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# CHINA DAILY

GLOBAL EDITION 中国日报 WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2024



President Xi Jinping and other leaders meet on Tuesday with members of China's delegation to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. JU PENG / XINHUA

## Xi hails Olympians for Paris glory

Athletes earned respect and showed positive image of nation in the new era, president says

By CAO DESHENG  
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President Xi Jinping hailed Chinese Olympians on Tuesday for their performance and sportsmanship at the 33rd Summer Olympic Games in Paris, saying that they have shown the world the country's openness, inclusiveness and progress as well as the ambition, courage and confidence of the Chinese people.

"The motherland and the people are proud of you and applaud you," said Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, during a meeting with China's Olympic delegation to the Paris Olympics at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

China claimed 91 medals at the Paris Olympics, including 40 gold medals. It tied with the United States for the most gold medals at

the Games, marking the country's best-ever performance at an overseas Olympics.

At around 3:20 pm on Tuesday, Xi and other Chinese leaders arrived among the delegation members. He shook hands with some of them, chatted with them and had a group photo taken with the delegation.

The president emphasized the unity, tenacity and outstanding performance of the delegation at the Paris Olympics, congratulating them warmly and extending his best regards to those working in the sports sector throughout the country.

Xi noted that the exceptional performance of the Chinese sports delegation would promote Chinese sportsmanship and the Olympic spirit.

He praised the delegation for upholding sportsmanship and ethics, earning widespread respect and recognition, and showcasing a positive image of China in the new era. He said the Chinese athletes

have won gold medals in competition, ethics and demeanor.

Xi emphasized that the outstanding achievements of the Chinese sports delegation not only demonstrate the progress in China's sports development, but also reflect the accomplishments in Chinese modernization, fully demonstrating the strength of China in the new era.

He said that a strong nation leads to a strong sports sector, attributing China's success to the continuous enhancement of comprehensive national strength and the advanced technological support provided for sports training.

The fact that China has been able to establish itself as a major sports country in the world and a strong Olympic nation fundamentally lies in the continuous enhancement of comprehensive national strength, Xi said.

The modernization drive in the new era to advance the building of a strong country and national rejuvenation will undoubtedly provide better conditions for and give strong momentum to the development of China's sports industry, he added.

Xi urged the delegation members to maintain their ethical standards and sportsmanship in the upcoming Olympic cycle, emphasizing the importance of continuous improvement, talent development and high-quality preparations for future competitions.

He encouraged them to enhance their overall competitive strength and promote national fitness and youth sports, thus contributing further to the construction of a strong sports nation.

China has become one of the world's most competitive sporting nations in recent decades. It made a number of breakthroughs in various events at the Paris Olympics, including tennis, boxing and swimming.

Chinese tennis player Zheng Qinwen made history after defeating Croatia's Donna Vekic to become the first athlete from the country to win a singles gold medal in tennis.

In rhythmic gymnastics, China became the first non-European country to finish on top of the group event at the Games by taking first place just ahead of Israel and Italy.

## China's Olympic triumph: Dawn of an Asian renaissance

The Paris 2024 Olympic Games will be remembered not only for its awe-inspiring sporting feats but also for what it symbolized on the global stage — the rise of Asia, with China leading the charge. China's haul of 40 gold medals is not merely a display of athletic excellence, it is the culmination of decades of meticulous planning, discipline and unwavering dedication. This triumph transcends sports. It heralds the dawn of an Asian renaissance that is reshaping the world — economically, culturally and socially.

China's success in Paris is not an isolated achievement. It is part of a broader Asian surge that has been gaining momentum for years. The victories of athletes from China, along with those from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and China's Taiwan region, and other Asian nations, reflect a newfound confidence and capability across the continent.

But what makes China the vanguard of this Asian renaissance? The answer lies in a unique blend of visionary leadership, robust economic growth and a cultural ethos that values discipline and perseverance.

The Chinese government's science-guided and reformist leadership has driven unprecedented socioeconomic development, fueling advancements in public health and sports. Decades of strong economic growth have vastly improved nutrition, education and sports opportunities for the Chinese people, particularly the youth. The government's sub-

WORLD WATCH  
By Wilson Lee Flores

stantial investments in education, public health and sports science have created a fertile environment for nurturing athletic talent, enabling Chinese athletes to excel on the world stage.

China's deep connection to its rich cultural heritage also plays a crucial role. The ancient wisdom embedded in martial arts, acrobatics, traditional Chinese medicine and philosophy has significantly contributed to the physical and mental fortitude of Chinese athletes.

Practices such as tai chi, wushu (Chinese martial arts), acupuncture and qigong (a breathing exercise) are not merely cultural relics; they can become integral to the physical fitness, injury treatment and recovery regimen of athletes. These ancient practices enhance physical performance and provide the spiritual resilience needed in high-stakes competitions.

Confucian values — emphasizing hard work, respect, perseverance, continuous learning and humility — are instilled in the Chinese people from a young age and are vital to their success. This moral discipline was evident in Paris, where Chinese athletes not only secured victories but did so with grace and sportsmanship, earning the admiration of competitors and spectators alike.

See *Resurgence*, page 3

## POPULAR SCIENCE LIGHTS YEARS OF KNOWLEDGE, PROGRESS

Academics, experts take to TV and livestreams, publishing to deepen public awareness

By CHEN MEILING in Beijing and LIU KUN in Wuhan



In recent years, an increasing number of scientists in China have gone outside their work bubble to share their knowledge with the public.

They are frequently seen speaking at campuses and on television shows and short videos, while many of their books on popular science have become best-sellers.

Tan Xianjie, chief physician at Peking Union Medical College

Hospital's Gynecological Cancer Center in Beijing, believes the purpose of popular science is to help people avoid illness and reduce the incidence of late-stage diseases.

Consultations and surgeries make up most of the 54-year-old gynecologist's workday.

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## Video game based on classic novel goes viral

By LI MINGMEI in New York and YANG YANG in Beijing

A highly anticipated video game based on an ancient Chinese literature classic was released worldwide on Tuesday, thrilling gamers around the world.

The game, *Black Myth: Wukong*, an action role-playing game developed by Shenzhen-headquartered Game Science, was inspired by the rich tapestry of Chinese mythology and the 16th-century seminal novel *Journey to the West*, one of the four great classic novels of Chinese literature. It is infused with traditional Chinese cultural elements, offering gamers a novel experience of Chinese imagination and landscape.

In the game, players step into the shoes of the iconic Sun Wukong, also known as the Monkey King, who is likewise the leading hero in the novel, as they navigate his epic adventures westward.

Available on PS5, Steam, Epic Games Store and WeGame, *Black Myth: Wukong* is already a top sell-

er on multiple platforms, including Steam and WeGame, marking a new milestone for Chinese Triple-A games — those with high budgets and profiles produced and distributed by large, well-known publishers.

Development of the game, which is being hailed as China's first Triple-A masterpiece, was launched in 2018 and completed after six-and-a-half years of challenges.

By July, presales had surpassed 400 million yuan (\$56 million), and the physical Collector's Editions are currently sold out. In addition, Game Science's final prelaunch trailer on YouTube quickly hit 1 million views, highlighting the wide anticipation of the game's release, especially amid a 24-hour countdown.

As of 10 pm on Tuesday, *Black Myth: Wukong* had more than 15 million concurrent players on the platform Steam, surpassing *Counter-Strike 2* to top the Steam trending games chart.

IGN China, a branch of IGN, one of the leading media companies covering video games, movies, TV

shows, entertainment news, reviews and guides, rated the game with its highest score, 10 points.

More than 50 gamers on Metacritic, an international review aggregation website, gave the game a Metascore of 82 points out of 100.

One Metacritic commenter called GamesRD, who gave the game a score of 100 points, said, "With breathtaking concept art, stunning graphics and sceneries, wonderful score, and one of the most fulfilling playabilities we've seen in role-playing games, *Black Myth: Wukong* is unquestionably a Game of the Year candidate, promising a bright future for the genre's fans."

Zhinengluzhang, who has nearly 4.6 million followers on Chinese livestreaming platform Bilibili, said in a post that he gave the game 94 points out of 100 and expected its Metascore to rise soon.

What particularly impressed Chinese as well as foreign players is the design of the game scenes and characters.



People wait in line to try the *Black Myth: Wukong* video game at the booth of Chinese company Game Science during the opening day of Gamescom 2023 in Cologne, Germany, in August 2023. The game was officially released on Tuesday. YING TANG / NURPHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES

*Black Myth: Wukong* crafts a stunning dreamscape with Chinese scenery, featuring desolate mountains, ancient roads, pavilions among mountains and water, deserts and ancient temples. This vision draws inspiration from the 1986 TV series *Journey to the West* as well as film director Stephen Chow's adaptation, *A Chinese Odyssey*.

The game's production company, Game Science, traveled across

China and meticulously scanned ancient buildings and relics. It incorporated the creations and historical relics into every scene of the game.

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Online See more by scanning the code.

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## PAGE TWO

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But during his spare time he shares his medical knowledge of women's health issues with the public. He writes popular science books, answers patients' questions online, and shares his medical knowledge on TV programs.

**Healer, educator**

Uttering words such as "menstruation", "uterus" and "vagina" might make some men slightly uncomfortable in public settings, but Tan doesn't mind saying them.

He said no doctor can cure every disease, and the most skilled surgeon can only perform four or five surgeries in one day. The maximum daily number of patients a doctor can see is 100, Tan added.

"However, a good popular science book, a lecture, or a quality science video can benefit thousands of people, often in the early stages of an illness, which can prevent diseases and even save lives," said Tan.

He recently received China's top sci-tech award, the State Scientific and Technological Progress Award for his medical book *Speaking of the Palace of Life*.

The publication focuses on uterus health and provides essential health knowledge for women in a straightforward manner.

About 120,000 copies of the book have been sold over the last 14 years and have helped 300 million people, Tan said. "Many patients tell me that it is because of reading this book that they were able to detect and have their disease diagnosed early. Every time I hear this, I feel that my efforts are meaningful," he added.

