development and prosperity.

"I would like to point out in particular that practical cooperation within the SCO not only promotes economic development and the improvement of people's livelihoods in various countries, but also provides important support for the continuous upgrading of the Belt and Road Initiative," he added.

The Astana summit will make new plans for the SCO's development and cooperation in various fields, Zhang said, and will bring new opportunities for the SCO to participate in high-quality Belt and Road cooperation in a more pragmatic and efficient manner.



Ruslan Tulenov (left) presents a Chinese ceramic cup during his visit to an HSBC branch in Qormi, Malta, in May. Tulenov, a Kazakh with the rare Rh-negative blood type, is known in China for his generosity in donating blood and his contributions to Hainan province's economic cooperation with the world. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Kazakh with rare blood type praised for his generosity, economic contributions

By ZHAO YIMENG and PENG YIXUAN

Ruslan Tulenov, a Kazakh with the rare Rh-negative blood type, has made headlines in China for his generous blood donation over the years and his contributions to economic cooperation between China's island province of Hainan and the world.

With a yearning for the sea, 16-year-old Tulenov came to Hainan in 2009 from his home country to explore more opportunities.

Since Tulenov studied at Hainan University as an undergraduate student, he has donated more than 6,000 milliliters of his rare "panda blood" to save the lives of Chinese patients, which is about 1.5 times the amount of blood found in an adult.

His story was shared by President Xi Jinping during a speech at Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev University in 2013, in which he praised Tulenov as "a messenger of China-Kazakhstan friendship".

Tulenov watched the speech on television at his dormitory, but he never expected his "simple" act of kindness would be mentioned by the Chinese president.

His Chinese was even not good

enough to understand that he was the protagonist at first because "the advanced words" are not often used by an international student.

Encouraged by the attention, Tulenov made a commitment to study and work hard, aiming to make contributions to the friendship between China and his home country.

"I thought I should study hard and not squander any time," Tulenov said, adding that he wished he could meet President Xi in person someday.

Tulenov's wish came true in 2022, when he had the opportunity to meet and speak with Xi during the president's inspection of Hainan.

Tulenov, who is the global media officer of the Hainan International Economic Development Bureau and deputy director of the bureau's investment promotion department, is responsible for attracting investment and engaging investors from all over the world.

In April, Tulenov visited the Boao Lecheng Medical Tourism Pilot Zone in Hainan Free Trade Port to learn about the policies to facilitate investment by a Swiss company.

He witnessed an operation in which an artificial cornea was used to help a boy born with poor eyesight.

The Lecheng pilot zone is introducing innovative foreign medicine and medical equipment.

"It usually takes five or six years for foreign medicines to get approval for use in China, but by collecting data, we might be able to reduce the time to six to eight months," Tulenov said.

The Hainan International Economic Development Bureau has organized the China International Consumer Products Expo, a bridge for global brands to enter the Chinese market via Hainan, since 2021.

The expo has provided a new platform for global enterprises to showcase their quality products and share development opportunities.

"After Kazakhstan attended the CICPE, cooperation between different parties has been conducted. I have seen Kazakh products in some super-markets in Haikou," Tulenov said.

He added that his mother owns a little grocery shop at home, which mostly sells Chinese products.

"My mother used to tell me that when you grow up, you need to be kind to people and help others whenever you can," he said.

Contact the writers at zhaoyimeng@chinadaily.com.cn

SCO profile

The SCO is the only intergovernmental organization named after a Chinese city. It has become a key venue for China to bolster its cooperation with countries in Central Asia and the broader Eurasian region.

9 member states

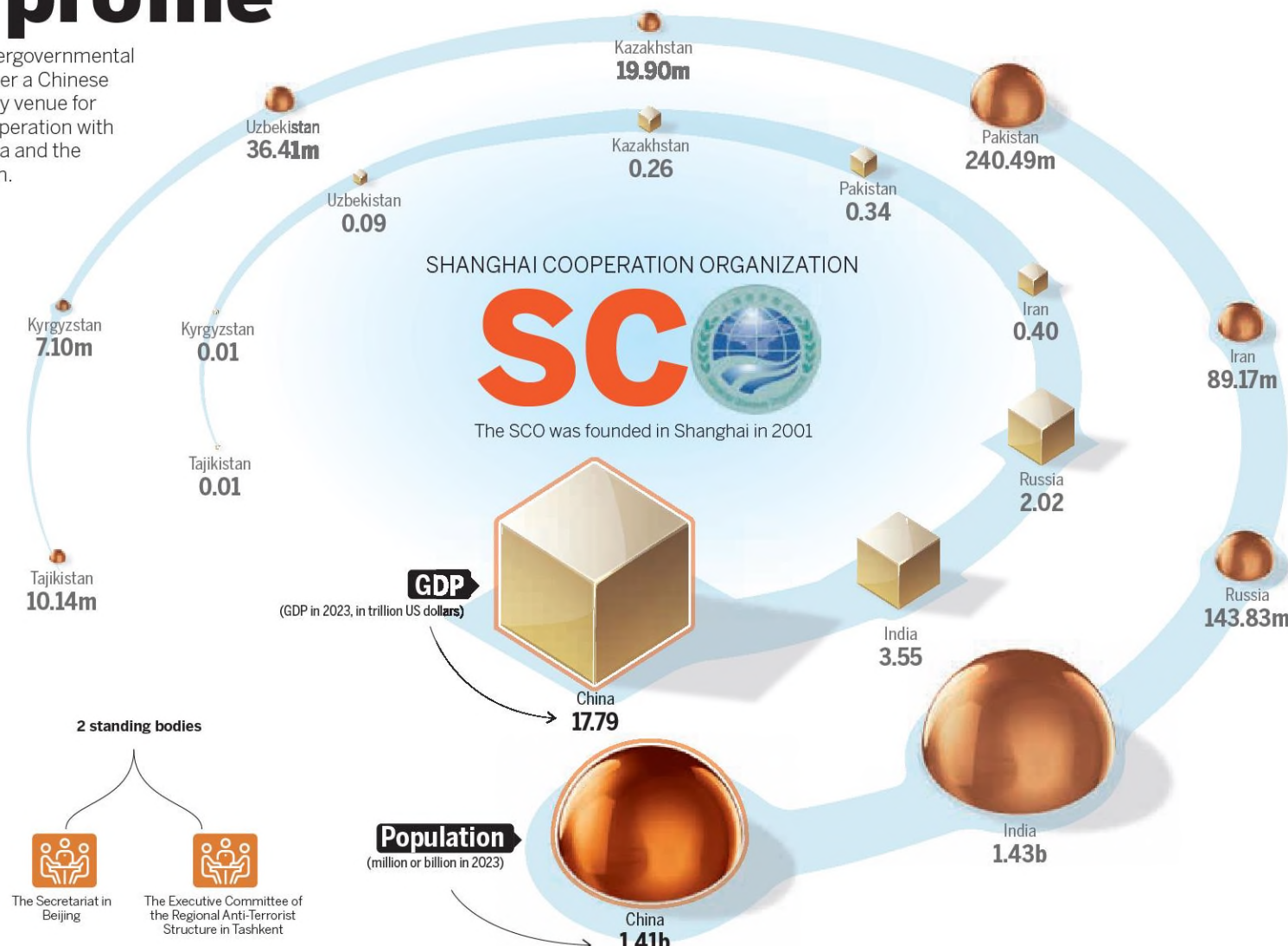
- China
- India
- Iran
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Pakistan
- Russia
- Tajikistan
- Uzbekistan

3 observer states

- Afghanistan
- Belarus
- Mongolia

14 dialogue partners

- Azerbaijan
- Armenia
- Bahrain
- Egypt
- Cambodia
- Qatar
- Kuwait
- Maldives
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- United Arab Emirates
- Saudi Arabia
- Turkiye
- Sri Lanka



Sources: The World Bank, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

TOP NEWS

Importance of people in Sino-US ties highlighted

By ZHANG YUNBI and HU MEIDONG in Fuzhou

When it comes to securing steady, lasting progress in China-United States relations, "it boils down to listening to public opinion and responding to the people's aspirations", a former senior diplomat said.

Yang Wanming, who is president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, told China Daily in a recent interview that "the more frequently the people of the two countries interact with each other, the more solid the foundation of public opinion for the development of China-US relations will be".

Looking back on history, he said that every pivotal moment in the China-US relationship was made possible by the people of the two countries, who made concerted efforts to work toward the same goal.

The enduring friendship and goodwill between the two peoples "have been the foundation and source of strength for the development of China-US relations", he said.

President Xi Jinping has always attached great importance to, supported and encouraged China-US people-to-people exchanges, Yang said, noting that Xi not only attended a welcoming banquet held by friendly groups and individuals in San Francisco in November, but also delivered a heartwarming speech.

"He affectionately recounted friendly stories of his interactions with the American people, and he used the word 'people' more than 60 times in his speech," Yang said.

Over the past 45 years, since the establishment of China-US diplomatic relations, there have been frequent and close exchanges between the people of the two countries, covering a wide range of fields such as culture, education, science and technology, tourism and health.

This has brought "substantial benefits" to the people of both countries, Yang said.

Demonstrating how much he values youth exchanges, Xi visited schools in the US and wrote letters to students to encourage more US youths to learn Chinese and understand China, "sowing a large number of seeds of friendship", Yang said.

In 1985, Xi, who was then secretary of the Communist Party of China Zhengding county committee in Hebei province, led a five-person delegation to the US state of Iowa

for a two-week trip that included visiting farms, feed suppliers and grain-processing companies.

"The story about him and his old friends from Iowa ... is time-honored and widely celebrated," Yang said, adding that the anecdotal account was also profoundly enlightening.

Last year, Xi unveiled in San Francisco the plan to invite a total of 50,000 young people from the US for visits and exchanges in China over the next five years.

In recent months, many US students have come to China, including those from Cascade Elementary School in Utah, Muscatine High School in Iowa, Columbia University, the University of Virginia and Stanford University.

As part of its efforts to fulfill the youth exchange plan at the subnational level, Yang's association — a flagship Chinese organization working on public diplomacy — co-hosted an event titled Bond with Kulliang: 2024 China-US Youth Festival, which was held last week in Fuzhou, Fujian province. The event gathered more than 200 young people from the US to meet with more than 300

Chinese peers.

The association plans to host in China a few more student delegations from reputable US schools, colleges and universities this year, Yang said.

These guests "will have exchanges and interactions with national ministries and commissions,

university experts, local officials and Chinese peers on topics such as China-US ties, China's history and culture, and the path of development", he said.

Yang said his association has invited a 190-member student delegation from 14 schools spread across seven US states to visit China as early as this month.

It will further encourage young people in both countries to collectively act as a bridge in China-US relations and establish more contacts and exchanges, in order to "reduce misunderstandings and stereotypes ... and build up friendships and a rational perception", he said.

As this year also marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of his association, Yang said the organization looks to write more chapters of people-to-people friendship and cooperation, tighten bonds between the peoples, and make greater contributions to world peace and growth.

Contact the writers at zhangyunbi@chinadaily.com.cn



Young people from the United States visit the Beijing Olympic Museum on June 13. The visit was part of the "Bridge of the Future" China-US Youth Exchange Program. JIANG QIMING / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Water, water, everywhere



A laborer carries a huge basket of vegetables as he wades through a flooded market street in Lahore, Pakistan, on Monday, after heavy rainfall. The Pakistan Meteorological Department has said strong monsoon currents are likely to become active in the upper parts of the country from Wednesday. ARIF ALI / AFP

Economy on track for recovery

Mixed economic data leads to calls for more fiscal policy support from experts and execs

By OUYANG SHIJIA and ZHOU LANXU

China's economy is on track for steady recovery in the second half of the year given effective policy stimulus measures and thriving new growth drivers, said economists and executives.

However, the foundation for economic stabilization is not yet solid amid lackluster domestic demand, still-weak expectations and the troubled property sector, they said, and expect stepped-up monetary and fiscal support, including further cuts to the reserve requirement ratio and interest rates.

Their comments came after the announcement of mixed economic data for June. The Caixin China General Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index rose to 51.8 in June from 51.7 in May, the highest level since May 2021, indicating ongoing improvement in the sector, media group Caixin said on Monday.

However, the National Bureau of Statistics said on Sunday the official PMI for the manufacturing sector stood at 49.5 in June, unchanged from May, and still below the 50-point mark that separates growth from contraction.

The official nonmanufacturing PMI, which incorporates subindexes for services and construction, came in at 50.5 in June amid the lingering property downturn, versus 51.1 in May.

"China's overall economy continued an expansion trend, but the foundation for sustained recovery and improvement still needs to be strengthened," said Zhao Qinghe, an NBS statistician.

The pressures of low price growth and weak demand persisted with NBS data showing that the subindex of factory-gate manufacturing sector prices dropped into contractionary territory to 47.9 in June, down from 50.4 in May.

To ease the decline of 10-year treasury bond yields amid low inflation, the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, said on Monday it will borrow treasury bonds from primary dealers — a move experts said signals that the PBOC may sell long-term treasuries soon. Bond selling essentially leads to price declines and yield increases.

Experts said the central bank may take more direct measures to support the economy in the third quarter, after it vowed last week to focus more on taking measures to ease cyc-

China's overall economy continued an expansion trend, but the foundation for sustained recovery and improvement still needs to be strengthened."

Zhao Qinghe, statistician from the National Bureau of Statistics

lical downward economic pressures.

Hu Yifan, head of macroeconomics for Asia-Pacific at UBS Global Wealth Management, said the PBOC may further cut the RRR — or the proportion of cash banks must hold as reserves — and interest rates in the remainder of the year to address low inflation. Targeted low-cost lending facilities to support housing inventory acquisition would also be likely.

The NBS also said that the PMI for high-tech manufacturing stood at 52.3 in June, up from 50.7 in May, remaining in expansionary territory for the eighth consecutive month. Sun Xuegong, director-general of

the department of policy study and consultation at the Chinese Academy of Macroeconomic Research, said the data demonstrates a notable characteristic of China's economy — the transition of growth drivers.

"On the one hand, we see a lackluster performance of old drivers like real estate, which is yet to emerge from its downward spiral. On the other hand, we see new quality productive forces booming, for example, high-tech manufacturing is growing by double digits," Sun said, adding that overall, economic growth momentum has largely continued in the second quarter.

"The first half of this year will see about 5 percent economic growth. China remains on track to achieve its yearly target (of around 5 percent)."

Joe Ngai, chairman of management consultancy McKinsey China, expressed strong confidence in China's economic growth prospects, and expects China's economic growth to be close to 5 percent this year.

Meanwhile, he said rising household savings point to lackluster domestic demand amid still-weak confidence and property woes, adding that more efforts should be made to whet spending appetites for products and services and boost consumer confidence.

Contact the writers at ouyangshijia@chinadaily.com.cn

Trip: New policy enhances cities' appeal for overseas talent

From page 1

environment and enjoy the convenience of traveling to the mainland.

This is expected to enhance the attractiveness of Hong Kong as a long-term settlement option for non-Chinese individuals.

Macao's Chief Executive Ho Iat-seng described the central government's move as an important manifestation of the nation's

expanding openness.

Ho said he believes that the new measure is conducive to supporting the Macao SAR in attracting overseas talent and consolidating its position as a world center of tourism and leisure, adding that it will also create more favorable conditions for Macao's economic development.

Meanwhile, the central government has introduced a series of

measures since early last year to promote exchanges of talent between Hong Kong and the mainland.

Since May 6, mainland residents who travel to Hong Kong with an exit endorsement for a business visit have been able to stay for up to 14 days.

Since February 2023, the central government has piloted a new kind of travel endorsement for six types of mainland talent in nine

mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, which allows them to make multiple trips to Hong Kong and Macao.

In addition to the nine Greater Bay Area cities, the program has also included eligible talent from Beijing and Shanghai since May 6.

Contact the writers at atlasshao@chinadailyhk.com

Equality: Nation always seeks to resolve disputes through dialogue

From page 1

China is not using these principles as rhetoric, instead, it has taken practical actions to create the path of peaceful coexistence. During the height of global tension, late Chairman Mao Zedong presented the Three Worlds Theory to describe the Cold War and the role of China, working to protect weak nations from bloc politics and its effects. Over the decades, China has never bullied any country, but only interacted respectfully with other nations, based on the concept of sovereign equality.

China always pushes for solving disputes through dialogue. For

example, after the USSR attacked Afghanistan, China urged all parties to solve the issue peacefully and through dialogue. In North Asia, China initiated the Six-Party Talks, which stands in contrast to the tense situation at present in the Korean Peninsula.

Moreover, China is building partnerships with countries by adhering to the principle of non-interference. For example, China has been working with Middle Eastern countries for decades, but never picked a side in regional conflicts or interfered in their economic or government models. Pakistan is another example. China and Pakistan are working

closely and are considered the iron brothers, yet China has never interfered in Pakistan's internal affairs.

It is pertinent to highlight here that with during the transition from a middle power to a great power, China's resolve to adhere to the five principles has become stronger. There are many examples of China working to implement the principles.

In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, China has promoted cease-fire and dialogue for long. In his BRICS summit address in November 2023, President Xi Jinping made three points. First, all parties should cease fire and release

hostages; second, humanitarian aid channels should be guaranteed; third, international measures should help avoid escalation of the conflict in the Middle East. On May 6, Xi told the world in Paris that Palestine should be supported to become an official member of the United Nations, talks of two-state solution be reignited, and the people of Palestine should enjoy due national and international rights.

China is applying an identical formula toward an eventual resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The peace plan by China is a comprehensive proposal that covers all important areas. It asks

both parties to respect each other's sovereignty and work for the betterment of people, and emphasizes building a security framework, which must be representative of the needs of all concerned parties. As it was mentioned in the second point of the peace plan, all parties should help forge a balanced, effective and sustainable European security architecture, following the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and bearing in mind the long-term peace and stability of the world. Further, efforts must be put forward to oppose military blocs and confrontation.

These examples prove that China has been a trustworthy partner and a positive contributor in striving to create a peaceful world by resolving issues through dialogue. Despite the fact that China has become a great power, it is not interfering in or dictating to other countries, and is the only major power whose leaders successively pledge never to seek hegemony.

Rather, China is trying to build partnerships and assist in resolving disputes and ending conflicts, a proven force for global peace that is a beacon of hope for all peoples.

The author is CEO of the Asian Institute of Eco-civilization Research and Development in Pakistan. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

CHINA

Huangpu descendants foster unity

Families linked to military academy stress importance of peace across Strait

By ZHANG YI
zhangyi@chinadaily.com.cn

The Huangpu Military Academy, part of the shared history across the Taiwan Strait, will unite descendants of alumni from both sides to collectively promote reunification of the motherland, descendants said.