Tan's mother died of endometrial cancer when he was 12 years old. The cancer can be cured with targeted therapies and timely intervention, but when Tan's mother experienced postmenopausal bleeding no one thought it was a big deal at the time. "If my family members had had some medical knowledge and taken her to hospital, my mother would not have passed away so early," he said.

The experience motivated him to become a gynecologist. Over the past 31 years, he has treated about 200,000 patients and performed about 10,000 surgeries. But he hopes women have no need to visit him, and instead stay healthy.

In August 2012, when he studied at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, as a visiting scholar, he saw the doctors communicate with patients in simple and understandable language.

After each consultation, they would give the patient a card with a website link to access related popular science articles.

He decided to give this method a try after returning to China. At that time, he was one of the first doctors in the country to try and popularize medical knowledge. In the hospital evaluation system, health education was not rated as highly as surgical skills and patient volume, as it did not contribute significantly to the professional reputation of doctors.

However, Tan was determined to continue. He believes health education is a doctor's duty and social responsibility.

Since then, he has published multiple award-winning books, given about 200 nonprofit lectures and appeared on a dozen TV programs. He has about 1.3 million followers on Sina Weibo and 480,000 on the short video platform Douyin.

One time, a woman entered his consulting room with a big smile on her face and holding a thank-you banner. Tan was confused because she was not his patient.

The woman told him she had watched his lecture on cervical cancer on TV in 2018 and decided to go to the hospital for a checkup. The results showed she was in the early stages of the disease. She had surgery and recovered.

In the next one to two years, Tan plans to focus on improving the health literacy of female teachers and grassroots doctors in the Xizang autonomous region, and Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces.

**Explaining black holes**

Gou Lijun, a research professor at the National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, has contributed to the successful detection of the rotational speed of a dozen black holes.

Over the past 10 years, he has also sparked curiosity about



From top to bottom: Tan Xianjie, gynecologist; Gou Lijun, astrophysicist; Deng Zixin, microbiologist. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

# Scientists: Transforming lives with insight

"A good popular science book, a lecture, or a quality science video can benefit thousands of people, often in the early stages of an illness, which can prevent diseases and even save lives."

**Tan Xianjie**, chief physician at Peking Union Medical College Hospital's Gynecological Cancer Center

"Like the Chinese mythical beast the *pixiu* (a lion-shaped creature with wings), black holes, with extremely huge gravity, devour everything, including light. Anything that falls into a black hole cannot escape."

**Gou Lijun**, research professor at the National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences

"The actual work of popularizing science is about using genuine emotions to captivate individuals. It is about making science more relatable to everyday life, helping people understand what is controllable and what is not controllable..."

**Deng Zixin**, academican of the Chinese Academy of Sciences

astronomy in a new generation of children.

Though describing himself as an introverted person, Gou's passionate lectures always arouse questions from his audience.

When asked one time whether a human would be sucked into a black hole he had to reply "yes".

"Like the Chinese mythical beast the *pixiu* (a lion-shaped creature with wings), black holes, with extremely huge gravity, devour everything, including light. Anything that falls into a black hole cannot escape," he said.

During more than 200 lectures, he has explained that black holes are created when a massive star undergoes a supernova explosion at the end of its life, and its core collapses. Smaller black holes can be sucked into bigger black holes, so they grow into supermassive black holes.

He was given the title "Pioneering science popularization work-

er" by the Chinese Astronomical Society, and has published about 30 articles to explain astronomical events.

An essay about why the first photo of a black hole looks vague received more than 11 million views. He has twice won China's top book prize, the Wenjin Book Award, including for his translation of *The Science of Interstellar*, a book that explains scientific knowledge in the film.

As an expert on the Science Fiction Film Advisory Board established by the China Film Administration and China Association for Science and Technology, he worked as a consultant on *Wandering Earth II*. He is also the executive editor of popular science magazine Chinese National Astronomy.

"I want to raise people's interest in astronomy, especially youth, so

that they can contribute to related research in the future," he said, adding that China only has 3,000 astronomers, compared with 30,000 in the United States.

According to a survey by the science journal *Nature*, about 90 percent of children are interested in two things: dinosaurs and the night sky. "Curiosity about the starry skies is very natural for children; we must preserve this curiosity," he said.

Although there are estimated to be more than 100 million black holes in the galaxy, scientists have detected less than 100. It may take decades or hundreds of years to figure out their mysteries, therefore, it's vital to cultivate the next generation of astronomers, Gou said.

**Seeds of knowledge**  
At the Wuhan Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Hubei province, there is a greenhouse where visitors can embrace giant pumpkins, pick peppers, and learn up close about soil-less plantations and LED dynamic cultivation.

Deng Zixin, an academican of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, believes for people to acquire agricultural knowledge they must see and touch objects.

At an event in June to mark the third anniversary of the opening of his agricultural science popularization studio at the Wuhan academy, Deng, whose focus is microbiology and molecular genetics, gave a lecture to students and visitors on the double helix structure of DNA.

After that, they visited an exhibition garden to learn about new varieties of corn, cucumbers and tomatoes. "By allowing the public to take these seeds for planting, whether on balconies or in their homes, awareness of environmental protection becomes increasingly prominent," he said.

The same month, primary and middle school students were invited to visit the National Germplasm Repository for Aquatic Vegetables, the only aquatic vegetable genebank in China and the largest in the world. The children saw 500 species of lotus and were amazed by how leaves sprouted from lotus seeds thousands of years old.

In 2022, the studio, together with about 30 media outlets, organized a livestream of the Yangtze finless porpoise Fujian giving birth, which attracted about 220 million viewers.

Another livestream about the harm caused by an invasion of Canada goldenrod, a perennial plant that is native to North America, attracted about 4.3 million viewers.

The studio has about 100 members who conduct more than 100 activities including academic forums, popular science lectures, online live broadcasts, interactive interviews and consultations. The total audience coverage online and offline has so far exceeded 100 million people.

Experts from the studio give classes at campuses to inspire students' interest in agriculture, and teach farmers ways to improve planting efficiency. They also visit communities to tell residents how to select good vegetables.

Deng, who founded the studio, said, "I am the son of a farmer, well aware of farmers' thirst for agricultural technology knowledge, and willing to contribute a little to the vitalization of the countryside."

He wants to educate the public about food security, environmental protection, as well as rural development.

A better understanding of science boosts the public's acceptance of new things and helps in the application of innovative technologies, he said. The main reason as to why a large genetically modified organisms industry cannot be developed is the general public's lack of awareness about GMOs, and a misunderstanding that genetic engineering could destroy humanity.

"The actual work of popularizing science is about using genuine emotions to captivate individuals," he said.

"It is about making science more relatable to everyday life, helping people understand what is controllable and what is not controllable, while also considering social ethics and norms," the academican explained.

Deng also aims to change stereotypes about agriculture being a study major disliked by parents, and an industry where it is difficult to make big money.

"Actually, agriculture has various opportunities. It can create enormous social value and achieve sustainability," he said.

He also runs a rural vitalization studio in Fangxian county, Hubei province, his hometown, which has matched companies and researchers with projects in villages. This has boosted the application of scientific results and local development.

In Fangxian, for example, he helped promote high-quality konjac seeds and develop more than 10 products to make Fangxian konjac a national geographical indication product.

As the country attaches more importance to the popularization of science, Deng said he will continue his quest with dedication and passion.

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## TOP NEWS

## The 'red' side of the moon

A supermoon, also known as Sturgeon Moon, rises over the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France, on Monday. It is the first of 2024's four consecutive supermoons.

CHRISTIAN HARTMANN / REUTERS



## Global South solidarity urged

40th anniversary of the NPC's affiliation to Inter-Parliamentary Union commemorated

By XU WEI and CUI JIA

President Xi Jinping has underlined solidarity and cooperation with developing nations as "the unshakable bedrock of China's foreign policy", and called for joint efforts to build a world of peaceful development, mutually beneficial cooperation and shared prosperity.

Addressing parliamentary leaders from various countries on Tuesday at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Xi stressed China's readiness to work with all nations, particularly the developing countries, to serve as a stabilizing force for peace, a pillar for open development, a contributor to global governance and a promoter of civilizational exchanges.

The parliamentary leaders gathered in Beijing to attend events commemorating the 40th anniversary of the affiliation of the National People's Congress — China's top legislature — to the Inter-Parliamentary

Union, a global organization of parliaments dedicated to promoting democratic governance, institutions and values.

The leaders included Tanzanian National Assembly Speaker Tulia Ackson, Namibian National Assembly Speaker Peter Katjavivi and Surinamese National Assembly Speaker Marinus Bee.

"Although we come from different continents separated by vast oceans, we are all members of the Global South. Despite the differences in our national conditions and circumstances, we are like-minded brothers and close partners," Xi said.

Legislative bodies are responsible for and capable of helping to promote equal and trusting interstate relations, expand mutually beneficial development cooperation, and drive just and reasonable global governance, he said.

Xi emphasized China's unwavering commitment to high-level opening-up and its determination

to inject fresh momentum into global economic development. He expressed China's willingness for deeper exchanges and cooperation with the legislative bodies of other nations, particularly in exploring modernization paths suited to their own national contexts.

The president pledged China's continued support for the NPC in strengthening exchanges and cooperation with the IPU, including steps to enhance the exchange of legislative and governance experiences and build up capacities to fulfill responsibilities on the basis of mutual respect for each other's chosen development paths and systems of governance.

The parliamentary leaders expressed their deep appreciation for China's consistent efforts to promote unity, trust, friendship and cooperation among the world's parliaments.

They acknowledged China's significant contributions to the IPU's development and the realization of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Adrien Duval, speaker of the Mauritius National Assembly, said

the events have provided a crucial platform for discussions on modernizing the respective parliaments for the good of the nations and their people.

"We each have our own respective models of parliament, of democracy. But one thing we have in common is that we can really drive facilitation of access to people, for them to really come to understand and come to take part in governance and in the democratic process," Duval said.

Ahmed Nihan Hussain Manik, bureau chief of the Parliament of the Maldives, said China has been playing a huge role as a member of the IPU for the last 40 years and in the global economy and global affairs.

"It's important too for the world to learn more about China's political system," he said.

He added that China is a "great example" of how a socialist country is "able to assist the rest of the world without disturbing others' peace of mind".

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## Experts sure of upcoming FOCAC summit's success

By CHEN YINGQUN  
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The upcoming Forum on China-Africa Cooperation summit will offer hope to a world that is in turmoil and contribute to fostering peace and prosperity in the African continent, African politicians and experts said.

They anticipate that through the FOCAC framework, China and Africa will persist in mutually supporting each other's efforts to enhance economic development, peace and security.

Khamis Omar, Tanzania's ambassador to China, said that he has witnessed "very high enthusiasm" in both Africa and China during preparations for the 2024 FOCAC summit, which will be held in Beijing in early September.

"I have also witnessed an extremely high degree of cooperation and understanding," he said. "I have no doubt whatsoever that the summit will be a complete success and will live up to expectations."

He said that China and Africa have fundamentally agreed on areas of cooperation that have shaped the previous FOCAC programs. Hence there should be continuity on what both sides have started and there may be some adjustments needed to accommodate the latest dynamics.

"The cooperation should broadly be anchored around our common quest for economic modernization and transformation, development, peace and security, and cultural exchange," he said.

Both sides already have taken various initiatives that will need new impetus for implementation. The action plan drawn from the Beijing Summit will not deviate far from these areas, he added.

Nasser Bouchiba, president of the Africa-China Cooperation Association for Development in Morocco, said the convening of FOCAC comes as the world faces increasing turbulence and challenges, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the Israel-Palestine conflict, the food crisis in certain countries and climate change.

"FOCAC brings hope, with China offering projects that promote peace and development," he said.

Over the past few years, Bouchiba has been collaborating with Chinese enterprises to export China's independently-developed new technologies to developing countries. For example, he has introduced China's seawater desalination technology to his home country of Morocco, where drinking water resources are extremely scarce.

"This technology, characterized

by its short implementation cycle and high cost-effectiveness, meets the increasingly severe drinking water demands of Morocco's coastal cities," he said.

Furthermore, he began an experimental desert farming project in 2020, bringing cutting-edge soil enhancement technologies from Northwest China to the southeast part of Morocco. The positive outcomes are making people in arid areas optimistic about sustainable agriculture, which could reduce poverty and promote food security and stability, he added.

"There is significant potential for cooperation between China and Africa in the fields of technology and sustainable development. Unlike Western countries, China is very willing to transfer technology and know-how to Africa, which will greatly contribute to the economic development of Africa and the improvement of people's livelihoods," he said.

He hoped that the FOCAC would better serve as a platform to promote China-Africa cooperation, focusing on the interest of people and discussing development-oriented topics. Moreover, successful cooperation cases should also be promoted to other parts of Africa to help with their development, he added.

Elhizuelen Michael Mitchell Omoruyi, executive director of the Center for Nigerian Studies at the Institute of African Studies in Zhejiang Normal University, said that China acknowledges the importance of global cooperation, and plays an important role in enhancing African security by partnering with African countries, which is reflected in bilateral and multilateral Africa-China relations. The FOCAC platform and action plans have concentrated exclusively on Chinese-African cooperation and engagement in peace and security.

"All of these not only help mitigate the challenges posed by insecurity on the continent, but are also a clear indication that China is willing to support African countries in maintaining regional security and combating terrorism, and maritime piracy," he said.

He added that China has always been a willing and reliable partner in helping African countries address their pressing socioeconomic challenges. China's cooperation with Africa in tech innovations has made progress in recent years, with China proactively implementing tech innovation action plans under the Belt and Road Initiative and sharing sci-tech feats and experiences with numerous African nations.

## Game: Players most impressed by scenery, characters

From page 1

For instance, in the trailer, the battle between Wukong and the dragon Kang Jinlong features a distant view of an ancient temple modeled after Dule Temple in Tianjin. The temple is one of the country's few remaining structures from the Liao Dynasty (916-1125).

The various minor demons, demon kings, gods and Buddhas that appear in the game all feature Chinese aesthetics, forming a contemporary illustrated compendium of creatures from *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*, a major source of Chinese mythology.

Additionally, the game features traditional Chinese instruments such as the *guzheng*, bowls, wooden clappers and gongs. Much of the music is composed using Chinese-style chord structures.

As the game combines ancient dialogue and a worldview that

blends Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, players are immersed in an environment in which simply strolling leisurely or sitting alone by a cold river offers its own unique pleasure.

Feng Ji, Game Science founder and CEO, said in a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency that "the script and artistic concepts always take the lead, seamlessly incorporating Chinese stories and classical cultural elements into the game."

He said that a game's true value isn't defined by its budget or visuals, but by the genuine enjoyment it offers players.

Feng emphasized that the game was crafted entirely by a Chinese team, with the aim of bringing Chinese narratives to the global gaming stage.

When choosing to develop a game based on mythology, the developers do not consider whether a theme is "popular or outdated",

Feng said, but reflect instead on whether the subject excites them.

"Traditional Eastern myths, infused with magical elements, aren't sufficient," he said.

Feng added that his team aimed to go beyond the myths and also learned from other excellent games.

"*The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* video game involves a team completing a daunting task, similar to *Journey to the West*," Feng said. "Although the narrative structures and worldviews differ, the core essence is comparable."

Citing the growth of other Chinese industries in the international market, including the film industry, Feng said, "Eight years ago, we were confident that the stand-alone game market in China would not only exist but would also become significant." Stand-alone games are those that are not dependent on being online in order to play.

"Back in 2016, the stand-alone game market in the United States was about \$10 billion; Japan's was \$5 billion; and China's was less than \$1 billion," he said. "We believe that within 10 to 15 years, China's stand-alone game market share will reach or even exceed that of Japan."

The highest-ranked AAA titles on Metacritic are still from Western and Japanese companies, such as FromSoftware's *Elden Ring* and Nintendo's *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*, both of which have been given a score of 96, compared with the current 82 for *Black Myth: Wukong*.

The game won the Best Visuals Award at Gamescom 2023, the world's largest annual trade fair for video games, which was held in Germany.

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## Weight watchers



Penguin keeper Jess Ray weighs Humboldt penguins during Monday's annual weigh-in photocall at the London Zoo in the United Kingdom. HENRY NICHOLLS / AFP

sporting event; it was a grand stage where Asia, led by a progressive and continuously reformist China, showcased its emergence as a global force in every sense. The record number of gold medals won by China is not just a statistic — it is a symbol of the Chinese and Asian renaissance, a testament to the region's growing positive influence in sports, culture and beyond.

As we look to the future, it is clear that Asia's rise will continue, shaping global sports and cultural arenas in ways we are only beginning to appreciate. The 2024 Paris

Olympics offered just a glimpse of the potential that lies ahead.

Congratulations to China and all Asian athletes for your inspiring Olympic success. Your achievements have not only redefined the limits of human potential but have also ushered in a new era for Asia on the world stage.

The author is a multi-awarded columnist for *Philippine Star* and *Abante*, economics and politics analyst, college teacher, and moderator of the *Pandesaal Forum*. The views do not necessarily reflect those of *China Daily*.

## Resurgence: New era for Asia as global force on world stage

From page 1

A poignant example of this Confucian ethic was when Chinese pole vaulter Huang Bokai went out of his way to console the Philippines' shell-shocked EJ Obiena after a near-podium finish. This gesture embodied the true spirit of the Olympics, where fierce competition is balanced by mutual respect and camaraderie.

China's epoch-making triumphs

in traditionally Western-dominated sports, such as swimming and tennis, underscore its growing prowess across a wide range of disciplines. Nineteen-year-old Pan Zhanle's world record in the 100m freestyle and Zheng Qinwen's historic win in women's tennis are just a few examples of China's expanding capabilities in sports once considered beyond its reach.

However, China's stunning suc-

cess extends beyond athletic achievements; it signals a broader shift in global power dynamics. For centuries, Asia was often viewed through the Western lens as a region of economic potential but lagging in other areas. Today, that narrative is being rewritten.

Asia's resurgence in sports mirrors its broader renaissance in economic, cultural and social development, with China as the prime mover and dynamic cata-

lyst. These sports victories symbolize a continent reclaiming its rightful place in a new multipolar world, not just as a participant but as a leader.

As impressive as China's record-breaking medal haul in Paris was, it likely marks just the beginning of what this noble nation and its outstanding athletes are capable of achieving in the coming years.

The 2024 Paris Olympics was more than just a successful global

## CHINA

## Slice like this

A teacher explains how to properly cut a fish during a culinary class in Supu township in Qianxi, Guizhou province, on Tuesday. Supu has collaborated with Qianxi's Shuixi Secondary Vocational School this summer to provide free culinary lessons to farmers to help them lead better lives. ZHOU XUNCHAO / FOR CHINA DAILY



## Air-defense missile scientist dies at 90

By ZHAO LEI  
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Shen Zhongfang, one of China's foremost researchers in air-defense missile technology, died in Beijing on Saturday at the age of 90.

Born in August 1934 in Shanghai, Shen embarked on his journey in aerospace engineering in 1953 when he was admitted to the Beijing Institute of Aeronautics, now known as Beihang University, to study aircraft design. After graduating in 1958, he was assigned to the Second Branch of the Ministry of National Defense's Fifth Academy, which is now the Second Academy of China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp.



Shen Zhongfang

Shen spent his entire career at the Second Academy, rising through the ranks to become its deputy president and a top-ranking project manager before retiring in 2010. In 1992, he was appointed project manager for China's third-generation air-defense missile system, later named the HQ-9. Under his leadership, the HQ-9 became one of the world's top air-defense missiles, incorporating many world-class technologies.

In addition to the HQ-9, Shen also managed the development of two types of short-range ballistic missiles that were successfully exported to foreign countries.