President Xi Jinping sent a congratulatory message to the alumni association of the Huangpu Military Academy on the centennial of the academy on June 16, which was also the association's 40th anniversary.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, urged the alumni association to carry on the patriotic and revolutionary tradition of the academy, firmly oppose separatism seeking "Taiwan independence" and promote national reunification.

The academy was founded in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, in June 1924 at a critical moment when the nation faced the danger of extinction. Born out of the first cooperation between the Chinese Kuomintang and the CPC, it stood as the first academy cultivating military officers following the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

"The letter affirmed the contribution of the alumni association in expanding cross-Strait exchanges and opposing 'Taiwan independence' and promoting reunification," said Zhou Bingde, the niece of late premier Zhou Enlai. He was once a teacher at the academy, and her father was a student there.

Among the academy's students, there were many generals and leaders from both the CPC and the KMT who attended Zhou Enlai's lectures, and despite their different political stances in later years, they all held great respect for Zhou Enlai, Zhou Bingde recalled.

"My uncle always cared about the compatriots in Taiwan and the reunification of the two sides of the Strait," she said. "He made numerous statements and speeches during his lifetime, firmly asserting that Taiwan is an inseparable part of China, and the Chinese government will definitely resolve the Taiwan question and achieve reunification."

"As relatives and descendants, we bear the mission of our predecessors and have the responsibility to carry forward their cherished wishes, continuing the unfinished work they left behind."

Lin Shuangshuang, former deputy mayor of Kunming, Yunnan province, whose father joined the

CPC in 1926 and was admitted to the academy the second year, said: "I gradually understood the friendship that transcends party differences among the old generation. That was a bond forged in the blood and turmoil of resisting foreign aggression, akin to blood being thicker than water among brothers."

"Moreover, for them, there was a sense of righteousness more important than party disputes, and that is the unity of the Chinese nation. Reunification across the Strait is an unstoppable historical trend."

She added that the spirit of Huangpu can play a role in uniting compatriots at home and abroad to contribute to peaceful reunification.

Chiu Chih-shien, head of the Taiwan Association of Huangpu Military Academy alumni descendants, recently attended several centennial commemorative events on the Chinese mainland. His late father was born in Jiangxi province and later followed the KMT forces to Taiwan.

"My father often gathered with his former classmates, communicating through calls or letters, reminiscing about the most precious period of his life, which became a significant part of his later years," Chiu said.

"He always told me that we should cherish peace, and both sides should use their wisdom to maintain peace and promote development. The centennial of Huangpu should serve as a stronger bond between the two sides, rather than division and confrontation."

Chiu criticized a recent speech by Taiwan leader Lai Ching-te at the centennial commemorative event in Taiwan, where he again promoted the "two-state" theory, saying that his actions were starkly different from the spirit of Huangpu and distorted history.

"In Taiwan's current textbooks, you can hardly find any mention of the Huangpu Military Academy," Chiu said. "This is a very heart-breaking matter for so many ancestors who sacrificed themselves."

"President Xi's letter prompts us to consider how to inherit the history well, especially for young people in Taiwan."

Recently, he and friends from the mainland recorded a song that uses music and visuals to review the 100-year history of Huangpu, incorporating a significant amount of authentic historical material.

"Many elders and young people have left us messages, saying they felt uplifted after listening to the song," he said.

Tiger time



A staff member weighs a South China tiger cub bred in captivity at Wang Cheng Zoo in Luoyang, Henan province, on Monday. The zoo welcomed six South China tiger cubs, four males and two females, in mid-April, with four being nursed by their mother and the other two being raised by zookeepers. All six cubs have thrived and will soon be ready to meet visitors. ZHANG GUANGHUI / FOR CHINA DAILY

Doubts raised over actress' journal article

By ZHAO YIMENG
zhaoyimeng@chinadaily.com.cn

A recent article published by A-list actress Yang Mi in an academic journal has ignited online discussions about celebrity involvement in academic publishing.

Yang, who boasts over 113 million followers on the Weibo micro blog platform, authored a paper exploring an actor's creative process through a case study of a television drama in which she starred.

The publication in China Radio and TV Academic Journal sparked trending topics on Weibo, with netizens expressing doubts about the authenticity of the article. Some questioned whether Yang's demanding acting schedule allowed sufficient time for academic research. Others speculated about the possibility of ghostwriting or preferential treatment for celebrities during the publication process.

An analysis of the article also revealed a low similarity rate with existing academic literature, potentially indicating a lack of sufficient reference to relevant research.

China Radio and TV Academic Journal, a prestigious journal included in the extended list of the Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index, maintains rigorous standards for authors. The journal's editorial staff confirmed that Yang's article did not involve any editing or publication fees.

The article was based on her role in the espionage drama *In the Name of the Brother*, known as *Harbin 1944* in Chinese, which reveals a tumultuous chapter of the history in Harbin, Heilongjiang province.

It was published in the "Communication Window" section, a category distinct from traditional academic research papers.

Xiong Bingqi, director of the 21st Century Education Research Institute, acknowledged that Yang's

article aligns more with her professional experience as an actress than a conventional academic work.

Actors publishing papers in professional journals is a practical step to refine their acting skills and enhance their cultural understanding, he said.

"There is no need to elevate this to the level of academic excellence, nor should we diminish their publication as simply relying on their fame," he said.

Moreover, actors who are pursuing master's or doctoral degrees also need to write and publish papers, especially in core journals, to successfully graduate. Actor Lin Gengxin was recently admitted as a doctoral candidate at the Shanghai Theatre Academy.

"It is encouraging for performing artists to share their insights and experiences derived from their creative practices through publishing papers," Xiong added.

Old Suzhou street embraces new look

By CANG WEI in Nanjing
cangwei@chinadaily.com.cn

Shiquan Street, a renowned cultural hub in Suzhou, Jiangsu province, unveiled its new look on Saturday after undergoing a decade-long transformation that blends its classical charm with youthful energy.

Lined with elegant Suzhou-style buildings, the street boasts a rich history exemplified by landmarks like the Master-of-Nets Garden and the Canglang Pavilion. It also carries the legacy of renowned figures like painters Zhang Daqian and Zhang Shanzhi, who once resided here.

The street thrives with traditional shops and artisans, keeping Suzhou's cultural heritage alive. From Suzhou embroidery masters to skilled pastry chefs and renowned Suzhou cuisine experts, the artisans meticulously pass down their knowledge and talents.

In 2012, Suzhou embarked on a comprehensive renovation project

to revitalize the 2,004-meter street. The project has widened the road, attracted distinctive shops and independent brands, and prioritized the restoration of classical architecture.

Liu Xiaotao, Party secretary of Suzhou, sought public input during the renovation process. He met with local businesses, residents and tourists, gathering their opinions and suggestions on preserving and revitalizing the street. Liu emphasized the importance of environmental improvements and upgraded business models to establish Shiquan Street as a model for ancient city renewal.

The city government prioritized public participation throughout the renovation. Proposals from residents regarding traffic flow, urban environment and business development were carefully considered and implemented.

Yang Yue, deputy director of Gusu district, underscored the importance of responsible development.

"We must ensure that the voices of different groups are heard," Yang said.

The transformed Shiquan Street has become a vibrant hub for tourists, residents and local businesses. The meticulously restored ancient buildings have been given a new lease on life. Modern touches like star-shaped tree lights and convenient bike-sharing stations blend seamlessly with the cultural ambience. Regular cultural activities and exhibitions are planned to further attract visitors.

Jin Hongnan, who manages the Old Suzhou Tea House, said the improved cleanliness and spaciousness of the street makes it ideal for both residents and tourists.

Social media trends have driven younger generations to explore the teahouse's rich history and Suzhou culture, leading to a surge in its popularity. Reservations now extend into next year, a stark contrast to the pre-renovation era, Jin said.

Online medicine purchases made with insurance

By DU JUAN
dujuan@chinadaily.com.cn

Following Shanghai and several cities in Guangdong province, the Chinese capital has begun to provide online drug purchase services through individual medical insurance accounts, covering 300 pharmacies citywide to facilitate the purchasing of medicines by members of the public.

The Beijing Municipal Medical Insurance Bureau announced on Monday that insured individuals in Beijing can use their personal medical insurance accounts on two platforms, Meituan and JD, to purchase over-the-counter drugs online.

The delivery and packaging fees will be borne by the purchaser, and the purchased drugs will be promptly delivered by the online platform after placement of the order.

Beijing resident Li Yubo was among the first to try purchasing OTC drugs through the online platform after he heard the news.

"The process is simple — just log in to the platform, select drugs marked with a 'medical insurance' blue label, submit the order and choose 'Beijing medical insurance personal account payment,'" he said. "It's so handy that I don't need to rush out on foot to buy medicine for a fever when I feel terrible. It's a lovely policy for single people like me."

The 300 designated retail pharmacies cover all the districts in the city.

The medical insurance bureau said that it will explore and study the practicality of online purchases of prescription drugs to provide insured individuals with more convenient and efficient services.

It also plans to continuously increase the number of designated retail pharmacies for online purchase of OTC drugs. At the same time, it will continue to strengthen the supervision of the use of medical insurance funds by designated retail pharmacies, and monitor drug prices to ensure the safe and efficient operation of medical insurance funds.

One store of the Jinxiang pharmacy chain in Beijing said it had received 21 online orders by noon on Monday, with seven to eight orders utilizing the new policy, mainly for the purchase of cold medicines.

"This policy will have some impact on offline drug purchases, as people will reduce visits to pharmacies," a staff member said. "However, if they are unsure about which medicine to use, they will still come to us for related inquiries. This policy may be a bit challenging for the elderly to use. I think it mainly focuses on younger people."

Beijing resident Li Xiaoli, who also tried to purchase medicine online on Monday, said there were issues with payment, such as situations where medical insurance could not be used.

"There may be a need for improvements in the payment platform," she said. "It's new. It takes time to be better."

New online retail channels for pharmaceuticals have grown rapidly in recent years.

In July 2021, the National Medical Insurance Administration issued guidance that promoted "Internet + medical services" — exploring information sharing to achieve integrated services such as prescription circulation, online payment settlement and the home delivery of medicines.

Starting June 7, seven cities in Guangdong, including Dongguan and Zhongshan, started online drug purchases with medical insurance payments. Shanghai initiated an earlier pilot program.

New highway in Xizang begins operation

By PALDEN NYIMA
and DAQIONG in Lhasa

A 167-kilometer section of a highway project linking Lhasa, capital of the Xizang autonomous region, and Shigatse Airport in Shigatse officially opened to traffic on Sunday, marking a significant milestone in improving regional transportation infrastructure.

It has cut travel time between the two cities from over five hours to three hours, offering a more efficient route for commuters, according to the region's traffic and transportation department.

The Lhasa-Shigatse Highway is part of the G4218 Ya'an-Yecheng National Expressway, which starts at Ya'an, in Sichuan province, and ends in Yecheng county in Kashgar prefecture in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region.

With the latest addition, the total length of highways in Xizang has

reached 1,196 km, further enhancing connectivity and accessibility in the region.

According to the department, the newly opened highway is a vital component of the region's transportation network. It is a four-lane road with a designed top speed of 100 km per hour. Construction of the highway was not without challenges, as it traverses high-altitude, cold and seismic regions, with workers facing narrow river valleys, complex geological conditions and adverse weather.

"The opening of the highway helps Shigatse to integrate into the 'Three-Hour Economic Circle' of Xizang, which includes the cities of Lhasa, Shigatse, Nagchu, Lhokha and Nyingchi," said Yu Bin, deputy mayor of Shigatse.

"This development is of great importance for accelerating industrial growth in Shigatse, benefiting local residents, and promoting development of border areas."

Nyima Tsering, a village leader in Tsarak village in the region's Chushul county, hailed the highway's completion as a transformative development for the community.

He said its construction not only provided stable job opportunities for villagers, but also brought in over 40 million yuan (\$5.5 million) in income for the whole village through machinery rentals and other means, significantly improving villagers' quality of life.

"This makes our travel more convenient," Nyima Tsering said. "We have witnessed an era of change — from the past isolation in transportation to the current interconnectedness. Our hometown is undergoing a profound transformation."

"In the past, our township faced limitations in the development of agriculture, animal husbandry and tourism due to its remote location and poor transportation. This highway is not just a convenient trans-



A truck runs on the Lhasa-Shigatse Highway in Qushui county in Lhasa, Xizang autonomous region, on Thursday. PHEN THOK / FOR CHINA DAILY

portation route for us, it is also a broad avenue leading us toward rural revitalization.

"The operation of this road will also make it more convenient for us to access medical care, education and employment, and our agricul-

tural and livestock products can also be more easily transported to the broader market, and it will help us increase incomes."

Contact the writers at
palden_nyima@chinadaily.com.cn

Editor's note: As protection of the planet's flora, fauna and resources becomes increasingly important, China Daily is publishing a series of stories to illustrate the country's commitment to safeguarding the natural world.

Persimmons a sweet solution in rural Shaanxi

Planting trees helps locals earn living, retain water in mountain village

By **HOU LIQIANG**
in Fuping, Shaanxi
houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn

Until recently in the mountainous village of Yangjia in Fuping county, Shaanxi province, when it rained the water couldn't be absorbed by the barren soil there, so small gullies would be carved out of the mountainside and dirt roads would erode.

This would compound several issues faced by the remote village — a lack of fertile, absorbent soil, a lack of water and poor road and agricultural infrastructure.

Few trees on the mountainside to help fix the soil and mitigate erosion meant that a profitable agricultural industry was lacking for the villagers of Yangjia, and that the water that did fall in the area was lost, meaning that the resource was scarce for those who needed it most.

However, change came to the village in 2012 when the local government launched a program combining the prevention of soil erosion and the development of agriculture around the growing of persimmons.

As a result, the mountains in Yangjia have become populated by profitable persimmon trees.

The major beneficiaries of the program have been the local people and the environment.

While making the barren soil more fertile, the persimmon trees have also helped retain water.

The transformation in Yangjia is an example of how development and conservation don't necessarily contradict each other, but can actually be complementary.

As stressed by President Xi Jinping on many occasions, lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets, and the greening of the barren mountains in Yangjia has provided the momentum to environmentally and economically vitalize the rural community.

"In the past, when looking into the distance it was hard to see a single trace of greenery," recalled Yang Zhengchuan, a Yangjia village resident.

The barren land in the village and the severe water scarcity meant that his four-member family would seldom make more than 5,000 yuan (\$690) a year from farming, which used to be their main source of income.

According to the Ministry of Water Resources, China's water resources per capita on average is about 2,200 cubic meters. In Fuping, it is just 196 cubic meters per capita.

Yang's family's economic situation was so dire in the 1990s that he had to borrow money to buy milk powder for his two children, the price of which stood at 8 yuan per canister at the time, the 55-year-old recalled.

Their life would become chaotic during heavy rains. Soil and water



The top agricultural products from Fuping, Shaanxi province — dairy goats and persimmons — are painted onto cooling towers at a power plant in Fuping. JIA TIANYONG / CHINA NEWS SERVICE



Left: Wang Wei (left), general manager of Yunji Persimmon Company in Fuping, Shaanxi province, and employees discuss selecting persimmons to make wine in November. Locals are exploring new ways to make persimmons more profitable. LI YIBO / XINHUA



Right: A villager hangs up peeled persimmons for drying in Fuping in November. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

rushed down from the barren slopes, making the road impassable. To make matters worse, parts of the road connecting the remote village to the outside world were sometimes washed out, he recalled.

That might make them go without adequate daily supplies for days, as they usually had to buy such necessities from the nearest township of Zhuangli, which is more than 5 kilometers away.

Under the program introduced in 2012, gently sloping land was converted into terraced fields available for villagers to lease for persimmon cultivation, while the barren steeper slopes were afforested to mitigate soil erosion caused by rainwater.

In total, 90 hectares of trees were planted and 130 hectares of terraced fields were established in Yangjia and the two neighboring villages of Guzhang and Wangzhuang. Additionally, 18 km of new roads were

built in the area to facilitate persimmon farming and forest management, according to the Fuping county government.

The program has increased the size of persimmon orchards in Yangjia to 367 hectares, it said.

Qi Lei, an official overseeing water and soil conservation for the Fuping government, highlighted a range of additional measures aimed at improving water retention in the county.

Semicircular cement enclosures have been installed around each tree to aid in retaining rainwater at the base of the trees. Additionally, small dams have been built in mountain gullies to impede the runoff of rainwater and thus have more of the valuable resource absorbed into the ground.

Thanks to these measures, 50 to 60 percent of the rainwater that falls in the area can be retained, effectively curbing local water and soil loss, he added.

Yang leased almost 2.7 hectares of terraced fields to plant persimmons. When the trees started to bear fruit five years later, they became a reliable source of income, bringing in about 180,000 yuan a year.

He said local persimmon production has more than doubled thanks to the water and soil loss mitigation program. This, too, has been aided by a drip irrigation system the local government introduced to help address irrigation difficulties in the arid area.

As the mountains have been transformed into a lush landscape, locals no longer have to endure the challenges of muddy roads after the rain and swirling sand during windy weather, he added.

Before 2012, villagers found it challenging to sell the dried persimmons they produced locally. After giving some of their preserved fruit to friends and relatives, they took

what was left to markets and fairs in Zhuangli to sell, Yang said.

Now, Yang sells all his dried persimmons to an e-commerce company in the village named New Farmers.

Qiao Binbin, head of the company, is believed to be the first young person from Yangjia village to return after leaving. In 2012, the 37-year-old resigned from his executive position at a State-owned company in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, to pursue selling dried persimmons online — a venture he had been nurturing in his spare time since 2006.

"When I mentioned to the villagers in 2012 that I was selling dried persimmons online, none of them believed me," he recalled. Undeterred, Qiao maintained a steadfast belief in the substantial potential of the business because of his own experiences.

He managed to rake in 50,000 yuan in sales of the preserved fruit



in just one month on the e-commerce platform Taobao, he said.

By 2014, he'd made 1 million yuan in online sales, so he decided to found New Farmers. The company has even sold as much as 4.5 million yuan in dried persimmons in a single day.

Last year, the company sold 1,500 metric tons of dried persimmons and over 6,000 tons of various other agricultural products. With an annual sales volume of 100 million yuan, the company now employs more than 300 seasonal workers throughout the year.

Approximately 7,100 tons of persimmons can be yielded annually in Yangjia, according to Qiao, and around 1,750 tons of dried persimmons are processed, contributing to an increase of about 5,000 yuan in the per capita income of the village of 545 households and almost 2,400 residents.