Throughout his career, Shen received numerous national honors and awards in recognition of his significant contributions to China's defense capabilities. Last year he was named one of the "Figures Moving China", a prestigious title celebrating those who have had a profound impact on the nation.

## Internet companies fight against corruption

Tech giants underscore zero-tolerance approach to fraudulent activities

By JIANG CHENGLONG  
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China's leading internet companies, including Douyin, Tencent and Meituan, have ramped up efforts to combat internal corruption this year, underscoring a zero-tolerance policy toward fraudulent and corrupt activities.

Last week, Douyin, one of the largest video-sharing platforms in China, released its anti-fraud report for the first half of the year, revealing significant actions taken against internal corruption. The report said commercial bribery and duty encroachment were the most prevalent forms of corruption within the company.

According to the report, Douyin investigated 125 cases of fraudulent activities during the first six months of the year. Those investigations led to the dismissal of 88 employees for violating company integrity regulations, with 17 who were suspected of crimes handed over to judicial authorities.

The report detailed eight cases that were referred to law enforcement.

In one instance, a former Douyin

employee surnamed Zhou exploited his position to provide undue assistance to external influencers in exchange for kickbacks. Zhou was dismissed and handed over to public security authorities for suspected criminal activities.

In another case, a former product development and engineering employee, surnamed Cao, colluded with external personnel to seek personal gains through his position. Cao was also dismissed and referred to authorities.

Embezzlement has been another focus of anti-corruption efforts across China's tech industry.

In February, Tencent released its 2023 anti-fraud report, which disclosed that over 70 cases of rule violations were addressed last year. As a result, more than 120 employees were dismissed, and nearly 20 people suspected of crimes were handed over to public security authorities.

Tencent's report detailed 17 typical cases, including 11 involving the embezzlement of company assets. In one case, two employees, Gao Qiyuan and Wang Qi, were convicted of embezzlement and sentenced to four years and three

and a half years in prison, respectively.

Corruption cases often involve employees working in upstream supply chains and downstream sales channels of the internet firms. In February, Meituan, another leading Chinese tech firm, announced that it assisted authorities in investigating and prosecuting 93 individuals, both internal and external, last year for suspected criminal activities. The company released details of nine cases, seven of which involved procurement processes for fresh food, snacks, warehouse renovations and other areas.

The companies said they are committed to strengthening their anti-fraud measures. Meituan announced plans to focus on comprehensive anti-fraud governance in key areas such as procurement and major business collaborations this year. Tencent said in its annual report that it aims to prevent, detect and combat all forms of fraudulent activities by establishing robust anti-fraud systems and comprehensive risk management frameworks. Douyin also emphasized its commitment to continuously improving its systems and intensifying efforts to combat fraudulent activities, including commercial bribery and embezzlement.



## Panda pals

Young people from Taiwan participating in a cross-strait giant panda education camp pose for a photo at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding in Chengdu, Sichuan province, on Tuesday. The camp commenced on Monday and will end on Sunday. LIU ZHONGJUN / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

## Homegrown tunneling machine sets record

By LUO WANGSHU  
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China has reached an engineering milestone with its domestically developed shield machine successfully completing the excavation of an underwater high-speed rail tunnel at a depth of 106 meters below the seabed in the Pearl River Estuary, according to China Railway's 14th Bureau Group, which is overseeing the project.

On Monday, the Shenjiang 1 shield machine completed its 3,590-meter excavation mission for the Pearl River Estuary Tunnel.

The tunnel, on a crucial 13.69-kilometer segment of the Shenzhen-Jiangmen Railway in Guangdong province, was built using a combination of mining and shield tunneling techniques to navigate complex geological conditions.

The shield machine, with a cutting diameter of 13.42 meters, progressed 3.59 kilometers from Dongguan to Guangzhou's Nansha district. It traversed 13 different geological strata and five complex geological formations, facing unprecedented conditions.

The tunnel's lowest point, 106 meters beneath the estuary, subjected the Shenjiang 1 to extreme water and soil pressures. The machine can withstand water and soil pressures of up to 10.6 bar, which is equivalent to a pressure of 10.6 kilograms on an area

the size of a fingernail.

"This level of pressure and depth is unprecedented in China, with no existing engineering experience or design standards to guide the project," said Li Bing, an engineer from the China Railway 14th Bureau Group.

Chen Xingfei, another senior engineer with the group, said the Shenjiang 1 began its journey in December 2021, completing the excavation in 969 days. The project included a particularly challenging 490-meter fault zone with varying rock layers and high water pressures. The widest fault, measuring 32.5 meters across, added to the complexity and risk of the operation.

The Shenjiang 1 was designed for the task, incorporating advanced technologies such as high-precision circulation systems, automated pressure sealing, and sophisticated ventilation and cooling systems.

Once completed, the Shenzhen-Jiangmen Railway will stretch 116 km and operate at speeds of up to 250 kilometers per hour, linking the Guangdong cities of Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Dongguan, Zhongshan and Jiangmen. The line will significantly enhance regional connectivity, allowing travel between Shenzhen's Qianhai Free Trade Zone and Guangzhou's Nansha Free Trade Zone in just 30 minutes and boosting economic development in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.



Workers celebrate as a domestically developed shield machine successfully finishes excavating an underwater high-speed rail tunnel 106 meters below the seabed. SONG MINGJUN / FOR CHINA DAILY

## Two more former soccer officials sent to prison

By YANG ZEKUN  
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Courts in Hubei province sentenced two former soccer officials to prison terms on Tuesday for crimes including accepting bribes.

Huang Song, a former head of the competition department of the Chinese Football Association, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment and fined 600,000 yuan (\$84,100) for accepting bribes.

The Songzi People's Court also ordered the confiscation of his illicit gains and the transfer of the assets to the State treasury.

Huang came under investigation in March last year, and his case was transferred to the procuratorial authorities for prosecution in September. He pleaded guilty at his public trial in March.

In another case, the Tongcheng County People's Court sentenced Gu Jianming, a former chairman of the Chengdu Football Association in Sichuan province and a former member of the Chinese Football Association executive committee, to imprisonment for corruption, accepting bribes and offering bribes. He also pleaded

guilty to the charges.

The court sentenced Gu to three years and six months for corruption, with a fine of 200,000 yuan; two years and six months for accepting bribes, with a fine of 100,000 yuan; and two years and six months for offering bribes as an entity, with a fine of 100,000 yuan. In combining Gu's penalties, the court decided to impose a total sentence of six years and a fine of 400,000 yuan.

According to China's Criminal Law, if an entity offers bribes or kickbacks to a State functionary for illicit benefits, it shall be fined, and the people directly in charge of it and other people held directly responsible shall receive fixed-term imprisonment.

The court also ordered the confiscation of Gu's illicit gains.

On Monday, two other courts in Hubei sentenced two other former soccer officials — former Chinese Football Association vice-chairman Li Yuyi and former Wuhan Football Sport Management Center director Fu Xiang — to 11 years in prison each as part of an ongoing crackdown on corruption in the sport.

## Breakthrough made in ultrabright X-rays

By YAN DONGJIE  
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China has achieved a significant scientific milestone with the successful storage of high-energy electron beams in the High Energy Photon Source storage ring. The breakthrough, achieved on Sunday, has further advanced efforts to improve the brightness of X-rays.

The High Energy Photon Source,

a major national scientific infrastructure project, is under construction at Huairou Science City in Beijing and is expected to be fully operational by the end of next year.

Once completed, it will be China's first high-energy light source and one of the brightest fourth-generation synchrotron radiation facilities in the world, emitting light 1 trillion times brighter than the sun, according to the Institute of High Energy

Physics, which is part of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The ultrabright light produced by the photon source will address urgent needs for ultrabright, high-energy X-rays in cutting-edge research across various fields, including aerospace, energy, environmental and life sciences, the institute said.

According to Pan Weimin, the project director, the commissioning of the storage ring commenced on

July 23 following the fabrication, installation and joint conditioning of all its equipment.

"During the initial beam commissioning phase, the storage ring comprises 1,776 magnets, over 2,500 power supply devices, 578 electron beam position monitors, 1,360 meters of vacuum chambers, and more than 100,000 control signals," Pan said. "Any minor hardware issue, such as an obstruction or misalignment of equipment, can impact the electron beam's trajectory."

Pan also highlighted the unique challenges posed by the photon

source, including two slicing magnets for injection and extraction, with a vertical physical aperture of only 2 to 3 millimeters. "This undoubtedly presents a significant challenge for beam commissioning," he said.

The team of scientists has been working continuously on the commissioning process, operating 24 hours a day with only brief interruptions for hardware fixes. On Sunday, they achieved an electron beam with the current of 12 milliamperes, a hundredfold increase from the levels reached just a week earlier.

Jiao Yi, deputy head of the High Energy Photon Source accelerator division, said commissioning will continue over the next few months, aiming for higher beam currents with sufficiently long beam lifetimes to support vacuum conditioning and beam line commissioning.

Pan said the ultimate goal is to reach 200mA.



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## CHINA

A meteor travels across the sky tinged by an aurora at the Dahaidao scenic area in Hami, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, on Aug 12. XUE FEI / FOR CHINA DAILY

Annual festival introduces the prefecture's rich cultural heritage to more people

# STARGAZING EVENT PROMOTES DARK SKY TOURISM IN HAMI

By CHEN LIANG in Hami, Xinjiang  
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This summer, Xinjiang is ablaze with tourism fervor, attracting visitors from across the country to explore its diverse landscapes and vibrant cultural heritage.

While the majority of visitors have gravitated toward Altay, Ili, or Kashgar, the three most sought-after destinations in Xinjiang, other cities and prefectures in the Uygur autonomous region have been striving to capture a larger portion of the flourishing market.

Among these locales, Hami in the eastern part of Xinjiang stands out as a destination that has opted for an innovative approach to enhance its reputation among tourists. In the past three years, the prefecture with an area of more than 137,000 square kilometers — slightly smaller than Shandong province — has used stargazing as a way to promote its rich tourism resources.