As the local government intensifies its efforts to integrate water and soil conservation with the development of an industry around persimmons, people in other parts of Fuping have also benefited.

In the past decade, the county has constructed 30,000 hectares of terraced fields. While a total area of 8,600 hectares has been afforested especially for water retention, 3,000 hectares of economic trees such as persimmon and pepper trees have been planted.

As of last year, Fuping boasts 24,000 hectares of persimmon orchards, with the annual production of dried persimmons in the county reaching 70,000 tons. The overall annual output value of the persimmon industrial chain has surged to 6.5 billion yuan.

The booming industry now directly employs about 130,000 people, with 70,000 more engaged in the whole industrial chain.

With a significantly improved economic situation, Yang and his family have bid farewell to their old and dilapidated cave dwelling and moved into a new home with modern amenities.

Reflecting on the past, Yang recalled how leaving their hometown to work as migrant laborers was once thought of as the only means for young villagers to sustain themselves. Enticed by the thriving persimmon industry, however, many young villagers are now returning, making the community once predominantly inhabited by seniors and children bustle again.

"Previously, sightings of young individuals in the village were rare. Nowadays, encountering them is a common occurrence," he noted.

Scientific steps limit soil erosion on Loess Plateau

By **QUAN ZHANFU**
and **QIN FENG** in Suide, Shaanxi

In the rugged terrain of the Loess Plateau in Shaanxi province, northwestern China, a remarkable transformation is taking place in Suide county.

"This region used to be severely affected by soil erosion, but after years of scientific management the amount of sediment from here that ends up in the Yellow River has been substantially reduced," said Gao Jianjian, who heads the ecological engineering department at the soil and water conservation bureau of the Yellow River in Suide.

Xu Naimin, former chief engineer of the Suide Soil and Water Conservation Scientific Experimental Station of the Yellow River Water Conservancy Commission, recalled that in 1952, when he arrived here, all he could see was yellow sand, no vegetation and a tough task ahead of trying to control soil erosion.



In 1953, Suide established the Xindiangu experimental site, now called Xindiangu Water and Soil Conservation Demonstration Park, among others to study ways to combat soil erosion in the loess hills and ravines.

Xindiangu ravine was once plagued by soil erosion and was a major source of coarse sediment flowing into the Yellow River.

Through over 70 years of exploration, a "three lines of defense" integrated management model tailored to the local topographical features of loess hills and ravines has been formulated in Suide.

The first line of defense focuses on constructing terraced fields on the ridges and upper regions of loess hills where the slopes are relatively gentle. Trees and a rotation of grass and crops are planted on the terraced fields to modify the terrain, prevent soil erosion and enhance soil quality.

The second line emphasizes the cultivation of shrubs along with grass on steep ravine slopes to stabilize hillsides and prevent erosion.

The third line involves the construction of warp-land dams, or silt dams, at the bottom of ravines for further flood control, sediment trapping and farming. The warp-land dams are constructed to trap silt, and the silted land on the dam can be used for agricultural use.

The system combats soil erosion from the very tops of the hills to the

bottom of the ravines. With these three lines of defense, when rain strikes, the vegetation on the slopes of varying gradients creates a security barrier, setting up layers of defense to prevent rain from easily carrying away sediment.

The rich sediment intercepted by warp-land dams is then used to plant various cash crops.

In the early 1950s, research was also carried out in Xindiangu on the cultivation of forests that could enrich the soil and conserve water as well as be economically profitable.

Fruit trees of over 170 grape varieties and more than 20 apple varieties along with locust trees were introduced from abroad for experimental plantation on the loess mountains. The first mountainous orchard in northern Shaanxi established in Xindiangu is now a pillar industry for regional economic development after years of experimental plantation.

Xindiangu currently boasts over 100 species of woody plants, more



An excavator works on enhancing a warp-land dam in Xindiangu in Suide, Shaanxi province, on Sunday. The dam helps intercept eroded soil and boost agricultural production. LI HE / XINHUA

than 30 types of grasses, with a vegetation coverage of over 75 percent, achieving a remarkable sediment trapping rate of 98 percent, according to the local government.

This system has raised the soil conservation rate to 80.08 percent. The lush greenery has become an invaluable asset, said Gao.

Contact the writers at quanzhanfu@chinadaily.com.cn

WORLD

Concept praised for fostering intl stability

Experts laud Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, stressing current relevance

By XU WEIWEI in Hong Kong, EDITH MUTETHYA in Nairobi and YANG WANLI in Bangkok

The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence proposed by China serves as a crucial guide for navigating today's geopolitical tensions and fostering international stability, experts say, highlighting the historical significance and contemporary relevance of these principles in promoting global peace.

The Conference Marking the 70th Anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence was held on Friday in Beijing. President Xi Jinping attended the conference and delivered an important speech, calling on the international community to uphold the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence under the new circumstances and jointly build a community with a shared future for mankind.

"The speech comes at a critical juncture in global affairs. As the world faces unprecedented challenges — ranging from geopolitical tensions to economic instability and social unrest — his reaffirmation of these principles provides a much-needed framework for international relations," said Maarif Farooq, deputy editor-in-chief at Pakistan Economic Net and Daily Ittehad Media Group.

These principles — mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, nonaggression, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence — are more relevant than ever in fostering a stable and peaceful global environment, he said.

"By advocating dialogue over confrontation and collaboration over con-

flict, President Xi demonstrates China's role as a responsible global power dedicated to building a harmonious international order," Farooq said.

Bhokin Bhalakula, former speaker of the Thai Parliament, echoed Farooq's view, saying that the principles prevent conflicts over territorial disputes, promote a sense of security among nations, and foster trust and cooperation among countries.

He highlighted the role these principles can play in ensuring that international partnerships are fair and beneficial for all parties and reducing exploitation and inequalities.

Anthony Moretti, department head and associate professor in the Communication and Organizational Leadership Department at Robert Morris University, said that for countries throughout the latter half of the 20th century that were able to free themselves from the oppression of colonialism, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence became essential building blocks of their foreign policy.

Critical juncture

Dennis Munene, executive director of the China-Africa Center at the Africa Policy Institute, said that the speech comes at a time when the global community is facing both traditional and nontraditional security threats that have destabilized the international community.

"However, as an agent of peace and development, China has adhered to the principles of peaceful coexistence, which have enabled China to provide global public goods such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, and

the Global Civilization Initiative that have enhanced South-South cooperation, while at the same time improved and developed North-South relations," said Munene.

Lawrence Loh, director of the Centre for Governance and Sustainability at the NUS Business School, National University of Singapore, said the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence are timeless perceptions and are even more relevant today amid escalating geopolitical tensions.

"President Xi's reiteration of the principles is most timely for developed and developing countries to stay rooted together based on inclusive multilateral modes of interactions," said Loh, adding that the principles can be the continued basis to guide rational international relations for a calm and progressive world for the benefit of all.

Xn Iraki, an associate professor at the University of Nairobi's Faculty of Business and Management Sciences, said the principles have found wide appeal beyond China, and have been adopted by the UN.

"The principles can be a guiding light, ensuring coexistence within a country and its neighbors," Iraki said.

William Jones, former Washington Bureau chief for Executive Intelligence Review News Service and a nonresident fellow of the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies, said reviving those principles is of vital importance in putting a stop to the ongoing wars today, as well as the more serious wars being threatened by the geopolitical tensions being fomented now by certain forces in the West.

Yifan Xu in Washington and Yang Ran in Beijing contributed to this story.

Contact the writers at vivienxu@chinadailyapac.com.

Xi greets Australia's new governor-general

By CAO DESHENG caodesheng@chinadaily.com.cn

Chinese President Xi Jinping congratulated Samantha Mostyn on Monday on her assuming office as Australia's governor-general, expressing his hope to promote the development of a more mature, steady and fruitful bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership.

In a congratulatory message sent to Mostyn, Xi said China and Australia are important cooperative partners, and both countries are major members in the Asia-Pacific region and significant forces in the global multipolarization process.

He emphasized that the sound, steady development of the China-

Australia relationship not only suits the fundamental and long-term interests of the two countries and their peoples, but also contributes to regional and global peace, stability, development and prosperity.

Noting that he attaches great importance to the development of China-Australia ties, Xi expressed his readiness to work with the Australian side to facilitate a more mature, steady and fruitful China-Australia comprehensive strategic partnership based on the principles of mutual respect and mutual benefit as well as seeking common ground while shelving differences, so as to deliver more benefits to the two peoples.

Mostyn, 59, was sworn in as Australia's 28th governor-general on Monday, replacing David Hurley at the end of his five-year term. She is the second woman to serve as governor-general.

A businesswoman, gender equality advocate and former commissioner of the Australian Football League, Mostyn has had an extensive career in the Australian business community, including working at senior levels in telecommunications and insurance companies in Australia and globally. She has also held senior nonexecutive roles on boards, including Transurban and Virgin Australia, and has been the chair of Citibank Australia.

Balancing act



Contestants walk and fall from a greased-up pole into the ocean in an attempt to grab the flag at the end of the pole during the 94th annual Greasy Pole contest at St. Peter's Fiesta in Gloucester, US state of Massachusetts, on Sunday. The fiesta, which dates back to 1927, includes a carnival and boat races, and attracts people from all over the country. JOSEPH PREZIOSO VIA GETTY IMAGES

Central Asian businesses eye China International Import Expo to scale up trade

By MA LINMIAO malinmiao@chinadaily.com.cn

From Tuesday to Saturday, the 24th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is to be held in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan.

At the invitation of President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, a high-level Chinese delegation will pay state visits to Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, China's Foreign Ministry announced on Sunday.

The SCO summit as well as the upcoming State visits have led to more people calling for deeper economic ties and building a more "cohesive, influential" regional community that promotes mutual trust between China and Central Asia.

China has been the largest or major trading partner of Central Asian countries for several consecutive years. Dozens of high-quality agricultural products from Central Asia are being imported to China.

In 2023, the trade volume between China and Central Asia reached a historic high of \$89.4 billion.

China's trade and economic cooperation with Central Asian countries has demonstrated the willingness of the world's second-largest economy to promote common development with countries in the region, Global Times reported.

Hailed as a "golden gate" for global companies looking to enter the Chinese market or expand their business, the China International Import Expo, which takes place from Nov 5 to 10 annually in Shanghai, has gained publicity around the world.

It provides a platform for global companies and agencies to interact directly with Chinese consumers and to network with industry players and possible business partners.

Over the years, companies from 173 countries and regions have appeared at the CIIE and grossed more than \$420 billion in tentative transactions. Nearly 2,500 new products, technologies and services



Ethnic musicians stage a performance at the exhibition booth of Kazakhstan during the sixth China International Import Expo in Shanghai in 2023. FANG ZHE / XINHUA

have debuted at the annual expo.

Numerous Central Asian companies have taken steps to boost their brands and expect good returns as they believe that stronger China-Central Asia business ties will unleash greater possibilities and achieve fruitful results.

"Kazakh producers have shown great interest and enthusiasm in the expo since the very beginning in 2018," said Nuraly Bukeikhanov, deputy director-general of the Qaz-Trade trade policy development center, a key institution for the development and promotion of Kazakhstan's exports.

Serving as a guest country of honor at the sixth CIIE in 2023, Kazakhstan — the world's largest landlocked country — supported 37

domestic companies to participate. With a wide array of featured agricultural goods such as camel milk, meat, candies and honey on display, the exhibition booth spanned 387 square meters.

Kazakh companies signed three memorandums of cooperation and 15 export contracts in just the first two days of the CIIE 2023, reported the Kazakh Trade and Integration Ministry's press service.

As a key player that has been a part of the expo for six consecutive years, many Kazakh companies and trade agencies have seen the benefits of the CIIE.

"The Chinese market offers tremendous business opportunities for Kazakhstani dairy producers," local exhibitor Alibek Smailov stat-

ed during the fifth edition of the expo in 2022. "Through the CIIE, more Chinese customers are becoming aware of Kazakhstan's premium green food offerings, including desserts, dairy products, fruit juices, wheat, salt, drinks, meat products, vegetable oils, spices and more."

Alibek also sensed that Chinese and Kazakh businesses were willing to further their collaboration and anticipated that the trade volume between the two countries would keep rising.

Besides the agricultural sector, a contract for uranium supply between China and Kazakhstan stood out among the many deals of 2023's expo. It signifies a whole new level of collaboration between

the two nations in the energy industry.

According to Egemberdieva Asel Yerikovna, deputy CEO of Qaz-Trade, Kazakhstan is upbeat about its economic and trade cooperation with China. Bilateral trade between the two rose 32 percent year-on-year to \$41 billion in 2023, making China the largest trading partner of Kazakhstan.

"More Kazakh enterprises are expected to enter the Chinese market via the CIIE and make their products known to the world," Yerikovna said.

Another significant Central Asian country, Tajikistan, is gearing up to explore new measures and further increase the scale of trade, expand economic cooperation and

\$89.4b

Trade volume between China and Central Asian countries in 2023, a historic high

speed up major connectivity projects with China.

During the sixth CIIE in November, a lot of individuals were drawn to Tajikistani stone crafts composed of local varieties, including marble, emerald, granite, tiger's eye and jasper.

As the world's first country to sign a memorandum of understanding with China on building the Silk Road Economic Belt, a primary component of the Belt and Road Initiative, Tajikistan in recent years has underscored its trade cooperation with China.

In 2018, 27 Tajikistani businesses from agricultural and trade in services sectors debuted at the inaugural edition of the CIIE, adding to the economic and trade relationship between China and Tajikistan.

According to Muminjon Mamedjonov, manager of Tajikistan's Isfarafud LLC food firm as well as a CIIE exhibitor, the expo has the potential to boost international enterprises' exports to China while having a favorable effect on the growth and collaboration of Chinese and foreign businesses.

The seventh CIIE, which is scheduled to take place in November in Shanghai, is set to continue its streak of success and embrace the participation of more global brands.

According to the CIIE Bureau, 325,000 sq m of the business exhibition area has been booked by exhibitors from around the world, surpassing the figures of the 2023 edition. This year's event promises to attract more global companies and agencies, offering them a chance to capitalize on the vast opportunities within the Chinese market.

"Kazakhstan and other Central Asian nations all believe that the CIIE will continue to be a significant contributor to global development," said Gulnar Shaimerzgenova, director of China Studies Center in Kazakhstan.

WORLD

Argentina yields surplus with Milei's bold revamp

By JIMENA ESTEBAN
in Buenos Aires, Argentina
For China Daily

In a move that underscores the effect of Argentine President Javier Milei's stringent economic policies, the country posted its fifth consecutive monthly fiscal surplus in May, the largest to date.

The achievement is a critical step toward Milei's ambitious goal of a "zero deficit" as he works to stabilize an economy long plagued by crises. Fiscal surpluses have long been rare in Argentina, but Milei has taken drastic steps to shift the country's economic trajectory by eliminating subsidies, cutting spending and laying off workers.

Yet, Argentina continues to grapple with severe inflation rates, which have surged to more than 300 percent annually over the past year. An economist by training, Milei has faced significant criticism for his controversial policies.

Many Argentines have borne the brunt of the economic measures, experiencing heightened financial strain and a lot of pain, as prices of everyday items have increased much faster than wages, even as the value of the peso has weakened against the dollar.

However, Milei maintains that these sacrifices are essential to strengthen Argentina's economy in the long term.

Despite these efforts, the economic outlook remains precarious. The International Monetary Fund recently downgraded its growth forecast for the country, predicting a 3.5 percent contraction this year.

Nevertheless, the IMF said a turnaround in the second half of the year could alleviate some of the downward pressure.

In addition to domestic reforms, Milei has sought to strengthen Argentina's international alliances, notably with China.

On June 12, Argentina renewed an active segment of an \$18 billion currency swap agreement with China, extending a crucial \$5 billion portion until July 2026, which is expected to give the former greater flexibility in managing its payments.

"The renewal of the swap is important to avoid an even more acute crisis than currently exists in terms of reserves," Gabriel Merino, a professor at the National University of La Plata in Buenos Aires, said.

Renewing the currency swap line is part of Argentina's broader

strategy to bolster its relationship with China.

Merino highlighted the strategic value of maintaining robust relations with China and the importance of Chinese-led infrastructure projects. "The swap itself, utilized last year, also demonstrates its importance for Argentina as a mechanism, particularly in the context of a severe drought that caused a significant shortage of foreign currency," he said.

The Argentine government has actively pursued closer ties with the Asian powerhouse recently.

Argentina's Foreign Minister Diana Mondino visited China in May as part of the first official visit from Milei's government.

She told China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, "No matter how Argentina's internal political situation changes, its friendly policy toward China will not change."

On June 17, the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing launched a new Argentine Studies Center, signaling the potential for deeper bilateral cooperation.

Steady growth

"Economic relations with China have grown steadily since the 2000s," said Genaro Grasso, a researcher at the Center for Cultural Cooperation in Buenos Aires. "Commercially, until last year, China was our second-largest trading partner."

The two countries are naturally complementary, Grasso said. "Argentina can export food, energy and potentially minerals, which China needs, and in turn, China can supply the machinery, infrastructure and technology that Argentina requires for its industrialization."

China has become an alternative to traditional financing sources, such as the IMF, World Bank or the Paris Club, he said.

China offers relatively favorable conditions and allows the financing of the bilateral trade deficit, he said.

"The swap facilitates many Chinese investments. Additionally, by strengthening the country's financial stability, it incentivizes firms from other developed and developing countries to invest.

"Argentina should continue trading and participating in South-South cooperation agreements, which include but are not limited to China," Grasso said.

The writer is a freelance journalist for China Daily.

Fleeing attacks on Gaza



Palestinians displaced by the Israeli air and ground offensive on the Gaza Strip flee from parts of Khan Younis following an evacuation order by the Israeli army to leave the eastern part of Gaza's second-largest city on Monday. JEHAD ALSHRAFI / AP

UN adopts resolution on AI that China proposed

By MINLU ZHANG
at the United Nations
minluzhang@chinadailyusa.com

The United Nations General Assembly on Monday adopted a resolution proposed by China to strengthen international cooperation on artificial intelligence capacity-building and advocate for "an open, fair and nondiscriminatory business environment."

AI technology is rapidly developing globally, but most people, especially in developing countries, have not yet had real access to it or benefited from it, said Fu Cong, China's permanent representative to the UN. He called for a strengthening of international cooperation on AI, for developing and using AI technology equally, and for a sharing of its benefits.