While the Perseids meteor shower peaked during the second weekend of August in the past three years, the government of Hami prefecture cooperated with China Image Group and the China StarVision Alliance, a platform for nearly 1,000 Chinese astronomy photographers and businesses related to dark sky tourism, to organize an annual festival, titled "Sweet Whispers to the Galaxy".

## Stargazing at relic sites

In 2022 and last year, a group of CSVA astronomy photographers and livestreaming engineers visited spectacular landforms hidden in the Gobi Desert, lakes on the grassland or alpine meadows on the eastern Tianshan Mountains. Taking photos or livestreaming the Perseids meteors raining down the night sky against spectacular and diverse backdrops, they promoted a few of Hami's natural attractions to millions of people.

"Hami is already considered as one of the country's top destinations for dark sky tourism," said Wang Junfeng, an experienced astronomy photographer, online influencer and one of the co-founders of CSVA. Since 2020, Wang has paid regular visits to Hami to take photos at its various landmarks and is also one of the organizers of the festival.

Jiang Chenming, another CSVA co-founder and an experienced astronomy photographer who was invited to attend the festival, told China Daily: "The annual Perseids meteor shower is like a New Year celebration for the country's stargazing enthusiasts. This year I am sure that I will meet some of our CSVA members stargazing at some scenic areas in Hami."

He did. At the Dahaidao scenic area, a site hidden in the Gobi Desert and known for extensive mesa landforms, he met two groups of CSVA members who visited Hami to witness the peak of the meteor shower.

Different from the previous two years, this year's event brought dozens of astronomy photographers and reporters to a few of the prefecture's little-known historical sites.

Among them include the Baiyanghe Han (206 BC-220) and Tang (618-907) Ancient City Ruin, the Taku Karez site and the Liaodun Fire Beacon Tower, three relic sites under national first-class protection.

"We expect to make more people know that besides diverse natural attractions, Hami also boasts a rich and well-protected cultural and historical heritage," said Liu Xuehua, an official of the Publicity Department of the Hami Prefecture Committee of the Communist Party of China. "They are valuable evidence of the country's long history of governance and jurisdiction in the region."

## Welcoming the meteor shower

The festival kicked off at a stretch of the Gobi Desert, dozens of kilometers away from any human settlements and without mobile signals, in Yizhou district of Hami city on Aug 9.

"Hami has vast wild areas without any light pollu-



The Liaodun Fire Beacon Tower under the starry night in Hami on Aug 11. ZHOU BO / FOR CHINA DAILY



The Perseids meteor shower seen at Dahaidao during the wee hours of Aug 13. QIU BI / FOR CHINA DAILY

tion. In addition to its arid weather, it's a perfect place for us to welcome the meteor shower here," Wang said. That night the photographers recorded dozens of shooting stars and many worked till dawn.

On the evening of Aug 10, Zhou Bo, an astronomy photographer and also co-founder of CSVA, arrived at the Taku Karez site in Erpu town, Yizhou district. He joined hands with three CSVA engineers to livestream the event online from the ancient karez well.

The karez well, part of an irrigation system dating back over 2,000 years, consists of a vertical shaft connected to an underground channel. The channel, connected with a network of underground channels, is supplied with water from the melted ice and snow in the Tianshan Mountains.

The underground structure prevents water from evaporating. Water from the well, flowing into ditches and then pouring into a big pond at the historical site, has nurtured many poplar and jujube trees and turned the area into a lush park.

The live broadcast, hosted by knowledgeable Zhou, allowed millions of viewers to revel in the beauty of Hami's starry sky. "Through such live events, we hope to draw more attention to Hami's dark night tourism resources and let more people personally experience

its charm," Zhou said. "Hami not only has sweet melons but also incredibly beautiful starry skies and rich cultural heritage waiting for people to explore and discover."

On Aug 11, the group moved their campsite to a meadow near the Liaodun Fire Beacon Tower.

In the rugged terrain of the Sandaoling mining area in Hami city lies the ancient fire beacon tower. Constructed with packed earth and wooden beams, the tower reaches a height of about 6 meters, with a base measuring 7.2 meters north to south and 6.4 meters east to west. Divided into two levels, the upper level features lookout holes, offering a vantage point over the vast and barren plain.

In ancient times, the beacon towers, scattered throughout the region of Hami, formed a crucial part of the military defense system. They played a pivotal role in safeguarding the Silk Road, ensuring its smooth operation and serving as a testament to the governance and jurisdiction of Xinjiang by the central government.

Dating back to the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and later refurbished during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the Liaodun tower stands as a testament to the significant position held by Hami along the ancient Silk Road,



Zhou Bo (left) hosts a livestreaming session of the Perseids meteor shower at a hotel in Dahaidao on Aug 12. WEI GUONENG / FOR CHINA DAILY



An engineer from the China StarVision Alliance prepares a livestreaming session at the Taku Karez site. WEI GUONENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

said Liu, the official. The fire beacon tower complex in Hami comprises a total of 106 towers, scattered across the prefecture's Hami city, Barkol Kazak autonomous county and Yiwu county.

As night fell, photographers adjusted their equipment to capture the moments when the starry sky enveloped the ancient structure.

Even though the sky became a little cloudy in the wee hours, the photographers could still take time-lapse photos of clouds gathering and rolling above the tower.

Photos and video clips of the historical site under the night sky were published by local media outlets and began to appear on Chinese social media platforms.

"The fire beacon tower exudes a strong sense of the times, embodying the vicissitudes of culture and history. When we photograph the galaxy and stars, we view this vicissitude from a cosmic perspective," Jiang said. "Here we can experience a strong sense of transcending time and space."

## Perfect ending

On Aug 12, the group moved to Dahaidao. In the evening, while livestreaming the Perseid meteor shower, the photographers suddenly realized there were not only shooting stars falling across the night sky, but also a rare pinkish aurora dancing in the northern sky.

The astronomic wonder mesmerized the photographers and their excitement was livestreamed across multiple online platforms, attracting over 5 million viewers to collectively marvel at the beauty and mystery of the night sky in Hami.

"Near midnight on Aug 13, a geomagnetic storm occurred, granting us the rare opportunity to witness the aurora. With the aurora's enchanting display, the meteor shower became even more breathtaking," Wang said. "It's truly a perfect ending for this year's festival."

According to data from the culture, sports and tourism bureau of Hami, the prefecture received more than 8.46 million tourists in the first half of this year, a 9.6 percent increase compared to the same period of last year.

## WORLD

## Widodo reshuffles cabinet weeks before leaving office

JAKARTA— Indonesian President Joko Widodo reshuffled his cabinet on Monday just weeks before he steps down in an effort to ease the transition to his successor, Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto, his office said.

Widodo will hand over the reins in October, departing with sky-high approval ratings over an economic track record that delivered consistent growth coming out of the pandemic.

Widodo swore in new ministers for law and human rights, energy and mineral resources, and investment on Monday morning, as well as the new head of the food and drug agency and chief of the newly created National Nutrition Agency.

Former investment minister Bahliil Lahadalia, a close aide and vocal supporter of Widodo, was appointed energy and mineral resources minister as the Indonesian leader focuses on a drive to boost nickel output.

Bahliil said he would prioritize working on incentives to promote efforts to reactivate idle energy wells and reverse the decline in Indonesia's crude oil output.

Rosan Roeslani, who was head of Prabowo's presidential campaign, replaced Bahliil as the country's new investment minister, while Supratman Andi Agtas, a member of Prabowo's Gerindra party, became minister of law and human rights.

Widodo also named Dadan Hindayana, a professor at Bogor Agricultural University, to head the National Nutrition Agency and oversee Prabowo's key campaign program — a multibillion-dollar



Indonesian President Joko Widodo (right) shakes hands with newly appointed Minister of Law and Human Rights Supratman Andi Agtas during the swearing-in ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Jakarta on Monday. YASUYOSHI CHIBA / AFP

pledge to give schoolchildren free meals.

Dadan, a member of Prabowo's campaign team, was quoted telling local media the meals program would start on Jan 2.

## Smooth transition

The changes "are necessary to facilitate a smooth, orderly and effective government transition", said Ari Dwipayana, a presidential palace official, in a statement.

Widodo, raised in a bamboo shack in a riverside slum on Indonesia's biggest island of Java, hailed last week his government's record on the economy, development and infrastructure building in his final State of the Nation address.

The Indonesian leader has served the maximum two terms for a decade in power after beating Prabowo twice, in 2014 and 2019 elections.

Prabowo, 72, has been seeking to boost his profile overseas, with

trips to Russia, Qatar, Japan and China since his victory in February. On Monday, he was in Australia.

Prabowo won with Widodo's eldest son, Gibran Rakabuming Raka, running as his vice-presidential candidate.

The defense chief soared in polls with the support of Widodo, as well as pledging to carry on popular economic policies.

AGENCIES—XINHUA

## Factory deal sign of China's US solar reach

Trina Solar US has loan to build photovoltaic plant in a small city outside of Dallas, Texas

By MAY ZHOU in Houston  
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Trina Solar US has secured \$235 million in financing for its planned 1.35 million-square-foot solar plant in Wilmer, a small city about 15 miles south of downtown Dallas in Texas.

The company, a subsidiary of Trina Solar, which is based in China's Jiangsu province, will use the loan to construct and operate a solar photovoltaic (PV) manufacturing plant.

Standard Chartered, the London bank that arranged the deal, announced the "green" loan in a news release on Aug 7.

Trina Solar leased the space at Tradepoint 45 West to set up a factory to manufacture and assemble high-power solar panels and PV modules, a company statement said.

The plant is expected to be operating by year-end and provide 1,500 local jobs when at full capacity.

"We were thrilled to bring together this group of leaders and community members to celebrate our commitment to the City of Wilmer and the clean energy industry," Steven Zhu, president of Trina Solar North America, said in the company's first announcement of the factory.

"This facility represents a significant investment in American manufacturing that will bolster the US solar market in addition to positioning Texas as a leader in the transition to a sustainable future," he said.

Jerry Wu, CFO at Trina Solar, said in a statement that the project is "the first non-recourse syndicated project financing in the United States raised by a PV module manufacturer and renewable enterprise".

The factory capacity is 5 gigawatts, the company said.

A recent analysis by Reuters concluded that Chinese companies will have at least 20 gigawatts of annual solar panel-production capacity on American soil within the next year. Chinese companies account for about one-fifth of the solar factories announced since the United States adopted new climate subsidies under Biden administration's Inflation Reduction Act program.

There are a few major solar panel projects underway by Chinese companies. Illuminate USA, a joint venture between Chinese solar equipment maker Longi and US company Invenery, began

manufacturing at a 5-gigawatt plant in Pataskala, Ohio, in February. The project is expected to employ 1,000 workers at full capacity.

This facility represents a significant investment in American manufacturing that will bolster the US solar market in addition to positioning Texas as a leader in the transition to a sustainable future."

Steven Zhu, president of Trina Solar North America

China-based solar cell and module manufacturer JA Solar will establish a 2-gigawatt production facility in Phoenix, Arizona. Expected to be operational by year-end, the company said the \$60 million investment will create 600 new jobs.

Another Chinese company, Runergy, is building a 5-gigawatt solar module plant in Huntsville, Alabama, which is creating 800 jobs.

Some experts say that China's presence in solar panel production on US soil will help the domestic solar manufacturing industry mature while creating jobs.

"They have a lot more experience building factories and setting up supply chains," David Feldman, a solar market researcher with the US Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory, told Reuters.

Zhu told The Wall Street Journal earlier this year that the US market needs Chinese solar manufacturers for their technological know-how, ability to bring suppliers from China, capital, and appetite for investment.

China is a leading producer of solar energy. The International Energy Agency (IEA) reported that in 2023, 407-446 gigawatts direct current of photovoltaics was installed globally, and China represented 60 percent of 2023 global total installs.

While the United States was the second-largest market in terms of cumulative and annual installations, it lags with 26.3 gigawatts installed in 2023, according to the IEA.

## Boeing's year keeps getting worse

By MINLU ZHANG in New York  
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The trouble seems to never end for Boeing.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on Tuesday ordered inspections of Boeing 787 aircraft following a midair dive by a LATAM Airlines plane in March in which more than 50 of its 263 passengers were injured.

The FAA had received a report saying that the dive happened when the captain's seat moved, causing the autopilot to disconnect. The plane rapidly descended until the first officer took control.

Since then, the FAA has received

four additional reports of similar issues, the most recent in June, according to numerous media reports.

The FAA's inspection will affect 158 airplanes registered in the United States and 737 airplanes globally, the agency said in the statement, according to Reuters. It requires airlines to inspect the captain's and first officer's seats on 787-8, 787-9 and 787-10 models within 30 days to check for missing or cracked rocker switch caps or damaged switch covers.

On March 11, the Chilean multinational airline LATAM's flight LA800 experienced a "sudden midair drop" about an hour before landing during its journey from Sydney to Santiago,

Chile, with a stop in Auckland, New Zealand.

During the plane's sudden descent, passengers were hurt as some were knocked into the cabin ceiling. A passenger said a pilot had told him he had lost control of the plane when "my gauges just kind of went blank on me," CNN reported in March.

"The plane, unannounced, just dropped. I mean it dropped unlike anything I've ever experienced on any kind of minor turbulence, and people were thrown out of their seats, hit the top of the roof of the plane, thrown down the aisles," passenger Brian Jokat told the BBC in March.

"My neighbor who was in the seat two over from me, there was a gap

in between us, as soon as I woke, I looked, and he was on the ceiling, and I thought I was dreaming," he said.

Boeing's manufacturing reputation took another hit on Tuesday when it halted the launch of its 777X aircraft after the company found problems between the engine and the plane's wings during a test flight.

In the first week of 2024, a Boeing 737 MAX 9 passenger jet lost a rear door plug in midflight, leading to rapid decompression and forcing an emergency landing.

In February, a United 737 MAX 8 reported its rudder pedals stuck during landing.

In March, a Boeing 777-200 lost a tire shortly after takeoff, and there was a fuel leak on a United 777-300.

In April, the FAA investigated Boeing after the company admitted that it may have missed some inspections of its 787 Dreamliner aircraft.

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

Vol. 38 - No.1402

## Dubai aims to strengthen role as gateway for Chinese investment in Middle East

By CUI HAIPEI

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Dubai aspires to serve as a gateway for Chinese companies to broaden their presence in the Middle East, a senior official has said, hoping for joint efforts between China and the United Arab Emirates to capitalize on the progress over the past 40 years, fostering an even more fruitful future.

The UAE holds a crucial position as a strategic partner in advancing the Belt and Road Initiative. From the onset of the BRI, the country has functioned as a vital trade portal connecting the Middle East with the global community, Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah, president and CEO of Dubai Chambers, said in an interview with China Daily.

He made the remarks before departing for Beijing to attend the Dubai Business Forum-China on Wednesday, when more than 50 Dubai-based companies and 350 Chinese ones will participate.

Calling China "a priority market", Lootah said the event aims to

showcase the diverse investment opportunities in the emirate; attract Chinese multinational companies, unicorns and fast-growing startups to Dubai; and support Chinese investors and businesses to establish partnerships with their counterparts in the Middle East.

"It will explore economic synergies, new frontiers in innovation and technology, as well as investment opportunities in high-potential sectors, such as green tech, e-commerce, artificial intelligence, healthcare and renewable energy," he said.

Last year, Dubai remained the world's top destination for greenfield foreign direct investment projects for the third consecutive year.

The Middle East hub is home to modern airports, seaports, logistics facilities and a well-developed transportation network with numerous free zones that provide businesses with world-class infrastructure and access to incentives, Lootah said.

"Dubai's strategic geographical location, combined with its world-class hard and soft infrastructure, numerous free zones and its ability to attract diverse high-quality talent,

"We admire China's deep-rooted commitment to innovation and are excited about the vast trade and investment opportunities that can be leveraged to empower tech startups."

Mohammad Ali Rashed Lootah,  
president and CEO of Dubai Chambers

creates a dynamic ecosystem that is highly conducive for business growth," he said.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and the UAE. Their mutually beneficial cooperation has set a model for partnerships and different civilizations coexisting in harmony.

Last year, amid a challenging global economic environment, the volume of China-UAE trade nearly reached the milestone of \$100 billion, with more than 8,000 Chinese



companies having invested and started business in the UAE, said Zhang Yiming, China's ambassador to the UAE, in May.

The state visit to China by UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan in late May has paved the way for further strengthening the China-UAE ties, as the two countries' joint statement vows a bilateral trade volume of \$200 billion by 2030.

The Gulf country is also home to nearly 400,000 Chinese, Lootah said, adding that more than 5,100 Chinese companies had been regis-

tered by the end of the first quarter with Dubai Chamber of Commerce.

China is also the largest trading partner of Dubai with non-oil bilateral trade worth \$67.8 billion last year, a 4 percent year-on-year rise and a more than 80 percent growth compared with a decade ago, according to Dubai Chambers.

Last month, the 20th Communist Party of China Central Committee held its third plenum, focusing on advancing China's modernization, outlining comprehensive reforms and proposing more than 300 measures. Lootah said this sent a strong signal to the world that China will continue to deepen its reform and opening-up.

## Remarkable success

"We see China as a global economic powerhouse and believe that its remarkable success story is set to continue," he said. "This is one of the reasons of why we have three international offices in China alone, in Shenzhen, Shanghai and Hong Kong, which is the highest in any other region around the world."

As China has emerged as one of

the world's largest digital economies and a leading global center for advanced technologies, Lootah emphasized Dubai's eagerness to enhance cooperation in AI, blockchain and the internet of things.

"We admire China's deep-rooted commitment to innovation and are excited about the vast trade and investment opportunities that can be leveraged to empower tech startups," he said, adding that the UAE's digital economy is expected to reach a value of more than \$140 billion by 2031.

Last year, Dubai unveiled the Dubai Economic Agenda, known as D33, to double the size of its economy to \$8.7 trillion over the next decade. Lootah said this strategy and the BRI can be aligned to explore innovative, green and prosperous future, pointing out that the UAE's entry into BRICS is attracting more Chinese investors to Dubai.

"For us, China is a market of great strategic importance. ... We will serve as a catalyst for collaboration and mutual prosperity," he said.

Pan Jie in Beijing contributed to this story.

# WORLD

## Biden praises Harris in final party speech

### Democratic convention commences amid pro-Palestinian demonstrations

CHICAGO — US President Joe Biden cemented the Democratic Party's elevation of Kamala Harris to lead the fight for the White House against Republican Donald Trump during a convention speech on Monday, as thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators marched near the venue to express their dissatisfaction with the Biden administration's handling of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Biden took center stage on the opening night of the Democratic National Convention, delivering a farewell speech to the party he has served for half a century. He has five months left in office.

Taking multiple swipes at Trump, Biden promised to be the "best volunteer" Harris and Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, her vice-presidential running mate, had ever seen.

Biden's address in Chicago kicked off a four-day event fueled by enthusiasm for Harris and relief that Biden abandoned his own reelection bid and endorsed her to replace him.

Biden urged Democrats to unite behind a candidate who, if triumphant on Nov 5, would become the first woman, who is also black and South Asian, to be elected US president.

Harris is riding a historic whirlwind into the convention: her campaign has broken fundraising records, packed arenas with supporters, and turned opinion polls in some battleground states in Democrats' favor.

She joined Biden onstage for a hug after he finished his address on Monday.

Harris' campaign said on Monday that she is proposing to increase the corporate tax rate to 28 percent from 21 percent if she wins the election against Trump.

Harris campaign spokesman James Singer said the move would be part of "a fiscally responsible way to put money back in the pockets of working people and ensure billionaires and big corporations pay their fair share."

When Trump was president, he slashed the corporate tax rate to 21 percent from 35 percent and implemented other tax breaks that are set to expire next year. Trump has vowed to make the cuts permanent.