The resolution "encourages international cooperation to help countries, especially developing ones, strengthen AI capacity, enhance their representation in global AI governance, and advocate for an open, fair and non-discriminatory business environment," said Fu.

The resolution has been co-sponsored by more than 140 countries, including a last-minute addition of the United States.

"We're very appreciative of the positive role that the US has played in this whole process. China is ready to work with the US on the issue of AI," Fu told reporters at UN headquarters after the resolution was adopted. He said that



Fu Cong

senior-level officials in China and the US have discussed AI.

"So we look forward to intensifying our cooperation with the United States and, for that matter, with all countries in the world on this issue," he said.

On Monday, Fu presented the draft resolution to the General Assembly on behalf of Algeria, Brazil, Cuba, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Laos, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Uganda, the UAE and Zambia.

The resolution, said Fu, emphasizes that AI development should be "human-oriented, promote good, and benefit humanity."

It highlights the UN's central role in international cooperation to achieve inclusive and sustainable AI development and contribute to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, he said.

The resolution at the 78th session of the General Assembly came about one month after the United States released a new round of measures to restrict and monitor American companies' and individuals' investments in key technologies in China, including AI, semiconductors and quantum computing sectors.

The US has been imposing export-control measures since

October 2022, aimed at restricting China's access to advanced AI chips made with US inputs.

"With respect to the sanctions imposed by the US government, fostering an inclusive business environment is important," Fu said. "We don't think the actions taken by the US align with that principle. We urge the US to lift these sanctions."

"We don't believe that the US government's position or decisions will be helpful for the healthy development of AI technology," he said. "Such actions could divide the world in terms of standards and rules governing AI. We believe it's important to be inclusive on this matter."

In March, the General Assembly unanimously adopted the first AI resolution, submitted by the US with more than 120 member countries, including China, to "promote safe, secure, and trustworthy AI systems" and advance a shared approach to the technology.

Fu said the two resolutions complement each other. "If you look at them, the US resolution is more general, while the Chinese resolution is more focused on capacity-building. That's why we believe these are complementary resolutions," he said.

It is the second draft resolution proposed by China to be passed by the General Assembly in less than a month. Earlier this month, the assembly unanimously adopted a resolution to establish the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations.

South Africa announces new coalition government

CAPE TOWN — South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa named a new Cabinet on Sunday night after his African National Congress, the former main opposition party and nine other parties agreed on the makeup of a coalition government following weeks of haggling.

Ramaphosa's party retained the largest share of ministerial positions as he appointed ANC officials to 20 of 32 Cabinet minister roles in the new coalition. But there were six ministers from the Democratic Alliance, once the main opposition and fiercest critic of the ANC, and Ramaphosa shared out the remaining ministerial posts among some of the smaller parties.

The president's announcement of his new, multiparty Cabinet came a month after the ANC lost its 30-year political dominance of Africa's most industrialized country in a national election, forcing it to seek coalition partners. The ANC's share of the vote slumped to 40 percent in the May 29 elections and it lost its parliamentary majority for the first time since it came to power at the end of apartheid in 1994.

The DA won the second-largest share of the vote with 21 percent.

Others have also joined what the ANC called a government of national unity that is open to any of the 18 parties represented in Parliament. Some have refused to take part.

Power-sharing

The power-sharing coalition is unprecedented for South Africa. The country briefly had a coalition government at the end of apartheid.

This time, the ANC needed the help of lawmakers from the DA and other parties to reelect Ramaphosa for a second term.

The landmark national election saw South Africans shifting away from the ANC, driven by frustration over poverty and some of the highest rates of inequality and unemployment in the world. Ramaphosa said on Sunday those issues would be priorities for the coalition government.

"The incoming government will prioritize rapid, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and the creation of a more just society by tackling poverty and inequality as well as unemployment," he said.

While there are 11 parties in the coalition, the ANC and the DA are the two largest and the key players. Talks between them have been tense and drawn out and the DA was reportedly on the verge of walking away from a power-sharing deal until a meeting between Ramaphosa and DA leader John Steenhuisen on Friday.

"We have shown that there are no problems that are too difficult or too intractable that they cannot be solved through dialogue," Ramaphosa said, noting the negotiations had been complex.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

Bracing for storm



Residents reinforce windows in preparation for Hurricane Beryl in Bridgetown, Barbados, on Sunday. Beryl plowed toward southeastern Caribbean on Monday as officials warned residents to seek shelter ahead of powerful winds from the storm. RAMON ESPINOSA / AP

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

Follow us on:

twitter.com/chinadaily
facebook.com/chinadaily

usa.chinadaily.com.cn

These materials are distributed by China Daily Distribution Corp. on behalf of China Daily Beijing, China. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

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

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

CHINA DAILY (ISSN 0748-6154) is published daily except weekends by China Daily USA, 1500 Broadway, Suite 2800, New York, NY 10036. Periodical postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to CHINA DAILY USA, 1500 Broadway, Suite 2800, New York, NY 10036.

Vol. 38 - No.1366

Chinese furry doll expected to help Thailand boost tourism

By YANG WANLI in Bangkok
yangwanli@chinadaily.com.cn

Thailand's tourism authority has joined hands with a Chinese toy company to launch a co-branding initiative aimed at leveraging the popularity of adorable furry dolls to attract Chinese tourists.

At the invitation of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, or TAT, Beijing-based toy company Pop Mart brought its beloved toy doll Labubu to Bangkok on Monday for a four-day tour of the kingdom.

Labubu, created by Hong Kong artist Kasing Lung and inspired by characters in Nordic fairy tales, has gained significant popularity despite its monster-like appearance. With a friendly personality and helpful nature, it features distinctive high, pointed ears and serrated teeth.

The character saw a surge in demand in Thailand after K-pop star Lisa from the girl group Blackpink shared a photo of herself holding a Labubu macaron on social media.

During a welcoming ceremony at Suvarnabhumi Airport, the furry doll was granted the title of "Amazing Thailand Experience Explorer" by the TAT, marking the beginning of its journey to explore Thailand's vibrant culture and iconic landmarks.

Thai Minister of Tourism and Sports Serm Sak Pongpanit said the ministry is promoting the positive image of Thailand in line with government policies to facilitate travel, such as the upcoming implementation of a 60-day visa-free entry for citizens of 93 countries, including China.

"I am delighted to see that the TAT and Pop Mart have co-branded to bring Labubu to engage in the diverse and unique activities in Thailand, which will certainly help boost tourism to Thailand," he said at the ceremony.

The TAT has planned a list of "must-try" experiences for the doll, outlining a journey that includes five must-do activities: Thai food, Thai shows, Thai culture, Thai fabrics and Muay Thai — Thai martial arts.

"The activities reflect the 'Five Must-Do in Thailand' strategy with Labubu being a storyteller to share impressive travel experiences in Thailand," TAT Governor Thapanee Kiatphaibool said. "We hope this will help inspire its fan base in China to follow in its footsteps and choose Thailand as their preferred destination."

From Tuesday to Thursday, the Labubu mascot in traditional Thai attire will be filmed in a series of



From left: Pop Mart Vice-President Chen Xiaoyun, Tourism Authority of Thailand Governor Thapanee Kiatphaibool and Thai Minister of Tourism and Sports Serm Sak Pongpanit pose with the mascot of Chinese toy doll Labubu in Bangkok on Monday. YANG WANLI / CHINA DAILY

promotional videos, exploring landmarks and taking part in cultural activities.

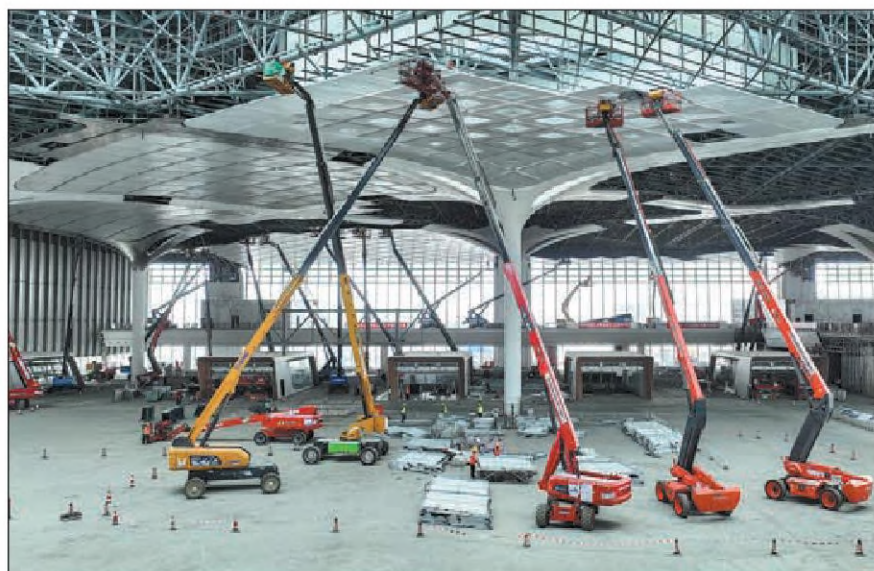
At the ceremony, the TAT also announced it would partner with Chinese travel portal Qunar to promote travel packages inspired by Labubu's adventures in Thailand. The packages, featuring Bangkok, Pattaya and Chon Buri, are available until Sept 1 to encourage more travel to Thailand.

Chen Xiaoyun, vice-president of Pop Mart, announced the opening of the company's sixth store in Thailand, scheduled for Friday in Bangkok.

"Labubu has enjoyed popularity worldwide, Thailand in particular. It helps to foster cultural exchanges among young people between the two countries. Pop Mart will continue to promote such communication in the future," she said.

BUSINESS

Future hub



Employees of China Railway Construction Corp put finishing touches to the ceiling of the new Shantou high-speed railway station in Guangdong province. The State builder said exterior construction work of the major station, which will be linked by 24 HSR lines upon completion, has basically been finished, with only a few interior decor works remaining. Shantou is building the station into the largest HSR hub in eastern Guangdong, CRCC said. YANG FUGANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

PayPal bullish on nation's opening-up

Govt's financial policies warmly welcomed by US online payments firm

By CHENG YU
chengyu@chinadaily.com.cn

China's commitment to further open up its financial sector is presenting huge opportunities for PayPal, as the US-based online payment company strives to bridge Chinese merchants with overseas consumers for growth, its top executive said.

Hannah Qiu Han, CEO of PayPal China and senior vice-president of PayPal, said the company is pleased to see the Chinese government's "proactive" efforts to promote further openness in the financial sector.

"We have consistently observed new policies being introduced by the Chinese government for further financial opening-up, which we warmly welcome," Qiu said in an exclusive interview with China Daily during the 15th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions, also known as the Summer Davos Forum, in Dalian, Northeast China's Liaoning province, last week.



Hannah Qiu Han

"We also hope that more policies will be introduced in the future to further beef up our presence in the Chinese market," she said.

In 2019, PayPal became the first foreign company licensed to provide online payment services in China. It was also the first foreign operator with full control of a payment platform in the country.

In recent years, the US payment firm has increased its investment in its Chinese businesses twice, which Qiu believes demonstrates the company's "confidence in China's openness and economic prospects".

"The importance of the Chinese market to PayPal is undeniable. China, as a global manufacturing hub, is an important part of the global industrial chain," she said.

By serving more than 400,000 merchants in China, PayPal not only helps Chinese merchants to venture abroad, but also enriches choices for overseas consumers, Qiu said.

"China is the world's second-largest economy. As PayPal is dedicated to connecting Chinese merchants with overseas consumers, the Chinese market is definitely a link that cannot be ignored," she added.

Since the beginning of this year, China has been seeking greater breakthroughs in facilitating pay-

ments for foreign visitors and has launched more visa-free policies to attract foreign tourists.

"These measures reflect China's commitment to openness and determination to develop the digital economy. They will also greatly facilitate cross-border payments, providing broader market opportunities for payment service providers like us," she said.

In terms of finance and innovative technology, Qiu noted that China is a pioneer in the application of digital payment solutions.

"PayPal will strive to seize this opportunity to contribute to China's e-commerce and payment ecosystem and to become a partner of Chinese financial institutions and technology platforms," she said.

As US tech firm OpenAI's ChatGPT has taken the tech world by storm, Qiu said artificial intelligence is playing a crucial role in the online payment sector and such technologies have already been applied in daily operations.

PayPal, for instance, uses machine learning to detect fraud, including registration fraud, login fraud and payment fraud, she said.

"By leveraging machine learning technology, we can detect risky behavior in real-time so as to improve risk management capabilities and protect customer interests," she added.

AI seen as key to firms, job seekers

By ZHENG YIRAN
zhengyiran@chinadaily.com.cn

With huge potential and market growth in artificial intelligence application and development in China, both job seekers and employers alike should be ready to ride the tide, said a senior executive of US payroll and human capital management company ADP.

Jessica Zhang, senior vice-president of ADP Asia-Pacific, said during the just-concluded 2024 Summer Davos in Dalian, Liaoning province: "The potential and growth of AI adoption in China are enormous. China takes a leading role in AI development in the world."

Global market research firm International Data Corp projects AI spending in the APAC region to reach \$49.2 billion by 2026, with a compound annual growth rate of 24.5 percent from 2021 to 2026. China leads the APAC in AI spending, accounting for 58 percent of total AI expenditure in the region, and is expected to spend around \$26.4 billion by 2026.

"The significant investment reflects China's solid determination to include AI into its economic framework," Zhang said.

The senior executive said AI-driven products are transforming how work is done, improving efficiency now and in the future.

"These tools enable HR practitioners, managers and employees to make informed decisions efficiently and confidently."

According to a recent survey con-



Jessica Zhang

ducted by ADP Research Institute among nearly 35,000 private-sector workers in 18 countries, 85 percent believe AI will impact their jobs in the next two to three years.

The 2024 talent report, issued by Shanghai-based recruitment agency Hudson, showed that at the beginning of this year, the number of AI-related jobs in China surged 28 percent year-on-year, with sectors including finance, healthcare and manufacturing experiencing clear changes.

David Yu, CEO of Hudson Greater China, said: "ChatGPT has attracted tremendous attention. It is altering the development trajectory of AI technology and applications, accelerating the human-machine interaction process and becoming a milestone in the history of AI development. The year may become a breakthrough year for AI. The future focus is expected to shift from 'catching up with trends' to 'landing capabilities', and the popularization of AI will accelerate."

While some see it as a benefit, others worry about job displacement. Remote workers and younger generations are particularly divided on whether AI will help or replace their job functions, said the ADP report.

Wang Peng, an associate research fellow at the Beijing Academy of Social Sciences, said that with AI, some traditional occupations may be replaced by machines. For example, some simple data entry and cus-

tom service tasks have already been replaced by automation.

Meanwhile, new jobs — including data scientists, machine learning engineers and other professions which require strong technical background and innovative abilities — are emerging, he said.

The development of AI is also changing the way people work, making telecommuting and flexible work more common, and offering more choices for workers, said Zhan Junhao, founder of Fujian Huace Brand Positioning Consulting.

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report expects that by 2025, while 85 million jobs may be displaced by automation, an impressive 97 million new roles are projected to emerge, reflecting a shift in the division of labor between humans, machines and algorithms.

This paradigm shift emphasizes the need for significant workforce evolution rather than a reduction in the workforce, experts said.

When asked about future development trends, Zhang said: "According to our global survey, we are witnessing significant generational changes. Over the next five to 10 years, more members of Generation Z will enter the workforce, bringing substantial changes. To support these workers, companies must provide ongoing training, skill development and flexible work roles to keep pace with technological changes. This approach will help both employees and employers fully benefit from future AI advancements."

Inner Mongolia ramps up green computing

By LIU YUKUN in Beijing
and YUAN HUI in Hohhot

North China's Inner Mongolia autonomous region will fully leverage its environmental and natural resource advantages to accelerate the development of the green computing industry, aiming to become one of China's key computing power hubs, officials and experts said recently.

Wang Lixia, chairwoman of the autonomous region, said Inner Mongolia has cool weather with temperatures lower than the national average, which helps ensure the performance of computing devices. The region also boasts the largest wind and solar power installed capacity nationwide, which can supply abundant green electricity to energy-consuming computing devices.

The remarks were made at the 2024 China Green Computing Power Conference held on Saturday in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia.

At the conference, 13 projects were signed involving a total investment of 61.35 billion yuan (\$8.4 billion). These projects cover upstream computing equipment manufacturing, midstream infrastructure construction, downstream computing applications as well as operational and maintenance services.

Several partnerships were also initiated at the conference including trans-

ferring computing workloads from Beijing to resource-rich Inner Mongolia. The conference also announced the setting up of a computing power resource management platform and a data trading center in Hohhot.

In recent years, Inner Mongolia has stepped up efforts for computing power development. In June, it rolled out 16 supportive measures, covering optimizing industrial layout, strengthening electricity supply, expanding application scenarios and cultivating talent.

Such efforts have borne fruit. As one of the 10 data center clusters in the national "east data, west computing" initiative — a move launched to optimize the layout of computing infrastructure and to enhance overall supply capabilities — the Horiger Green Computing Power Development Research Center, which was unveiled at the first China Green Computing Power Conference, currently has a server installation capacity exceeding 3.7 million units.

Its total computing power has reached 47,000 petaFLOPS, with intelligent computing power accounting for 41,000 petaFLOPS, ranking among the top nationwide. By the end of this year, the center's server installation capacity is expected to surpass 4 million units, with a total computing power reaching 65,000 petaFLOPS, including

58,000 petaFLOPS of intelligent computing power.

Inner Mongolia is a microcosm of the rapid development of China's computing power industry. By the end of 2023, China's total computing power capability had reached 230 EFLOPS, with intelligent computing power reaching 70 EFLOPS, growing at an annual rate of over 70 percent, thus strongly supporting the development of the artificial intelligence industry, said the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

Meanwhile, China is accelerating the construction of a nationwide integrated computing power system, facilitating the rapid flow of data elements. The country has launched the "east data, west computing" initiative to build data center clusters in less developed western regions and transfer workloads there from the more developed eastern regions that boast high demand for computing power.

Li Donghong, deputy director of the Institute for Global Industry at Tsinghua University, said that computing power is a high energy-consuming sector and called for the promotion of emerging energy-saving products and efforts to enhance energy efficiency and increase the proportion of green energy use.

Contact the writers at
liuyukun@chinadaily.com.cn



PUBLIC INTEREST AD-0112

NATURE'S FORTUNE

Only through harmonious coexistence can we ensure a shared future filled with peace, prosperity and happiness. Let's share our joy with the world around us, the blossom on the trees, the birds, the bees, all creatures, great and small.

CHINADAILY
中国日报

BUSINESSFOCUS

CHINA UP-CLOSE

Solar needs 'visible', 'invisible' guiding hand

Experts call for joint efforts from government and industry players to improve market conditions

By ZHENG XIN
zhengxin@chinadaily.com.cn

China will step up efforts to guide the construction and release of upstream solar production capacity to avoid repetitive building of low-end capacities, after major solar manufacturers urged increased government intervention to create a favorable market environment for the industry.

The National Energy Administration has vowed to guide capacity expansion and avoid redundant investments, monitoring solar factory utilization and expansion plans to help improve market conditions.

This comes in response to solar companies' call asking Beijing to step in after a surge in capacity caused equipment prices and profits to shrink.

Solar panel makers, including Trina Solar Co and GCL Technology Holdings Ltd, converged at the International Solar Photovoltaic and Smart Energy conference in June and called for industry collaboration, as a jump in capacity has led to a steep plunge in prices of solar cells and modules, slashing the industry's profits.

The growth of solar power over the past two decades has been phenomenal, from a niche sector to the world's dominant source of new energy. The world added 445 gigawatts of solar panels last year, mostly from China, propelling the growth of multibillion-dollar companies, which are now comparable to the giants of oil and gas.

On the other hand, solar prices have been dropping in China after a breakneck expansion created much capacity, forcing many firms to sell at lower prices. The country's dominance of the world's solar supply chains, which is being challenged by protectionism overseas, has made solar companies fret even more.

Still, low prices are helping speed up clean energy adoption. Industry insiders believe China and the global market are showing strong demand prospects for clean energy, prompting solar industry players to further expand capacity over the long term.

China's strong production ability makes what should be expensive products affordable to consumers. There are more people willing to use solar products, because it is not only cheap, but also environmentally friendly, said Ma Yinqiong, a senior analyst covering metals and supply chain materials at Rystad Energy.

China's solar industry is going through a period of technological upgrade. Government guidance and intervention that mainly focus on expanding domestic demand, optimizing capacity construction and strengthening innovation capacity, are expected to help the solar industry transition through this period, she said.



Above: Workers inspect rooftop photovoltaic panels in Jinhua, Zhejiang province, in December. SHI BUFA / FOR CHINA DAILY
Below: An employee works on a photovoltaic production line in Hefei, Anhui province, in June. RUAN XUEFENG / FOR CHINA DAILY



The government has vowed to further consolidate the market for new PV power installations domestically while accelerating the construction of a new energy infrastructure network to improve the grid's ability to accept, allocate and regulate new energy generation, including PV.

It will also strengthen multi-departmental coordination, while continuously enhancing PV technology innovation capabilities to reinforce standard innovation leadership, said Li Chuangjun, director-general of the administration's renewable energy department.

Zhu Gongshan, chairman of GCL Technology Holdings Ltd, said he believes breakthroughs in core technology can help avoid over-competition in China's solar sector and lead to the expansion of industry limits.

Taking perovskites as an example, which have achieved in over 10 years what crystalline silicon solar cells took 50 years to accomplish in terms

of technological evolution, Zhu said the depth and breadth of its technology far surpass traditional technologies, requiring complex model architectures, extensive empirical research and full-element technical matching.

"Only those focusing on cutting-edge innovations, from advanced photovoltaic materials to AI-driven energy management systems, can stand out from the white-hot competition," he said.

Zhu called for more efforts to support the construction of perovskite demonstration power plants, accelerate the market validation of perovskite technology, and promote the rapid industrialization of new photovoltaic technologies to create a new ecological landscape.

"This is especially necessary as the solar sector's overall capacity has nearly tripled, while profit margins have declined by around 70 percent, and the entire industry chain is under pressure. Trade barriers

from Europe and the United States are leading to shrinking overseas demand and declining exports," he said.

"The government should also take actions to stop 'over-investment' in the industry as the plunging prices of solar cells and modules are eroding profits, help coordinate the industry's development to avoid over-competition, and come up with guided actions to protect manufacturers from low bids.

"China's photovoltaic industry urgently needs the government's 'visible hand' and the market's 'invisible hand' to work together and make structural adjustments by improving technical standards and market access thresholds," he added.

Longi Green Energy Technology Co, one of the world's largest solar panel manufacturers, announced in June a new world record efficiency of 30.1 percent for commercial M6 size wafer-level silicon-perovskite tandem solar cells, an emerging

photovoltaic technology that is being actively researched by the global photovoltaic industry.

The company's research into mass production technology for tandem solar cells in recent years has boosted the global photovoltaic industry's confidence and expectations for silicon-perovskite tandem solar cell technology, it said.

The company has attached great importance to research and innovation in technology since its establishment, as "technological innovation and intelligent manufacturing help the photovoltaic industry move toward new prosperity", said Dennis She, vice-president of Longi.

The clean energy sector accounted for around a fifth of China's 5.2 percent gross domestic product growth in 2023. Beijing has identified solar panels, electric vehicles and lithium batteries as the three new pillars of the country's economic growth.

Figures released by Citibank show that more clean energy capacity addition is expected from large-scale wind power and photovoltaic plants in China this year, with a focus on deserts in the country and from off-shore wind power, as well as from large-scale hydropower plants, biomass energy and hydrogen energy.

Rystad Energy said renewable capacity installations in China have maintained a high pace since last year, with the trend continuing, supported by a number of under-construction or planned large-scale renewable base projects.

Industry executives speaking at a conference recently also called for an end to race-to-the-bottom price competition. They suggested bidding processes take into account levels of R&D, instead of just pricing.

Zhong Baoshen, chairman of Longi, believes technological innovation will be the core driving force with the scale of the PV industry continuously expanding and costs decreasing.

After more than 20 years of ups and downs, solar power has become the cheapest source of electricity in the vast majority of countries worldwide, playing a significant role in global energy transition and sustainable development. China, meanwhile, has made significant contribution to global low-carbon energy transformation, he said.

In response to the protectionism being applied in some countries, Zhong called for more cooperation to address challenges facing global energy transition and the impact of climate change.

"Only through global cooperation and the optimization of the allocation of resources through free trade can we accelerate this transformation and make it cheaper," Zhong said.

Despite its rapid expansion, the sector is marred by various irregularities, as well as a lack of proper infrastructure such as grid connectivity and transmission lines to distribute solar energy effectively. In this context, government support and industry collaboration can further facilitate the sector's long-term development, he said.

Longi believes consolidation will be "good for the leading players" in the country.

Due to restrictions imposed by the US and the EU, as well as intense competition at home, the oversupply issue in China's solar industry is likely to persist until late into this decade, even without new capital expenditure, according to a report from Daiwa.

A joint effort by the industry is required to avoid overinvestment, said Gao Jifan, chairman and CEO of Trina Solar and honorary president of the China Photovoltaic Industry Association.

Government regulation of new investment in the sector is needed to plug further losses, Gao said.

Believing that the development of energy storage would ease the current capacity issue, GCL Group has continuously invested in energy storage as well as smart grid networks to further enhance the competitiveness of new energy solutions.

Energy storage systems are crucial for integrating renewable energy sources like solar and wind into the grid, as they can store excess energy generated during peak production time and release it during periods of high demand.

It has come up with a large number of high-quality user-side energy storage projects in the country's more developed regions such as the Yangtze River Delta and the Pearl River Delta, based on the company's photovoltaic industry chain resource advantages and multiple types of energy supply services.

The company will continue to expand various business models such as demand management, demand-side response, light storage integration and virtual power plants, and increase the development of industrial and commercial energy storage, it said.

By the end of the first quarter, China had 52.5 GW of pumped storage capacity and 35.3 GW of new energy storage capacity, with a strong under-construction or planned project pipeline to support near-term capacity growth, according to Rystad Energy.

Nation biggest contributor to global renewables capacity amid green transition

By ZHENG XIN

China is the largest contributor to the development of the global renewable energy industry, according to a recently released report by the International Energy Agency.

Last year, the scale of newly installed renewable energy capacity in China exceeded the total of other regions worldwide. The country is expected to remain an indispensable force driving the development of the global renewable energy industry, it said.

The IEA estimates that by the end of 2030, China will be contributing nearly 40 percent of global renewable energy installed capacity and its installed capacity of solar power, wind power, and hydropower will

also witness significant growth by then.

Countries worldwide are lagging in their actual actions to achieve the goal of doubling global renewable energy capacity by 2030. Without China's significant progress, the prospects would be even dimmer, it said.

The installed capacity of renewable energy saw record growth last year, said IEA's senior energy analyst Heymi Bahar. Additionally, China has ample solar manufacturing capacity, which is expected to further solidify the foundation of the renewable energy industry.

According to the agency, Chinese investments in energy remained extremely strong, accounting for one-third of clean energy invest-

ments worldwide and an important share of China's overall GDP growth.

China has announced dual carbon goals, to peak carbon emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060, and has shown remarkable progress in adding renewable capacity, it said.

Figures released by the agency reveal that China commissioned as much solar PV last year as the entire world did in 2022, while its wind additions also grew by 66 percent year-on-year. Over the past five years, China also added 11 gigawatts of nuclear power, by far the largest of any country in the world.

There was robust growth in the three major tech-intensive green

products — new energy vehicles, photovoltaic products and lithium batteries, dubbed the "new three", which saw a 30 percent jump in exports in 2023 from a year earlier, making them a major factor in Chinese trade.

These trends are expected to continue into 2024, with the largest portion of China's investments heading toward low-emission power, said the agency.

Ample domestic manufacturing capacity and continued government support for clean technologies provide a foundation for strong clean energy investment within China. Overall energy investment levels in China are comparable to the amounts required to meet national energy and climate goals, it said.



Wind turbine blades are loaded onto a freighter at Yantai Port in Shandong province in April. TANG KE / FOR CHINA DAILY

COMMENT

Editorials

At the very heart of its name, cooperation is the defining hallmark of the SCO

Over the past more than two decades since it was founded, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has withstood severe tests and made big strides in consolidating unity among its members, increasing mutual trust and boosting development.

Despite the sniping of Western countries in their attempts to distort perceptions of the organization as part of their zero-sum game, cooperation is the name of SCO's game. It has created a new model of cooperation based on partnership and dialogue, rather than being a clique for confrontation.

By transcending differences among countries in ideology, social system and development path, the SCO has become an effective mechanism for addressing common challenges, including terrorism, drug trafficking, cybercrime and transnational organized crime, in the region and beyond.

The "Shanghai Spirit" of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diverse civilizations, and pursuit of common development has continuously served as the bedrock for the organization's dynamic development and growth. It is essential that the growing SCO "family" stick to these tenets so that the organization can continue to safeguard common interests and effectively respond to common challenges.

From an organization primarily focused on countering the security challenges from terrorism in the Central Asian region, the SCO has matured into a powerful international structure with 35 statutory bodies and 45 expert mechanisms for multilateral interaction.

Its viability and importance have been fully demonstrated and all 14 states that are SCO dialogue partners have already declared their intention to become members of the organization as soon as possible. Belarus is due to become the newest member at this year's summit.

At the upcoming summit in Astana, capital of Kazakhstan, the leaders of the member states will once again discuss a wide range of political, economic and cultural challenges that the region faces and witness the signing of a series of documents, including the SCO Development Strategy through 2035.

As a founding member of the SCO, China has always regarded its involvement as an important part of its neighborhood diplomacy, and President Xi Jinping is once again attending the SCO summit.

Eleven years ago, Xi put forward the notion that the world is increasingly becoming a community with a shared future, as all of humanity is living in the same global village facing the same challenges. Since then, the SCO has been at the forefront of efforts to transform the notion of a community with a shared future into reality.

It is expected that the focus of the discussions at the summit will be cooperation in the field of security, which remains a high-priority area of activity for the SCO. Certainly, the SCO can and should set an example for the effective implementation of the principle of indivisible security. Strengthening trade and economic cooperation will also be at the top of the agenda, with the emphasis on making cooperation in these areas more resistant to the West's efforts to curtail it.

To this end, a practical road map for gradually increasing the share of national currencies in the mutual settlements of the SCO member states and how to better synergize the Belt and Road Initiative with the respective development strategies of member countries, not least by accelerating the development of transport connectivity between the SCO member states, are expected to be key topics for discussion.

Apart from attending the SCO summit, Xi is also scheduled to pay state visits to Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, which will bring China's bilateral ties with these two Central Asian countries to a higher level and strengthen China's interaction with the region as a whole.

In an increasingly turbulent world, instilling greater certainty and stability into regional peace and development will inject a breath of fresh air into the current suffocating atmosphere in the turbulent international arena that is helping to stave off bloc confrontation and enmity.

RIMPAC's 'values' not those of Pacific family

Washington has sought to use this year's Rim of the Pacific, or RIMPAC, naval exercises, to make the US club look as large as possible. The purpose of this large-scale muscle flexing is to give a veneer of legitimacy to the United States' military posturing in the Asia-Pacific region.

"Every nation in the world that has interests in the Pacific and will adhere to the same values is more than welcome to participate," said a RIMPAC deputy commander.

Although that seems to make the naval exercise an open family, the family law is clear-cut — adherence to US "values." Even if a nation has interests in the Pacific, if it is deemed to be unwilling to obey the "law" laid down by the US as the head of the family, it is to be cut adrift from the other family members.

That being said, the world's largest naval exercise this year, which involves 40 surface ships, more than 150 aircraft, three submarines and 25,000 people from 29 countries, with the US at the helm, will focus on "attack skills needed for war." This is to signal to those not willing to accept their allotted role in the family that they will be punished, and to deter any in the family from breaking the family "law" in the future.

The Pentagon has not singled out the simulated enemy for the exercise. But there must be one as one hand alone cannot clap. In an interview with Markus Garlauskas, director of the Indo-Pacific Security Initiative at the Atlantic Council, Voice of America made it clear that the unspoken enemy is China.

On the one hand, Garlauskas sought to portray Beijing as a warmongering party in the Pacific citing its tensions with Manila and Taipei — without mentioning at all the ugly roles the US has been playing in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait. On the other hand, he tried to baselessly smear China as a "thief" of intelligence, claiming it took advantage of its participation in RIMPAC 2016, which was why it had not been invited to take part in the exercise after that.

Featuring the theme "partners, integrated and prepared", the exercise this year, as anonymous US officials told VOA, is intended to send a strong message to China.

Apart from the US, the major players in the exercise include several NATO members and Japan, as the Pentagon hopes to take advantage of the exercise to coordinate their naval actions in the "Indo-Pacific." Both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Japan have expressed interest over the past two years in doing Washington's bidding to weave together the US' Atlantic and Pacific security networks.

That means the US is doing nothing with the exercise but trying to marshal its gang for the mass brawl it has long planned with China. As Garlauskas put it: China is "potentially going to have to deal with a response from a wide range of countries that have common interests in deterring and confronting Chinese aggression as threats to a free and open Indo-Pacific."

However, Washington should be reminded that almost all the 28 RIMPAC nations appearing in the exercise this year have stable and healthy relations with China, including some major economic and trade partners with the country.

They not only have "value" ties with the US, but also attach tremendous significance to relations with China. They can see clearly Washington's intention of downgrading them into pieces in the US' geopolitical games, in which the US tries to cook up a nonexistent security threat and offers them lip-service security protection in exchange for their surrendering of real strategic autonomy.

If Washington tries to pour too much anti-China poison into its RIMPAC wine bottle, it is the US that will foot the bill alone at last.

CHINA DAILY WORLDWIDE

Contact us at:

China Daily
15 Huijiaxin Dongjie 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/mobile/daily.html

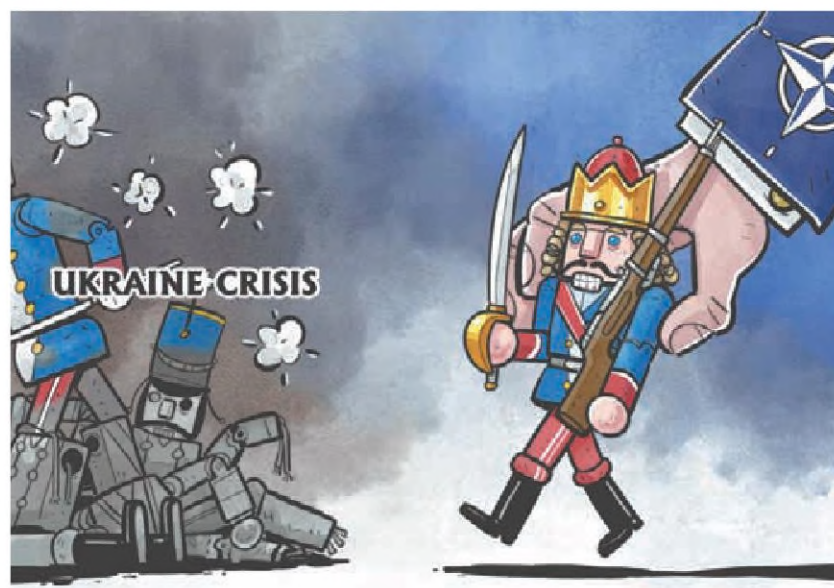
China Daily UK
90 Cannon St, London EC4N 6HA, UK
+44 (0) 207 398 8270
editor@chinadailyuk.com

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)
editor@chinadailyafrica.com
enquiries@chinadailyafrica.com
subscription@chinadailyafrica.com

Cai Meng



Opinion Line

Party's strong vitality originates from continuous self-revolution

Monday marked the 103rd anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China.

As the world's largest ruling Marxist party, the CPC has led China's social development with a spirit of self-revolution that distinguishes it from other political parties. The reason the CPC can correct its past mistakes and grow is because it doesn't shy away from accepting its mistakes. In the face of problems, it actively exercises self-criticism and launches self-revolution.

When socialism with Chinese characteristics entered a new era, the CPC Central Committee integrated comprehensive and strict Party governance into its strategic plan, promoted the improvement of Party conduct, integrity, and anti-corruption with unprecedented courage and determination. A series of self-revolutionary

measures have not only made the Party stronger and more powerful, but also enhanced its ability to maintain ties with the people and won their heartfelt support. This has enhanced the Party's solidarity and unity, and helped it gain the initiative, leading the people to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

In its theoretical thinking and practical exploration of comprehensively and strictly governing the Party in the new era, the central leadership of the Party has creatively proposed a series of new concepts, new thoughts and new strategies, forming important thoughts on the Party's self-revolution, which systematically answer major questions such as why the Party should and how it can carry out self-revolution. This means that the CPC has reached a new height in its understanding of its self-construction and

governance laws, and will open up a new realm of self-revolution.