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a nonpartisan advocacy group, said on Monday that Harris' proposal to raise the corporate income tax rate to 28 percent would reduce the US deficit by \$1 trillion over a decade.

As Democrats gathered for the convention, Trump took to social media to criticize his opponent.

"Kamala Harris can't answer how she'd pay for any of her new liberal spending schemes that will bankrupt our country!" Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

### Tight race

In the key swing states that could decide the results of the election, the race between the two remains tight.

According to the latest poll data compiled by RealClearPolitics, Harris leads Trump by 1.0 percentage points in Wisconsin and by 2.0 percentage points in Michigan. In Pennsylvania, Harris trails by 0.2 percentage points.

While the Democrats were gathering for their convention, thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters marched in a neighborhood park to voice their discontent and anger toward the Biden administration's Israel policy, as the Palestinian death toll from Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip has surpassed 40,000 since the outbreak of the current conflict on Oct 7.

After hours of peaceful demonstrations, dozens of protesters broke through part of the perimeter security fence, drawing riot police to the site, a Reuters witness said.

The convention's security team confirmed that protesters breached a portion of the fencing on the outer perimeter near the convention arena but said law enforcement personnel acted quickly and there was no threat to attendees.

Reuters witnesses saw four people detained and handcuffed. Chicago police confirmed at a news conference that arrests were made but did not say how many.

The chanting intensified ahead of the fence breach, as protesters reached a neighborhood park on Chicago's West Side and paused to amplify their calls for a cease-fire.

AGENCIES—XINHUA

## Auspicious offerings



A girl offers coconuts to the ocean to celebrate Nerali Purnima, or coconut festival, in Mumbai, on Monday. This festival is considered auspicious to the Hindus, who work as fishermen in India's western coastal districts. They commemorate this day by honoring the sea god. RFIQ MAQBOL / AP

## Malaysia's nonaligned stance hailed

By PRIME SARMIENTO in Hong Kong  
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Malaysia is emerging as a champion of a multipolar global order, opting to remain nonaligned as it contends with the changing geopolitical situation, analysts said.

While the United States remains one of Malaysia's biggest investors, Southeast Asia's third-biggest economy also "understands the limits and dangers of relying too heavily on the West".

Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who has been in power for nearly two years, has criticized the US and its allies over the prolonged conflict in the Gaza Strip, denounced "China-phobia", and rejected external interference in settling the disputes over the South China Sea. In July, Anwar sent an application to Russia, the current chair of BRICS, to join the group of emerging economies.

Awang Azman Awang Pawi, associate professor at the Academy of Malay Studies in the University of Malaya, said the government seeks to position Malaysia as a neutral and nonaligned state, to help it navigate the tensions between the US and

China. He said this approach also supports Malaysia's economic interests, as the country can be marketed as a politically stable and neutral location to potential investors.

Malaysia has long been a proponent of nonalignment, having been a member of the Non-Aligned Movement since 1970. It established diplomatic relations with China in 1974 at the height of the Cold War.

Awang Azman said Anwar's stance is a continuation of Malaysia's nonaligned foreign policy but this time with "stronger leanings toward China, reflecting a shift from previous governments that maintained closer ties with Western powers".

Julia Roknifard, assistant professor at the School of Politics, History and International Relations, University of Nottingham Malaysia, said Malaysia sees the rise of a multipolar world as an opportunity, not a threat.

She said Malaysia's interest in joining BRICS signifies the country's refusal to be dragged into the "negative geopolitical adventurism of the West that tilts increasingly belligerent against countries such as Russia and China".

Roknifard said Malaysia also understands where its economic

interests lie, as China has been its biggest trading partner for the last 15 years.

"Malaysia understands the limits and dangers of relying too heavily on the West."

Roknifard said the US pressure against Malaysia's stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict and its refusal to adhere to US sanctions against Iran and Russia is further pushing Malaysia to diversify its foreign policy. On the other hand, Malaysia has a positive view of China's mediation efforts in the Middle East, she noted.

Anwar's foreign policy also resonates with the local populace. According to The State of Southeast Asia survey published in April by the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, more than 80 percent of Malaysians polled ranked the Israel-Palestine conflict as their top geopolitical concern and nearly 60 percent of the respondents supported their government's stance.

More than 66 percent of Malaysian respondents perceived China as the most influential economic power in Southeast Asia and over 75 percent considered China as the preferred alignment choice.

## Briefly

### UNITED KINGDOM Diplomat resigns over arms sales to Israel

A British diplomat based in Ireland resigned over arms sales to Israel with his email circulated online saying the UK's foreign office "may be complicit in war crimes", it emerged on Monday. Images of his resignation email sent to colleagues were posted online, with Mark Smith, who was based in the British embassy in Dublin, writing there was "no justification for the UK's continued arms sales to Israel". The UK has issued 42 military licenses to Israel between Oct 7, the date of Hamas' attack on Israel, and the end of May, according to government data.

### PAKISTAN 215 killed in monsoon rains: Disaster authority

At least 215 were killed in rain-triggered accidents and floods in Pakistan so far in the monsoon season, including 20 deaths in the last 24 hours, the National Disaster Management Authority, or NDMA, reported on Monday. A total of 43 people were reported to have suffered injuries in the last 24 hours, while the number of injured in the monsoon season starting from July went up to 405, the NDMA said in a report. All through the season, the dead included 108 children and 32 women, according to the report.

### BELGIUM Talks to form coalition government extended

Bart De Wever, leader of the New Flemish Alliance party, met with Belgium's King Philippe on Monday to review his progress in forming a new federal government, with their next meeting set for Thursday evening, according to a statement from the Royal Palace. De Wever was tasked by the king on July 10 to establish a coalition government. His efforts are focused on bringing together five key political parties. De Wever's mandate was initially extended until Aug 19, following a report he presented to King Philippe in late July.

XINHUA—AGENCIES

## 'Complex issues' remain over truce plan: Blinken

TEL AVIV/GAZA — US Secretary of State Antony Blinken arrived in Egypt on Tuesday for talks on the Gaza cease-fire as he admitted that "complex issues" and "hard decisions" remained over a cease-fire plan.

It was his ninth urgent mission to the Middle East since the conflict in Gaza began more than 10 months ago. He did not say whether the "bridging proposal" addressed concerns cited by Hamas.

Even if the militant group accepts the proposal, negotiators will spend the coming days working on "clear understandings on implementing the agreement", Blinken said. He

said there are still "complex issues" requiring "hard decisions by the leaders", without offering specifics.

The top US diplomat flew to El Alamein to speak to Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on Tuesday. He will then head to meet Qatar's Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, in Doha, where the cease-fire talks took place last week.

At the Doha negotiations, the United States presented proposals to bridge the gaps between Israel and Hamas and seal the May 31 cease-fire blueprint laid out by US President Joe Biden, who has faced growing domestic criticism over the conflict.

Blinken said on Monday that Israel has accepted the US proposal and that he would speak to Egypt and Qatar to gauge the reaction of Hamas.

He played down a public rejection by Hamas of the modifications in the latest proposal and said Israel was ready to send a delegation for new talks later this week.

A series of reports, however, say Israel has set new conditions, including insisting on control of the Gaza border with Egypt that Israel seized from Hamas.

Blinken's visit came as the Israeli military said it had recovered the bodies of six hostages.


The military said its forces recovered the bodies in an overnight operation in southern Gaza, without saying when or how the six died.

In Gaza, the health ministry and a Palestinian news site said on Monday that a journalist was killed by Israeli fire the previous day in the south of the territory.

Palestinian Daily News, a website for which Ibrahim Muharab worked, announced his death "following shelling from the Israeli occupation on him and a group of journalists".

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

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## BUSINESS

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# Nation to back financial institutions

For stronger ties with Africa, coming summit to focus on more biz fields

By ZHONG NAN  
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China will encourage and support financial institutions from both its market and Africa to strengthen exchanges and innovate financial cooperation models in the years ahead, said government officials on Tuesday.

Speaking ahead of the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, which will be held in Beijing from Sept 4 to 6, Shen Xiang, director of the Department of Western Asian and African Affairs at the Ministry of Commerce, said Chinese government will focus on diversifying financial products and supporting cooperation between China and Africa in areas like green development, the digital economy and the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Dismissing certain countries' "debt trap" narrative in Africa, Shen said that based on a study recently released by the International Monetary Fund, commercial bonds and multilateral debt accounted for 66 percent of Africa's total external debt in 2023, while China-Africa bilateral debt made up only 11 percent.

Addressing a news conference in Beijing, Shen said this means that China has never been the main creditor of Africa's debt. Some parties have used the issue of African debt to make baseless accusations. Their objective is merely to tarnish and disrupt China-Africa cooperation.

"China has actively explored new models of financial cooperation with Africa, aiming to support the sustainable economic development of African countries," he said.

Tang Wenhong, assistant minister of commerce, said China will continue to prioritize expanding imports from Africa, leveraging its vast market to provide opportunities for African businesses.

The total trade value between China and Africa grew by 7.1 percent year-on-year to 1.98 trillion yuan (\$277.25 billion) in 2023, statistics from China's General Administration of Customs showed.

Last year, China's trade with nearly half of African countries saw double-digit growth, demonstrating the robust vitality of China-Africa trade.

This momentum has continued in the first seven months of this



Exhibitors promote coffee products during an expo in Nairobi, Kenya earlier this year. LI YAHUI / XINHUA

year, with bilateral trade value rising 5.5 percent year-on-year to 1.19 trillion yuan, Customs data showed.

To further diversify its overseas sales channels, Keiper (Changshu) Seating Mechanisms Co, a Changzhou, Jiangsu province-based supplier of automotive seats, exported 222,000 auto seats and related parts to South Africa in the first half.

South Africa has focused more on vehicle assembly rather than the production of every component. Importing parts like seats allows South African manufacturers to assemble vehicles locally while leveraging the cost advantages of imported components, said Han Yanwen, a manager at the company's sales unit.