Promoting the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation in an all-round way through Chinese-style modernization has a bright future, but it is by no means an easy task. How can the CPC maintain its strong governing ability and leadership; identify and solve its own problems in a timely manner, and how can one ensure that the Party always stands at the forefront of the times and leads the Chinese ship to sail far through wind and waves? All of these require the Party to eliminate its shortcomings through self-purification, improve its overall image through self-improvement, cultivate its creativity and vitality through self-innovation, and enhance its ability to take on responsibilities through self-progress.

— ECONOMIC DAILY

Closer to a sci-fi scenario with lab-grown brain

The latest invention by scientists from Tianjin University and the Southern University of Science and Technology, namely a robot controlled by a lab-grown artificial brain, is a significant breakthrough.

While making a "brain" from stem cells — often referred to as brain organoid, which is quite different from a real human brain — is not rare, how to enable it to receive orders, and/or even control machines like the antagonist boss Krang in *Ninja Turtles* did, remains a challenge. The process looks easy, but it involves decoding the brain, converting its thought process into electrical signals, and then sending the signals to the

machine in order to control it.

Further, there has to be a channel for the brain to receive feedback from the robotic arms it is supposed to control. The aforementioned research team has trained the "brain" for robot obstacle avoidance, tracking, grasping and other tasks, and completed the inspiration work of various kinds of brain computing.

While the bidirectional movement of brain signals with external machines is a progress, what's more significant is the team's discovery that low-intensity focused ultrasound can significantly promote the proliferation of neural progenitor cells and the differentiation of neurons, increase the

thickness of the cortical plate, make its stratification clear, promote the maturation of synaptic structure and function, and ultimately form a three-dimensional neural network with high complexity and storage computing capabilities. Put more simply, the cultivation of the brain organoid has improved, enhancing the hope of any such organoid growing into a real brain in the future, thus opening the door wider toward the sci-fi scenario of artificial brains controlling machine bodies. Unlike in the animation described above, they won't be used by Krang, but by doctors to help paralysis patients stand up again.

— ZHANG ZHOUXIANG, CHINA DAILY

What They Say

Cyberspace is a place that is not beyond the law

There has been an outpouring of public condolences and grief after Hu Youping died on Wednesday having been fatally injured trying to save the lives of a mother and child.

The 54-year-old school bus attendant has touched people's hearts with the courage and kindness she demonstrated in trying to stop a knife attack on a Japanese mother and her daughter at a school bus stop in Suzhou, Jiangsu province, on Monday last week.

The mother and daughter were also injured, but not fatally, before Hu bravely put herself forward to stop the assault by a 52-year-old unemployed man, who was arrested at the scene.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry has also expressed condolences to Hu's family. In a statement on Hu's death issued on Friday, the Japanese embassy in China, which flew the Japanese national flag at half-mast in her honor that day, said: "We believe (Hu's) courage and kindness represent

that of the Chinese people. We pay tribute to her noble deed."

The public security case, although tragic, would not have made the waves it has were it not for some extreme opinions that appeared online with the obvious aim of inciting group hatred against the Japanese people.

The accounts spreading these views on social networking platforms even applauded the criminal behavior of the attacker targeting Japanese children in the name of "patriotism" as a "delayed but righteous fight back" to let the Japanese repay the "historical debt" they have long owed to the Chinese people stemming from their acts of aggression against China from the late 19th century to World War II.

It is absolutely necessary for the social media platforms to act promptly to remove these posts and shut down relevant accounts according to relevant laws and regulations.

The platform companies should take advantage of more technological means to further improve the efficiency of their

monitoring so that they can discover and prevent such harmful and extreme views finding a gullible audience.

The network administrative authorities should also trace the online marketing accounts that fabricate and spread harmful extreme views in a bid to grab eyeballs and take concrete actions to eliminate the space in which such views can spread. Cyberspace should not be a land beyond the law. These moves are all necessary to create a clean and healthy environment where people can express themselves in a rational way.

A person's feeling of attachment to their country should not override their humanity or common sense. Those trying to hijack public opinion with their "patriotism" are harming the country by misleading society and ruining its international image. What they actually peddle is nothing but extreme xenophobia or narrow nationalism that brooks no inclusive or open attitudes to the rest of the world.

— LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

COMMENT

Sun Zhuangzhi

SCO boost for new type of global ties

Belarus is scheduled to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as its 10th full member at the SCO Summit, to be held in Astana, Kazakhstan, from Wednesday to Thursday.

The increase in the membership of the SCO, which covers the largest area and population of any cooperation organization, reflects the organization's appeal in terms of values and development prospects. The increase in membership will also allow the SCO to play a more active role in international affairs amid the fast-changing global situation.

The international community has reached a crossroad with the confrontations and disputes between countries worsening because of the impacts of major country competition, regional conflicts and the volatile global economy, as well as the factors hindering the rise of developing countries and emerging markets. An apt example of such confrontations and disputes is the series of sanctions the United States has imposed on Russia since the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis, in order to maintain its global hegemony.

Under such circumstances, the development of international organizations and multilateral mechanisms, including the United Nations, faces new difficulties.

Philosophy, rules and goals are essential to establishing multilateral cooperation and determining whether a mechanism can help maintain regional and global stability and promote development. For example, the SCO members have been carrying forward the "Shanghai spirit", putting in practice new concepts of cooperation, development, security, civilization and global governance, and working to build a new model of regional cooperation.

However, changes in the external environment and the increase in the SCO's membership have created problems such as a decline in the SCO's decision-making efficiency, and an increase in the internal contradictions and functioning of the mechanism. At the Astana summit, SCO leaders will discuss how to reach a consensus on cooperation, so as to inject new impetus into the development of the SCO and address the internal contradictions.

China's top leader proposed the Belt and Road Initiative in Astana in 2013, with Asian countries joining it to coordinate their development policies with the Belt and Road Initiative. This gave birth to mechanisms such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, China-Central



SONG CHEN / CHINA DAILY

Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor and China-Russia-Mongolia Economic Corridor, which have improved connectivity in the region covered by the SCO member states. In contrast, the US and other Western countries have been busy trying to decouple their economies with the Chinese economy.

As an important platform for connect-

ing the Belt and Road Initiative with the development policies of its member states, the SCO is committed to opening up new avenues for regional development and cooperation.

The SCO stands for partnership, not an alliance, rejects the Cold-War mentality and zero-sum games, upholds equality among all countries, and builds a

broad network of partnerships. It is capable of taking into account regional situations and national conditions and accommodating differences in political systems, economic strength and cultural traditions among SCO member states, as well as observer states and dialogue partners.

The SCO members need to boost national development and economic revitalization in a way that the coordination of their development strategies will promote economic regionalization. Expanding cooperation through the Belt and Road Initiative will benefit national development and people's livelihoods in the SCO member states.

Since China proposed it in 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative has become richer in experience and clearer in vision. It can provide "Chinese wisdom" for clearing the cooperation bottlenecks of the SCO as well as contribute to the establishment of a new type of international relations and a cooperative regional order.

To build a regional community with a shared future, we should build political mutual trust to support each other on core issues and independent paths of development, facilitate investment and trade, promote digital and green development, collectively respond to traditional and non-traditional security threats to maintain long-term regional stability, increase people-to-people exchanges to promote mutual learning and strengthen friendships, deepen cooperation on regional and global issues, and uphold international laws based on the UN Charter.

Moreover, the Astana summit is expected to emphasize the need to build a community with a shared future for SCO member states, which have historical ties and good state-to-state relations.

The SCO members will continue to contribute to regional and global development, promote multilateral cooperation, and safeguard their common strategic interests in order to better safeguard the countries' national security. In fact, by working together for the greater common good, the SCO members can make greater contributions to regional economic and cultural prosperity, and help improve the global governance system by making it more just and equitable.

The author is the director of the Institute of Russian, Eastern European and Central Asian Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.



Kang Bing

The author is former deputy editor-in-chief of China Daily. kangbing@chinadaily.com.cn

New eldercare hubs needed to better serve rural residents

Three elderly women from rural areas now living in Beijing with their children were chatting in a corner of our community square recently after finishing their routine square dancing one evening. "My salary is 600 yuan (\$82.56) per month," I overheard one of the women as saying. "So high!", the other two exclaimed.

From their conversation, I came to know that the second woman's salary was 400 yuan a month and the third's a paltry 180 yuan. The "salary" the women were talking about, in fact, is the pension they get from the rural social endowment insurance fund since 2009.

Before 2009, rural residents were not eligible for social insurance and, in old age, they were largely dependent on their children. Elderly couples in rural areas who didn't have any children were shifted to old people's homes near their towns or counties where they were taken care of.

To deal with the population aging problem in rural areas and to help farmers lead a better life, an endowment insurance was established 15 years ago. The social insurance program is open to all rural residents and the pension amount it offers is much lower than urban pension funds.

More such facilities are being built across China to provide proper eldercare to all those who need it.

Under the present mechanism, a person should deposit about 2,000-6,000 yuan per year for 15 years to be eligible to receive a pension of a few hundred yuan a month after retirement at the age of 60. One can choose to pay in bulk.

But since the insurance program is operated on a provincial/municipal basis, the insurance premium and the pension amount one gets can differ greatly depending on the development level of the province/municipality and the percentage of rural residents in the local population.

The average pension is about 1,400 yuan per month in Shanghai, 887 yuan in Beijing, 190 yuan in Guangdong province and 128 yuan in Sichuan province.

Rural residents, especially those who have retired, are happy with the insurance program. The pension amount, though humble, is enough to pay for food in rural areas, especially since elderly people can raise chickens and grow vegetables in their courtyards. They can earn some money also from the fruits that grow on the trees. And if rural residents are too old to till their land and harvest the crops, they can lease out their plots and orchards to other farmers to earn some money.

Despite being beneficial, however, the rural insurance program can't solve all the problems, problems such as how to deal with the rising number of elderly residents in rural areas who need financial support as well as eldercare. Statistics from the seventh national census in 2020 show that people aged above 60 made up 23.81 percent of the total rural population, 7.99 percentage points more than in urban areas.

Many youths migrate from rural to urban areas in search of better-paying jobs and to lead a better life, leaving their elderly parents and/or grandparents in villages. Governments at different levels have been taking measures to ensure such elderly people receive proper care. The Ministry of Civil Affairs, together with 20 other ministries and institutions, published the "Guidelines for Speeding up the Development of Elderly Care for Rural Residents".

According to the guidelines, by the end of next year, all the 1,299 counties in the country are expected to have at least one support/service center for helpless rural residents. There are about 16,000 such centers with a total of 1.68 million beds in China. More such facilities are being built across China to provide proper eldercare to all those who need it.

The guidelines also require more township-level eldercare centers to be built so that at least 60 percent of rural residents are covered by the plan within one year. China now has more than 145,000 such centers in towns and villages. Such centers are providing home-calling service, daycare service and are coordinating neighborhood mutual help groups. The guidelines also encourage such centers to develop into full-fledged old people's homes and the establishment of more such centers in the villages.

If more efforts are made, elderly people in rural areas can expect better care.

Han Na

China promotes coordination of AI governance

Artificial intelligence technology has become a key driver of social development. But thanks to the rapid development of advanced technologies, the global governance system faces unprecedented challenges, particularly in the field of AI security governance.

Establishing a secure, reliable and efficient AI security governance system has become an important issue that requires all stakeholders to collectively address. Given this fact, adopting a trust-based approach to global AI security governance will not only optimize the existing governance system but also appropriately respond to future security challenges.

AI is closely intertwined with security and development policies. As the core driver of the fourth industrial revolution, AI is playing an irreplaceable role in both development and security.

Little wonder then that stakeholders are striving to edge ahead of each other in AI technology, and economies such as the United States, the European Union and China have already issued AI regulations. In fact, there has been a surge in global AI regulations this year.

On March 21, 2024, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the first global resolution on AI, calling for the development of "safe, reliable, and trustworthy" AI systems to promote sustainable development. This is a significant step the international community has taken to establish a global AI governance framework and lay the foundation for global cooperation in formulating common rules and standards for AI application and development.

The EU has endorsed the AI Act. A year before that, in March 2023, the EU passed the "AI Act", emphasizing the importance of adopting a risk-oriented and end-to-end control approach, classifying regulations based on risk levels while focusing on specific industries and scenarios, and reaffirming the EU's leadership in technology regulation.

In October 2023, the US issued an

The trust-based approach to global AI security governance is a complex and systematic endeavor that requires joint efforts of the international community.

executive order called "Developing and Using AI Safely, Reliably, and Trustworthily," and in February 2024, it announced the establishment of the AI Security Research Institute Alliance. Supported by more than 200 leading AI stakeholders, the alliance is aimed at establishing a leadership position in the international AI governance framework.

In order to promote the healthy development of generative AI technology, China issued the Interim Measures for the Management of Generative Artificial Intelligence Services in July 2023. China is also actively involved in global AI governance and proposed the "Global AI Governance Initiative" in October last year, advocating for the international community to uphold a shared, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security perspective to promote the beneficial use of AI technology for humanity and advance the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

Global AI security governance is complex, especially because of the contradiction between the rapid development of technologies and relatively slow pace of construction of the governance system, as well as the diversity and complexity of interests of different stakeholders. Plus, the disparities between developed and developing countries in terms of AI research and application have resulted in uneven development of AI in different economies.

Moreover, the policies of different economies, organizations and enterprises on AI governance are different, making the formation of a global AI

governance system very challenging.

Geopolitical factors, too, have had a significant impact on global AI governance. Western economies, led by the US and the EU, are engaged in competitions to set AI policies and regulations, attempting to establish strategic alliances in AI governance and international participation, creating obstacles to the development of AI governance and international engagement for others.

As such, there is a need to urgently promote global AI security governance based on national trust. AI security governance and inter-state trust entail a continuous and positive interaction process.

Trust in the world arena can be categorized into rational trust, value trust, and environmental trust. National trust involves inter-party interactions based on respective interests and strategies, where each party primarily considers its own interests and strategies when making decisions on whether to trust another, serving as the fundamental consideration and prerequisite for establishing trust in AI security governance between different parties.

Value trust refers to interactions between different parties based on emotional cultural and cognitive concepts, serving as the guiding philosophy and key condition for establishing governance trust between them. And environmental trust involves interactions between different parties based on communication mechanisms and governance systems, mainly serving as important channels and safeguards for establishing trust in AI security governance.

Enhancing trust can help manage major country competition while mitigating the adverse effects of such competitions. Similarly, trust enhancement can create room for adjustment of issues arising from major country competition, further strengthening the construction of inter-state trust.

Besides, national trust is the cornerstone of international cooperation and

governance, especially when it comes to addressing common global issues such as AI. By strengthening communication and cooperation, stakeholders can set common security standards and governance mechanisms to effectively address the risks and challenges posed by AI. A governance system based on trust can help boost the confidence of all parties in the field of AI.

The trust-based approach to global AI security governance is a complex and systematic endeavor that requires joint efforts of the international community. By setting unified technical standards and ethical norms, strengthening data security and privacy protection, and promoting public participation and social supervision, a foundation of trust can be built for global AI security governance.

Based on this foundation, balancing technological innovation with ethical considerations, establishing effective risk assessment and response mechanisms, exploring ways to reach a consensus on mutual trust, enhancing value trust and environmental trust, and fostering international coordination and cooperation to consolidate consensus can construct an open, fair, and effective governance mechanism, promoting the beneficial use of AI technology for humanity and gradually enhancing rational trust.

In the future, as AI technology continues to advance, global governance will face more challenges. It is crucial to actively support the establishment of a just, transparent and efficient global AI governance system within the framework of the UN to provide solid guarantees for the harmonious development of human society.

The author is an associate professor/doctoral supervisor at, and executive director of, International Governance Research Center for Cyberspace, People's Public Security University of China. The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

GLOBAL VIEWS

GARY SIGLEY

Cherishing diversity

Mutual respect and dialogue essential to promote harmony among civilizations

A lesson should be taken from the West's attempts over the last several centuries to promote its own civilization as the most advanced, implying that others should emulate it. The West used its vision of civilizational hierarchy, with the

West situated at the very top to justify colonial domination over other peoples and places. We see elements of this sense of entitled supremacy being rolled out daily to smear the cultural and economic advances of non-Western societies such as China. This is the ongoing legacy of civilizational bias.

With a history of 5,000 years, China is the world's oldest continuous civilization. During this time, Chinese civilization has created a treasure trove of cultural wealth covering all fields from the humanities to science and technology. As a testimony to its enduring legacy, China has 57 UNESCO World Heritage sites placing it at No 2 behind Italy which has 58.

There is no one single agreed-upon definition of "civilization". Indeed, attempting to pin down a single definition is counterproductive as it leads to the folly of making lists of things to "include" and "exclude". We end up wielding disrespectful dichotomies that label some peoples as "civilized" and others as "uncivilized". The only criterion we need to agree upon is that all human "civilizations", no matter how "small" or "large", or how "old" or "new", are valuable manifestations of the human experience.

The 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly recent-

ly unanimously adopted a China-proposed resolution, designating June 10 as the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations. This is part of efforts by China and the international community to promote intercultural communication and understanding, something very much needed in our contemporary world. It builds upon other efforts of China such as the Global Civilization Initiative.

The UN resolution states that civilizations and cultures take diverse forms across time and space and flourish in contact with others and therefore should be preserved, enhanced and handed on for the benefit of current and future generations as a record of human experience and aspirations. The resolution does not seek to provide a definition of what constitutes a "civilization". And rightly so. Every civilization and every culture, represents the material and spiritual results of the collective interaction of humans with the physical environment over time. Every civilization has something profound to share with the rest of humanity based on its own rich experience. Let's take two examples, drawing upon the cultural wealth of Chinese and Australian civilizations.

The concept of *he* in Chinese civilization dates back several thousand years. It appears in *Yijing* (The Book of Changes) and *Shijing* (The Book of Songs), two ancient Chinese classics. *He* signifies harmony, balance, and unity. It emphasizes the importance of peaceful coexistence and mutual respect among individuals and groups (*yi he wei gui*). It stresses striving for harmony between humanity and nature (*tian ren he*

yi). In contemporary contexts, *he* can be a guiding principle for promoting diversity and harmony between cultures and civilizations. By fostering an environment where different cultures are valued and respected, we can create a more inclusive world where diverse perspectives coexist and enrich each other, leading to greater global understanding and cooperation.

In contrast to China, Australian civilization could be said to be one of the world's youngest civilizations. It is a composite of the ancient culture of Indigenous Australians, European settlers and the cultures of many non-Western peoples, including from China, who have migrated to Australia since 1788. Nearly half of Australians were either born overseas or have a parent who was. Thus, one virtuous element of Australian civilization is its strong commitment to multiculturalism and the promotion of a diverse, inclusive society. Australia is known for its acceptance and celebration of people from various cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, which has significantly contributed to its social harmony and cultural richness.

All civilizations have something important to contribute to the human experience. As humanity



MA XUEJING / CHINA DAILY

moves forward in the 21st century, it confronts a myriad of serious challenges. Genuine and respectful dialogue between civilizations and cultures is essential. These efforts, of course, cannot be restricted to just one day per year. They must be ongoing and conducted at many levels between nations and peoples throughout the world. We mustn't repeat the mistakes of the past and

attempt to define what a civilization is or isn't. Every "civilization", no matter how small or large, old or new, deserves a seat at the table. The International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations is a valuable opportunity to focus international attention on the importance of dialogue between civilizations and cultures. China should be lauded for its efforts in this field for working

toward promoting a "confluence" rather than a "clash" of civilizations.

The author is a member of the faculty of geographic sciences at Beijing Normal University. 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.

HUANG YUTAO AND XIONG AIZONG

Currency conundrum

Developing countries should take into account the downsides of dollarization

Since his election win, Argentine President Javier Milei's drastic reform plan to replace the local currency with the United States dollar has rekindled the debate over whether developing nations should dollarize the economy.

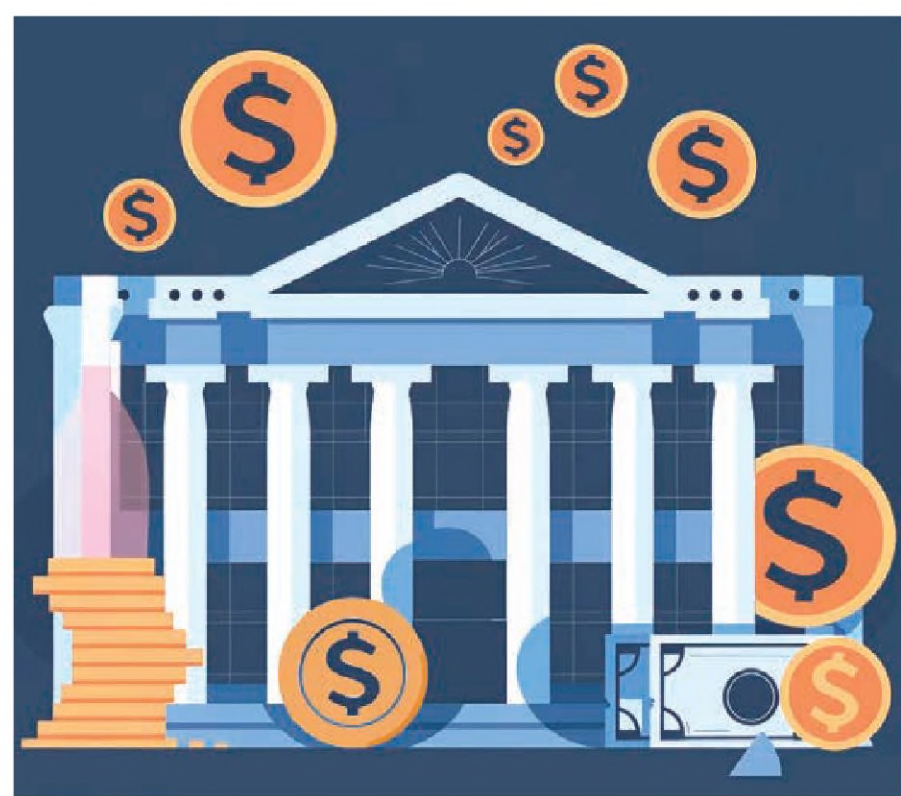
Dollarization means the US dollar plays a more important role in a country's economy. It could be either a market behavior, or an act of government that relinquishes the local currency and causes the loss of financial sovereignty.

The question here is whether the benefits of dollarization outweigh its costs?

Dollarization may bring three types of benefits.

First, it injects stability into an economy. When a country is mired in a crisis of confidence over its currency and hyper inflation, using a more stable and reliable foreign currency helps protect the value of assets and market transactions. Introducing an external anchor can help create a sound environment for the economy and stabilize the expectations of enterprises, thus ensuring long-term investment and operations.

Second, dollarization can reduce the costs of international transactions, and integrate a country into the global financial market. Since the US dollar is the leading global currency, dollarizing the economy can facilitate a country's economic and trade exchanges with other countries, and reduce the costs of currency exchanges.



WANG XIAOYING / CHINA DAILY

Third, dollarization can help enforce fiscal discipline and promote financial reforms. The governments of some developing nations have the impulse to print excessive money for short-term political gains. Dollarization can force the government of a dollarized country to accept strict fiscal discipline and prevent it from pumping too much money into the economy.

Despite these benefits, dollariza-

tion also comes with drawbacks. First, it deprives a country of its right to collect seigniorage, which is the profit made by a government from issuing currency, especially from the difference between the value of money and the cost to produce and distribute it. Second, dollarization undermines a country's currency sovereignty, and removes the government's ability to manage the economy through monetary tools.

Complete dollarization means an economy will lose the financial guarantee provided by the lender of last resort, which is its central bank. Thus, if the economy faces a liquidity crunch, it will be unable to deal with it via monetary tools. In addition, a country's capacity to control the amount of currency in circulation through adjusting monetary and exchange rate policies will be compromised. Third, a dollarized economy is

more vulnerable to external shocks.

As the priority of the Federal Reserve, the US Central Bank, is to deal with domestic economic issues, it does not pay heed to the spillover effects its monetary policies have on other economies. In other words, the US will not change its monetary policies to accommodate the needs of dollarized economies. If a dollarized country's economic cycle is not in line with that of the US, it will pay a hefty price in the face of external shocks.

Fourth, dollarization can create path dependence. Many dollarized economies faced immense challenges in reestablishing their local currency's status.

Turkiye became a highly-dollarized economy in the 1980s, having over 60 percent of its broad money supply, or M2, in the form of US dollar deposits. The country pushed for de-dollarization through the "reverse currency substitution" in the early 21st century.

However, to tackle the 2008 global financial crisis, Turkiye borrowed large amounts of foreign debts, which compromised its capacity to withstand pressure caused by deteriorating macroeconomic fundamentals. By the end of 2020, Turkiye's share of dollarization approached 60 percent of the total deposits.

Another case in point is Laos. The Southeast Asian country's ratio of US dollar deposits to total deposits reached a peak of 80 percent in 1997. As its economy recovered and inflation went down, Laos tried to reestablish the status of its local currency. As a result, the share of the US dollar dropped to 44 percent in 2010. However, since 2011, the worsening global economic environment pushed up the deficit of Lao's current account for nearly a decade, and the local currency was under depreciation pressure for a long time. These factors drove up

the proportion of US dollar back to nearly 50 percent in 2020.

Due to the multiple drawbacks of dollarization, it becomes more costly for developing countries to dollarize their economy. Plus, the fast-evolving global landscape puts a big question mark over the reliability of the US dollar-dominated global financial system and the credibility of the US dollar, which in turn has triggered a new wave of de-dollarization in the developing world.

The massive quantitative easing policy adopted by the US after the global financial crisis has significantly pushed up the US government's debt levels, eroding global confidence in the US dollar. Furthermore, the US imposed unprecedented harsh financial sanctions against Russia following the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis, which has prompted other countries to realize the US dollar is no longer a reliable store of value and medium of exchange.

The unscrupulous use of financial sanctions by the US is another important factor to be considered for countries contemplating dollarizing their economy. Although the US dollar still remains the dominant global currency, its primary status is in decline. Thus, going forward, the world will see increasing practices to de-dollarization.

Huang Yutao is an assistant researcher at the Institute of World Economics and Politics and the National Institute for Global Strategy at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Xiong Aizong is a senior research fellow at the Institute of World Economics and Politics and the National Institute for Global Strategy at the CASS. 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

Wall of adventure and splendor

Badaling section of the historic structure gives tourists a taste of the past with modern comforts, **Yang Feiyue** reports.



Night tours of the Badaling Great Wall in Yanqing district, Beijing, are a big draw for travelers from home and abroad. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Short but intense storms have sprung upon the capital city since early June, often with little warning. Yet, as swiftly as they come, they retreat, leaving in their wake a stunning sunset and crystal clear blue sky.

This cleansing effect seems magical when one drives to Yanqing, the outer suburban district northwest of Beijing.

Badaling Great Wall is one of the district's popular areas that take people's mind off from the bustling city center. It rests on the mountain ridges and seems to have its features — the thick curves of yellow bricks and rugged edges — brought into sharp relief. The clarity somehow magnifies its size and makes it look very close to viewers from the meandering mountainside highway.

About a 20-minute drive northward from the first sight of the Badaling section, camp tents, watchtower-like walls and an enclosed horse racetrack emerge at Beijing Expo Park. Men and women dressed in ancient-looking warrior costumes pulling stunts on the back of racehorses are visible upon walking into the facility carrying the Great Wall elements. The crack of their whip and the sheen of horse manes under the sun bring people back in time.

It is part of an immersive experience that local authorities have developed to bring visitors closer to the history and culture of the Great Wall.

The arrangement of such prelude eases tourists into the grand drama, *Dream of the Great Wall*, further into the facility, where various periods of major Great Wall development, from the Qin (221-206 BC) to the Han (206 BC-AD 220) and the Tang (618-907) and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties, are delivered onstage and walk the audience down history lane.

The 50-minute drama premiered in early June and has strung together stories of historical figures and anecdotes related to the Great Wall.

It exposes the audience to the initial severe hardships facing the Wall laborers, the formidable determination of the Qin Dynasty to unify the nation, and the faith and pride of the Han Dynasty in fortifying and expanding the Great Wall to consolidate its power, as well as the ensuing prosperity of the Tang Dynasty.

Visitors can get a big picture of how the Great Wall evolved into a world wonder and experience the whole gamut of historical figures' sentiments through the stage presentation that integrates music, dance, acrobatics and folk customs. Interactive sessions have also



Clockwise from top: Inbound travelers try on ancient-style costumes at a fashion boutique in Yanqing. Chinese actors give visitors an immersive performance at the Beijing Expo Park in Yanqing. A gift shop offering Great Wall-themed cultural items is a favorite stop for international travelers.

been prepared for travelers to experience the hardships of constructing the Great Wall or engage in a poetry exchange session with an actor playing the role of Li Bai, a Tang Dynasty poet.

"We started to build the stage in December last year, reutilizing vacant land in the park," says Yue Junfang, a staff member with Xiadu Cultural Communications, which is in charge of the drama operations.

Approximately 180 crew members have engaged in regular performances, and the facility has received more than 600 visitors per day.

Yue expects the number to keep growing as summer vacation continues. More sessions will be offered daily.

"We have special buses that can take visitors from downtown all the way here," Yue says.

The drama is among local authorities' latest efforts to foster a deeper appreciation for the Great

Wall, which President Xi Jinping in May called for continued efforts to protect. In his reply to a letter recounting Great Wall protection work from residents in Shixia village at the foot of the Badaling Great Wall, Xi made remarks about promoting its culture and passing on its precious heritage to future generations.

In addition to the new show, night tours of the Badaling Great Wall have been launched since May.

The performance programs have been innovatively redesigned and a "processional viewing" mode has been introduced to immerse visitors in different historical scenes, according to Zhai Yanwei, deputy general manager of Badaling Culture and Tourism Group.

Tree-shaped lighting systems, interactive non-player characters, daring motorbike stunts and a range of Great Wall-themed cultural and creative souvenirs dot the

whole journey, which has proved a hit among visitors, Zhai says.

Since it was first launched a few years ago, night tours of the Badaling Great Wall have packed in more than 400,000 visits, including 250,000 last year, according to Badaling Culture and Tourism Group.

"We will receive more visits this year," Zhai says.

Night tour visitors have spent five times as much as they did before and are more likely to stay the night in Yanqing, which has prompted them to explore more of what the district has to offer, she observes.

"Many travelers have chosen to stay at the star-rated hotels or homestays in Yanqing after the night tour and contributed to the bookings of 20,000 to 30,000 rooms last year," Zhai says.

To spice up the tourist experience, Yanqing has also rolled out leisure tours lasting from two to three days.

At the center of the arrangement is a night boating experience on the Guishui River, which originates from the district and runs 18.5 kilometers from east to west.

The river is transformed into a realm of mystery and serenity under the embrace of the night sky, with the gently swaying reeds, heart-shaped islands and an illuminated pagoda, dotting the surroundings and casting enchanting reflections.

Several performances are put in place during the boat trip, highlighting stories about local people and the legendary ruler Shun of over 4,000 years ago, who is regarded as one of the ancestors of the Chinese nation.

The actresses dressed in traditional Chinese costumes dancing on a floating canoe are eye-catching.

Additionally, there is a sightseeing bus tour that covers local wetland parks and wild duck habitats.

The tourist activities are aimed to satisfy their rising needs and complement their experiences centering on the Badaling Great Wall.

"We have received positive feedback from tourists," Zhai says.

In particular, with China's increasingly favorable inbound tourism policies, such as visa-free entry, the Badaling area's charm has been enhanced among international travelers, taking in 147,000 tourists from abroad as of mid-June this year, up 81 percent over the same period of 2023, Badaling Culture and Tourism Group reports.

Rong Xinfeng, Party secretary of the group, recently announced eight measures to facilitate inbound tourist visits, including multilingual services, optimized transportation, convenient payment options, unique dining experiences, comfortable accommodations, and cultural and creative gifts, with the goal of giving inbound tourists a seamless travel experience in Yanqing, according to Rong.

Inbound tourists can use their passports or permanent residence permits to buy tickets at manned windows on the scenic spot or via the WeChat mini-program, "Travel Inside and Outside the Great Wall."

Bookings of major Great Wall experiences, including the night tour and cable car, can be made on the online travel agency Trip.com Group's operations in 14 overseas sites, Zhai says.

"It will expand to 38 countries in July, mostly in Asia, Europe and the United States, and more countries and regions will be covered in the future," she adds.

Contact the writer at yangfeiyue@chinadaily.com.cn

Belgians harvest the good life in Guizhou

GUIYANG — Nestled in the heart of the mountains in Xiasi village, Dushan county, Southwest China's Guizhou province, there is a unique ecological family farm. It is run by Kevin Cillen Michael E., a 28-year-old Belgian who is passionate about the land.

With his parents and siblings, they have combined Western farming techniques with local countryside practices to cultivate an "ecological oasis" in the remote area.

Surrounded by verdant hills and melodious birdsongs, the family is dedicated to the land, pursuing their farming dream in China. Their journey began in 2000, when his mother Hetty Cillen Botthef visited China as a volunteer for the first time. The enchanting landscapes and rich cultural tapestry of Guizhou captivated her, compelling her to make this foreign country her home. Soon after, his father Patrick Jan Cillen joined her in Guizhou.

In 2017, the family relocated to Xiasi town to lease a plot amid the forest and establish an ecological farm where they laid the foundation, leveling the terrain, sowing pastures and acquiring lambs and chicks for rearing.

Determined to enrich the forage for their animals, they ventured into cultivating rapeseed flowers, a new endeavor, and sought advice from the warmhearted villagers, who generously shared their knowledge.

The locals have openly embraced the foreigners, integrating them into their community, inviting them to festivities and celebrating traditional Chinese holidays together.

In 2018, Yang Chengkai, a 34-year-old villager of Xiasi village, befriended the family, often assisting them on the farm.

"We frequently make our way up the hill to lend a hand at their farm when they're mowing the lawn," Yang says. "The community has embraced this family. Even the vendors at the local food market contribute by giving them vegetable scraps for free to feed their livestock."

During this year's May Day holiday, Yang collaborated with the family to produce a short video showcasing the local folk culture, which was well-received and helped attract more attention to Guizhou, a province that has transformed from a once poverty-plagued region into a national pilot area for ecological civilization in China. Through innovative environmental measures, the province has significantly improved its forest coverage and reduced the area of rocky desertification by 43 percent over the past decade.

The family farm, hidden deep within the dense forest, is a testament to Guizhou's ecological progress. The farm practices diversified grass cultivation for high-quality animal feed, utilizes solar panels for clean energy and employs automatic rainwater harvesting systems for a stable water supply. They treat animal diseases with Chinese herbal medicine and the free-range animals in the forest contribute to soil fertility, enabling ecological recycling.

Over the years, the farm has grown in size and diversity, housing hundreds of livestock including goats, chickens, rabbits and ducks.

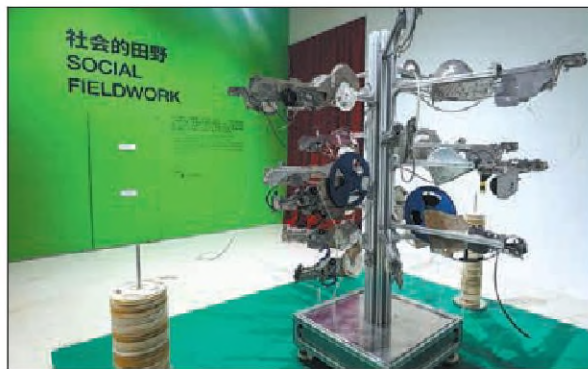
Living in China, the 28-year-old Belgian has witnessed the country's remarkable changes. "The village has taken on a new look and more and more people have begun to return to the countryside to enjoy the quiet pastoral life," he says, adding that as a "new farmer", he has also seized the opportunities of the internet and new media to increase the farm's visibility.

In addition to managing the farm, he has partnered with Qiu Ye, a social media influencer in Guizhou, to set up accounts like "Kevin's family in Guizhou" on various platforms. By sharing their daily lives on the farm and the natural beauty of rural China, their authentic and "grounded" content has quickly garnered a large following of over 700,000 subscribers.

"We are humbled by the interest in our story," the young Belgian says. "We are delighted to share our life in China with others, hoping our experiences will help more people understand China and its agricultural development."

XINHUA

LIFE



From left: She Luyun's installation artwork *Feeder*. Artist Nhozagri's works aim to create a cosmological self-consistent life system. Hu Weiyi's video installation *The Miracle of Flowers*.

Exhibition highlights new generation of artists

By getting answers, some surprising, to 90 questions, curator displays multifaceted perspectives in new project, **Li Yingxue** reports.

A mannequin head, feather duster, straw hat, toy goldfish, pigeon sculpture, coin and a motorcycle license plate ... Hundreds of seemingly unrelated objects are intricately connected, moving in a mesmerizing, chaotic dance.

This 10-meter long, 3-meter-high installation titled *The Squad Is Burning Out* is the brainchild of young artist Tong Kunniao. The piece features a myriad of discarded consumables that he has meticulously collected from urban and rural settings, transforming forgotten debris into captivating art.

"They have been removed from progressive lives and a savage society. I envision their mixture and existence as another world; a consumer world brimming with immense energy," Tong remarks.

"This chaotic yet unified installation is intended to remind us that society is an expansive arena, a battleground where countless elements compete for attention and struggle for basic survival," explains the 34-year-old artist from Changsha, Hunan province.

Alongside this piece, 69 other works are on display, all created by Chinese artists under 35. The exhibition *Era of Encore* opened in June at the Beijing Times Art Museum, featuring diverse works by 32 artists born in the late 1980s and 1990s, offering their unique perspectives on contemporary society.

"This exhibition aims to expand our discussion around post-'90s artists. It explores the historical context from the late 1980s to the present, providing insights from four dimensions — art and cultural history, technological drivers and impacts, social scenes and issues, and aesthetic innovation and rebellion," explains Bao Dong, curator of the exhibition.

As the curatorial sector of this year's Beijing Dangdai Art Fair, *Era of Encore* is a collaborative effort between the Beijing Dangdai Art Fair and the Beijing Times Art Museum. The exhibition will run until Sept. 1.

In China, artists born after the late 1980s have grown up in a brand-new world and naturally seek to explore different realms of artistic practice. Is their art a continuation or reboot, an encore or interlude, or a prelude to a new era?

The exhibition, divided into four sections — Farewell Modernism, Future Aborigines, Social Fieldwork, and Recurring Dopamine — aims to answer these questions by showcasing the dynamic and multifaceted perspectives of young Chinese artists.

The pioneering survey

Bao explains that the past 35 years in China have been a time of rapid development amid global upheaval so this generation, shaped by these dynamics, holds distinct perspectives compared to previous ones.

He highlighted that while generational differences among artists are minor, individual differences are significant.

"Our exhibition for young artists aims to capture a slice of this era through their art and creations," Bao explains.

The exhibition originated from the "90x90x90: Survey of Chinese Young Artists" project launched by the Beijing Dangdai Art Fair last year. This initiative involved asking 90 questions to 90 artists born in the 1990s about their creative processes, lifestyles and values, aiming to depict and analyze their artistic identity and characteristics.

Bao, co-founder and artistic director of the Beijing Dangdai Art Fair, spent the past year traveling across China, visiting cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Chongqing, Chengdu in Sichuan province and Wuhan in Hubei province. He conducted in-person interviews with nearly 90

young artists meeting some in their studios, others in cafes, and some amid preparations for their upcoming exhibitions.

"The project is a sociological survey covering their age, geographic diversity, educational background, family background, views on marriage, relationships, children, and their perspectives on art," Bao explains.

After speaking with them, Bao initially thought most young artists were outgoing but found that many are quite introverted. "Many don't drink coffee, alcohol or smoke. They prefer a quiet, home-centered lifestyle, going to bed early," Bao notes.

"These young artists have diverse backgrounds. Some have extensive international experiences in education and life, while others have never left their hometown," Bao explains. "But overall, they share a strong desire for success."

Bao emphasized the significant impacts of social media on these young artists. "The internet provides them a quicker way to connect with audiences and they are skilled at using new media to showcase themselves and their work," he adds.

In the exhibition's Future Aborigines section, Bao highlights how young artists perceive technology's impacts on daily life.

"As artists born after 1990, natives of the internet age, their sensitivity to information, familiarity with technology and innovative use of media give them a natural ability for artistic expression," Bao explains.

"This chapter focuses not on showcasing high-tech gadgets but exploring how technology influences society and how artists observe and translate this impact into their creative language," he elaborates.

A slice of society

According to Liu Weiwei, executive director of the Times Art Museum and the exhibition's supervisor, this exhibition has

been nearly a year in the making. "Young artists serve as a slice of society, expressing their thoughts on the current era and social conditions through their work," Liu explains.

Liu believes that artists born after the 1990s are evolving, making it challenging to draw definitive conclusions. "Many artists feel our current era is marked by profound uncertainty, with significant events unfolding. Each person in this era experiences intense emotions and insights. Some artists use their work to express these feelings," Liu explains.

"By age 30 or 35, artists' thoughts mature, their creative expressions become more refined and their works more complete. This period represents a peak of productivity, enriched by life experiences, personal reflections and social observations. Our goal is to showcase the artistic achievements of this generation at this pivotal stage," Liu adds.

While older artists might conduct fieldwork in rural areas or lands, today's youth see their "field" as the internet, livestreaming platforms or online marketplaces like Taobao. This defines the content of the Social Fieldwork section, aimed at showcasing the experiential artworks of these artists.

Tong Kunniao's *The Squad Is Burning Out* is just a highlight of this chapter, created specifically for the exhibition.

"Tong ventured into creating his largest work yet. We collaborated closely with him during curation, designing a custom glass enclosure suited to the expansive exhibition space," Liu explains. "This presentation adds a ceremonial touch and impact, reminiscent of showcasing a massive dinosaur skeleton in a museum."

Liu highlights that the exhibition prominently features many elements, experiences and models unique to China. For example, Li Hanwei's installation *New Communication* vividly portrays China's rapid development through his exploration of the logistics of e-commerce.

Liu observes that many artists born after the 1990s have wide-ranging interests, some niche but deeply explored within dedicated communities such as gaming, AI applications, swing dancing and cycling.

As organizers, Liu shares their goal to attract diverse enthusiasts to the exhibition by fostering cross-disciplinary collaborations. They plan to invite musicians, scientists and comedians to participate in interactive sessions, aiming to turn these discussions into broader societal conversations.

"We hope to create a platform where young people eager for communication can gather based on shared interests and enjoyment in art," Liu concludes. "This exhibition seeks to resonate with society's pulse and emphasize an immersive experience. By attending in person, visitors can deeply connect with the messages and emotions conveyed by the artworks."

Contact the writer at liyingsue@chinadaily.com.cn



Clockwise from top: The exhibition *Era of Encore* opened in June at the Beijing Times Art Museum, and features diverse works by 32 artists born in the late 1980s and '90s. The installation titled *The Squad Is Burning Out* is created by artist Tong Kunniao. The piece features a myriad of discarded consumables that Tong has meticulously collected from urban and rural settings.

PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Chinese acrobat wows audience at NBA halftime show

TAIYUAN — A video of acrobat Niu Rong's performance at an NBA game has gone viral online recently, garnering widespread attention on major video platforms.

In the video, Niu, dressed in a bright outfit and high heels, performed to the traditional Chinese song *Bridal Sedan Chair*. She rides a unicycle over two meters high with one foot, expertly kicking a stack of white porcelain bowls onto her head, which drew applause and cheers from the audience.

Known by her stage name "Red Panda", Niu chose the name because red symbolizes China and the panda is the country's treasured national animal, making her a memorable performer to audiences.

Niu is one of the most popular halftime show performers in the NBA, with American media hailing her act as "the best halftime show in basketball." Since her debut in 1993, she has performed for 30 NBA teams, showcasing her high-altitude porcelain bowl-balancing acrobatics

for 21 seasons. Her journey began in Shanxi province.

Born into an acrobat family in Taiyuan, capital of Shanxi, Niu began practicing acrobatics at an early age. "When I was young, I practiced somersaults and handstands but found that I was not good at them. So I chose to practice unicycle bowl-balancing when I was 7," she recalls.

Niu's NBA debut came the day before Thanksgiving in 1993 when she performed on the Clippers' home court in Los Angeles, California.

Her five-minute performance received four standing ovations.

"During the performance, four bowls fell steadily on my head one after another. There was applause almost every time I flipped a bowl. I couldn't believe it," Niu recalls.

Since then, Niu has become a fixture in NBA halftime shows. "She is the most dominant performer in the NBA, and her bowl-balancing technique is even more accurate than Curry's three-pointers," said an NBA head coach, praising Niu.

However, Niu's career has not been without challenges. She once fell from a stool over two meters high, fracturing her arm. "During that time, my father had passed away and I was down for a while. When I tried to go back on stage again, I thought I was ready but I wasn't focused enough," Niu says.

In October 2015, Niu overcame her injury and returned to the NBA court, once again becoming a fan favorite.

Speaking of her hometown

Shanxi, Niu says: "I used to go back to Shanxi at least once a year but I haven't had time to go back in recent years. I must make it this summer."

After working overseas for many years, she misses Shanxi's vinegar noodles the most. "When I left Shanxi, it didn't have a professional basketball team. If there is a chance in the future to perform in my hometown, that would be great," Niu adds.

XINHUA

LIFE



From left: Children prepare vegetables before cooking on their own at Qi Xiaojing's agricultural facility in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY A teacher gives a crafting class at the facility. BILIGE / FOR CHINA DAILY Young enthusiasts engage in spring planting to experience farm life. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Harvesting profits from leadership

Rural area benefits from graduate's return and her business acumen, **Yang Feiyue** reports.

With short, neat hair and tan skin, Qi Xiaojing beams with a glow of energy that seems to have her ready to hit the ground sprinting at anytime.

In a simple sport suit, the woman, 40, can't help smiling as she introduces a group of guests to her agricultural tourism complex.

Tomato murals and sculptures embellish the facility that the group visited late last month. The facility covers an area of 49,000 square meters in Ping'an village, Horqin Right Wing Front Banner, Hinggan League, North China's Inner Mongolia autonomous region.

The facility, established in 2022, has been filled with laughter since summer arrived as children from across the country have beaten a path to Qi's happy farmland to spend their vacation.

They are seen running around and playing sports on the grasslands or engaging in craft projects under professional guidance, such as painting pebbles, creating clay sculptures or making from scratch steamed buns of various shapes and sizes.

"There's so much fun and learning in our village, from the pastures to the grasslands, where students can pull cabbage, dig celery, pick corn, and shell sunflower seeds," Qi says.

"This way, they can not only learn from outside the school but also help with farm work," she adds.

Qi has been busy these days developing short videos of her renewed summer learning tours and promoting them on the livestream platform Douyin.

"We have introduced a five-day trip and more than 300 students have come," she says, adding that she expects the number to reach 5,000 this year, about 1,600 more than last year.

Her facility has reached an agreement with Chinese tech heavyweight Alibaba Group, which will help send more students from across the nation her way.

Over the years, Qi has carried out more than 200 tours that attracted over 100,000 visitors.

The booming operation has helped many of her fellow villagers to increase their incomes, as they get to work at Qi's operations or start up homestay businesses, or have their farm produce sold to cater to the



Playtime at Qi's facility in Ping'an village, Horqin Right Wing Front Banner, Hinggan League, Inner Mongolia. Efforts to develop rural tourism have inspired many of Qi's fellow villagers. BILIGE / FOR CHINA DAILY

needs of travelers from afar.

To date, her learning-tour business has provided employment for more than 90 villagers who used to struggle to keep their heads afloat by solely living off the land.

In 2022, four women followed Qi's lead in developing rural homestays, with each household seeing an income increase of more than 20,000 yuan (\$2,753) that year.

Seeing the profitability, more households have renovated their homes to join in the cause of developing rural tourism, Qi says.

She says she takes pride in that many villagers around her now seem very motivated about the future.

Her name Xiaojing has even evolved into an epithet for enterprising young people committing themselves to rural vitalization, leading locals to prosperity.

Under her influence, more college students have returned to their rural hometowns in Hinggan League.

Her contribution to improving living conditions in her rural hometown has also won her multiple national awards, including the title of March 8 Red-Banner Holder in

2020 — one of the nation's highest honors for women for their outstanding work.

The Hinggan League initiated a plan in 2022 to cultivate more industry-leading talent like Qi. The plan has trained more than 1,200 talents and helped 38,000 farming and herding households increase their annual income by 4,900 yuan per household by the end of 2023. The cumulative operating income reached 358 million yuan.

Born into a local rural household, Qi is no stranger to poverty.

"My family couldn't even put together the tuition fee when I was admitted to college in 2004," she recalls.

"It was my fellow villagers who helped to scrape up the money," Qi says.

It has since given her a strong desire to give back to her hometown.

After graduating from the Inner Mongolia University of Science and Technology, Qi answered the country's call for college students to work in rural areas, a strategy to cultivate talent for new village development.

From 2009-13, Qi went door-to-door, inquiring about rural household needs or helping out in the farmlands, which had her better understand the villagers and rural conditions.

She was inspired to start up her business after visiting a vegetable greenhouse in Northeast China's Liaoning province.

It amazed her to see the thriving vegetables in the biting winter and how a local woman manages two to three greenhouses that produces 5,000-6,000 yuan worth of vegetables.

"It was great to see farmers make money even during the wintertime," she says.

After learning from experts, she took out a bank loan and rented two greenhouses in Ping'an village to grow strawberries in 2014.

It turned out to be an immediate success and brought her more than 80,000 yuan that year. An increasing number of visitors started to come and pick strawberries.

Qi was encouraged to reach out to a few other college graduates who had served rural areas in the region

and they jointly established a cooperative in the business of planting various vegetables and fruits, which has been steadily expanding.

Once the cooperative was on track, Qi began pondering how to carry out her original dream of bringing prosperity to her fellow villagers.

In 2017, she proposed a "chicken-for-egg" cooperation model where a farmer receives at least 20 chicks for free from the cooperative and is expected to return 25 eggs per chick once they are grown.

After that, the chickens belong to them and they can sell all the subsequent eggs back to the cooperative.

Her plan worked as it managed to pique villagers' interest and get them on board. They all returned with the eggs as agreed and the cooperative sold the eggs at a profit, creating a win-win situation.

Encouraged by this success, Qi introduced other models like chicken-for-chicken, pig-for-meat and seedling-for-fruit, all of which have effectively increased the incomes of 80 impoverished households.

Wang Xilin, who fell into poverty due to an illness in his early years,

regained hope for the future after opting into Qi's plan.

"She trusted me and gave me 50 chicks for free. I didn't have to pay for feed or vaccines," Wang says.

"After raising them, I returned five chickens and sold the remaining chickens for 120 yuan each, earning 5,400 yuan. I am truly grateful," Wang adds.

Qi says her goal has been continuously scaling up the agriculture-related business in the village and helping local villagers sell their agricultural and livestock products to larger markets at better prices.

To achieve that, Qi has established an e-commerce service station to facilitate the sales of rural produce from more than 100 standardized fruit and vegetable greenhouses jointly run by her and other local villagers.

Zhang Xiuqin no longer has to wake up at unearthly hours and rush to sell vegetables at local markets since she started to work with Qi a few years ago.

"We all trust (Qi) Xiaojing. The online orders she provides have never failed to come through and the payment for our vegetables has always arrived on time," Zhang says.

One greenhouse can increase her income by more than 5,000 yuan, she adds.

Reflecting on the development over the past decade, Qi deems it an upgrade from version 1.0 to version 4.0.

"Version 1.0 was growing crops in greenhouses to develop agricultural production; version 2.0 involved offering tourists vegetable and fruit picking while developing the catering industry; version 3.0 was an advancement to an integrated model of training, lodging and catering; version 4.0 is the current agricultural tourism complex," she says.

To date, Qi has evolved from something of an entrepreneur to a tutor who helps to train more of her fellow villagers to find the key for rural vitalization.

"I believe in the cause, which means bringing more people together to form a youth alliance and sharing resources," Qi says.

"It might be me leading them forward at the beginning, but now they are my pillar of strength and together, we forge ahead."

Contact the writer at yangfeiyue@chinadaily.com.cn

A 'bucket list' has physical and mental advantages

A "bucket list" is a personal list of goals and activities someone wants to accomplish before the end of their life. Fortunately, I've been able



Kara Schroeder
Second Thoughts

to check off quite a lot of mine, an achievement that many people I know never get the opportunity to do.

While most of us don't like to ponder our mortality, the hard fact is that it will come eventually. After the loss of several loved ones, I decided to make my bucket list so that, when I reflect on my life, I'll smile and know that I grabbed every

chance at happiness that I could.

Some of the things on my bucket list that I've achieved — hiking the Plank Road in the Sky on Mount Huashan in Shaanxi province; diving off the highest platform of 15 meters (50 feet) into the sea at Ariel's Point in Boracay, the Philippines; doing the world's highest commercial bungee jump at 233 meters off Macao Tower in the Macao Special Administrative Region; octopus fishing in the Yellow Sea off South Korea; and much more.

The top item on my bucket list, however, is much more difficult to achieve. Being adopted from South Korea to the United States in 1976, I have been searching for my birth parents for the past several years. I can't help but worry that they may not still

be living. But having this item at the top of my list urges me to keep trying and I'm planning to visit Seoul in October to continue the search.

When I've talked about my bucket list to others, some of the feedback I've received is that it seems "a bit morbid." Like, if you have a list, you're neurotically thinking about your death.

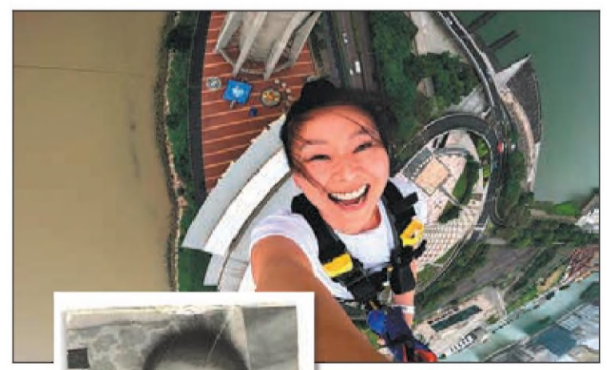
In October 2019, the American Heart Association published an article listing the emotional and physical benefits of keeping a bucket list. According to research, pre-planning trips or adventures has been linked to happiness and more positive cardiovascular health outcomes. A bucket list also prioritizes "breaks" in routine life and helps to spell out how you want to be

remembered after you pass.

As you get older, the list may change. And that's OK. Whether it includes visiting certain countries, getting in better physical shape, buying a particular item or just spending more time with loved ones, there is no wrong way to do a bucket list. Your list can include short-term goals, once-in-a-lifetime experiences or just personal goals. It can give a boost to your motivation and force you to take breaks when you might not otherwise think of doing so.

I consider my bucket list as a way to keep my hopes and dreams alive, a north star by which I can steer my life.

Contact the writer at schroeder@chinadaily.com.cn



Above: Kara Schroeder swings above the ground at the Macao Tower bungee jump. Left: A snapshot of her in Seoul, South Korea. COURTESY OF KARA SCHROEDER / CHINA DAILY