"China has a well-established

manufacturing industry with economies of scale that allow for the production of auto parts at a lower cost compared to many other countries," said Han. "This cost-effectiveness makes it attractive for South Africa to import these components rather than produce them domestically."

Jiangsu province's trade with Africa totaled 111.34 billion yuan during the January-July period, up 27.5 percent year-on-year, data from Nanjing Customs showed.

Li Wentao, director of the Institute of African Studies, which is part of the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations in Beijing, said that many African countries seek to diversify their economies beyond natural resources by developing all the three key sectors of manu-

facturing, agriculture and services. China's expertise in these areas helps African nations to diversify their economic drivers.

By the end of 2023, China's non-financial direct investment stock in Africa exceeded \$40 billion, making it one of the largest sources of foreign investment on the continent. Over the past three years, Chinese companies have created more than 1.1 million jobs locally in Africa, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The economic and trade cooperation zones in Africa they have invested in cover sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and logistics, attracting over 1,000 companies. These zones have made significant contributions to local tax revenue, export growth and foreign exchange earnings.

# Rolls-Royce committed to China investment

By ZHOU LANXU  
and LIU ZIZHENG

British power and propulsion solutions provider Rolls-Royce remains committed to investing in China, as the country has a promising aviation market and plays a vital role in its supply chain, the company's top executive in China said.

"We have suppliers across many different locations in China. China has been, and is, an important part of our supply chain ... They supply to the engines that are manufactured for the global market," Julian MacCormac, regional director of Rolls-Royce Greater China, told China Daily in an exclusive interview recently.

MacCormac, also chair emeritus of the British Chamber of Commerce in China, said Rolls-Royce has one wholly owned manufacturing facility and a number of joint ventures across the country. These are not only involved in the manufacturing of parts, but also include the assembly of diesel engines, as well as maintenance, repair and overhaul.

MacCormac said Rolls-Royce continues to look at the capability in China because some of its best-performing suppliers that are located here are able to produce to its exacting standards and are competitive at the same time.

He said Rolls-Royce sees great growth potential in China's aviation market as it is recovering well from the COVID-19 pandemic, which once brought serious challenges to the sector.

In the first half of this year, China transported 350 million passengers by air domestically, growing 23.5 percent year-on-year. This was 9 percent above the pre-pandemic level in 2019, according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China.

Besides, aviation is closely linked to the improved standards of living and GDP. As the Chinese economy continues to expand, its aviation market will grow accordingly, he said.

China's GDP expanded by 5 percent year-on-year in the first half of the year, in line with its annual growth target.

Against such a backdrop, Rolls-Royce has carried out further investment plans to make sure its capacity meets surging demand.

"We have to invest in this region so that we're able to get close to our customers ... and also then that we can provide the services and the support that our customers need, to service that growing installed fleet in China," MacCormac said.

Rolls-Royce has invested with Air China in a partnership in Beijing. A maintenance, repair and overhaul facility was jointly established by the two companies in 2022 and will be put into operation by 2026.

MacCormac said the company is investing in skills and talent to ensure that it has the right people and capability for the project to service and maintain the engines.

"When it is at full capacity, there will be 250 engines per year maintained at that facility, servicing operators in China and beyond. And that's a really exciting program for us. It's the biggest investment that we've had in the Chinese mainland," he said.

If the country wants to further deepen opening-up and attract more foreign investors, it should ensure greater clarity and transparency in terms of what to expect and predictability for business, MacCormac said.

"What companies are really looking for is a level of predictability. It's clear that there are significant opportunities as China continues to grow, but what is really important is that companies feel confident that they are part of that future growth story," he said.

According to a resolution adopted at the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in July, China will further reform the institutions and mechanisms for promoting foreign investment, ensuring national treatment for foreign enterprises in terms of access to factors of production, license application and standard setting.

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# Report: Luckin Coffee planning massive overseas expansion

By WANG ZHUOQIONG  
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Beijing-based Luckin Coffee, China's largest coffee brand by store number, is planning a massive expansion in the fourth quarter of this year and the first quarter of 2025, to fuel its next phase of growth amid intense competition in the domestic market, according to a media report.

Latepost, a unit of Caijing Magazine, reported that Luckin is planning to expand overseas with focus on Southeast Asia and the United States. The company was not available for comment.

Luckin runs over 20,000 stores in China, with its operations covering both online and offline channels.

There are 38 directly run Luckin stores in Singapore, with the first one having opened in April 2023. Unlike in China, Luckin does not prioritize its low-price approach in Singapore.

The company views the Singapore market as a testing ground for its overseas operations and business



Pedestrians walk past a Luckin Coffee shop in Yantai, Shandong province. TANG KE / FOR CHINA DAILY

model development. Latepost reported that over the next three to five years, the coffee chain aims to expand its operations in neighboring regions, with Singapore serving as the headquarters for its opera-

tions in Southeast Asia.

In the first half of this year, Luckin started discussions with BJ Food, the franchiser of Starbucks in Malaysia, to form a joint venture for entry into the Malaysian market.

"Chinese coffee and tea brands are expanding overseas, and the international brands are focusing on penetrating lower-tier cities in China to find their own growth stories," said Jason Yu, general manager of Kantar Worldpanel China.

Chinese coffee and tea brands are seeking to offer high-value products at affordable prices, aiming to reach a broader consumer base without resorting to the heavy subsidies seen in the domestic market, Yu said.

To win over local consumers abroad, however, optimizing supply chains, ensuring product supply and establishing trustworthy brands are essential tasks, he said.

A strong supply chain has helped Luckin to cut costs. Since 2019, the company has built two roasteries with another one under construction.

In June, Luckin announced plans to buy about 120,000 metric tons of coffee beans from Brazil from 2024 to 2025. Brazil is currently one of the most cost-effective coffee bean

producing regions in the world. In 2022, Luckin signed a three-year agreement to buy about 45,000 tons of coffee beans from Brazil.

In the domestic market, Luckin has sought growth by expanding into tea-based beverages, rolling out new products like the light jasmine tea, a runaway hit that sold 11 million cups in its first week.

The move is aimed to attract tea-drinking consumers during afternoons that are seen to have significant growth potential for coffee shops.

Chinese tea brands Chagee and Heytea have opened pop-up stores in Paris during the 2024 Olympic Games. In March, Chagee launched its first drive-through store in Malaysia. Heytea began global expansion in 2018 and now has nearly 30 stores abroad.

As of June, ChaPanda had eight stores in South Korea, Thailand and Australia. Tianlala has set its sights on Indonesia and aims to open 300 stores. Mixue Bingcheng, a beverage chain, operates more than 4,000 stores overseas.

# Near decade record set for nuclear plant approvals

By LIU YUKUN  
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Five nuclear power projects encompassing 11 units were approved for construction during a State Council executive meeting on Monday.

It marks the highest number of approved nuclear units in a single year since 2015, a development rate that experts predict will significantly boost related manufacturing sectors.

A nuclear power unit is a generation unit composed of a reactor, its supporting turbine generator set, and systems and facilities required to maintain full and safe operations.

The five projects are Jiangsu Xuwei nuclear power heating plant operated by China National Nuclear Power Co Ltd encompassing three units; Shandong Zhao-yuan, Guangdong Lufeng and Zhejiang San'ao nuclear power projects managed by China General Nuclear Power Group with six units; and Guangxi Bailong first

phase nuclear power project with two units totaling 40 billion yuan (\$5.6 billion) in investment operated by State Power Investment Corp Ltd.

Among these, the Jiangsu Xuwei project is the world's first to combine high-temperature gas-cooled reactors with pressurized water reactors. It features a "nuclear reactor — steam turbine generator set — heating system" collaborative model, primarily for industrial heating which is also used to generate electricity.

The executive meeting at the State Council also emphasized the need to continuously enhance nuclear safety technology and risk management, and strengthen safety oversight across all areas to support the industry's long-term vitality.

China's nuclear power construction is accelerating. From 2019 to 2023, the number of approved nuclear units was six, four, five, 10 and 10, respectively, indicating a positive trend in safe and orderly development. Experts said this

pace keeps China ahead in terms of approved and under-construction nuclear power capacity. The growth in nuclear power will further drive demand for equipment such as pressure vessels, nuclear valves and special motors, significantly boosting relevant manufacturing sectors.

The China Nuclear Energy Association said nuclear power generation reached 433.4 billion kilowatt-hours last year, making China the second-largest generator, which accounted for 4.86 percent of the country's total power generation.

This resulted in an equivalent reduction of about 340 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually.

As of end-2023, China had 26 nuclear power units under construction, totaling 30.3 million kilowatts, tops worldwide. Operational units reached 55 in number and 57 million kW in installed capacity.

Zhang Tingke, vice-president of the association, predicts that by

2035, nuclear power's share in China's energy mix will reach around 10 percent.

Lin Boqiang, head of the China Institute for Studies in Energy Policy at Xiamen University, said that nuclear power, with its high energy density, stability and low carbon emissions, is highly advantageous for China's green goals.

He said: "In recent years, China's independent innovation in the nuclear power industry has significantly improved with a leap from second-generation to domestically developed third-generation nuclear power technology. Meanwhile, progress in advanced nuclear projects such as high-temperature gas-cooled reactors has been substantial. Additionally, China's nuclear power industry chain is increasingly complete, with a well-established supply chain for raw materials, equipment, auxiliary equipment and instrumentation, meeting the sector's sustainable development needs."

# BUSINESS

## County in Zhejiang charts green path for heavy trucks

By LI JIAYING  
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Anji county in Zhejiang province is making strides in converting heavy trucks from diesel to electric power as part of its green efforts in the transportation sector.

To support this transition, Anji has established a comprehensive network of centralized charging and battery-swapping stations, along with smaller stations in rural areas. This integrated system offers a "three-in-one" solution for charging, energy replenishment and battery swapping, meeting the needs of over 2,000 heavy trucks across the county.

Anshan station in Anji, the first of its kind in the nation, combines photovoltaic power generation, energy storage, charging and battery swapping under one roof. Dubbed a "supercharging hub", the facility boasts 4.2 megawatts of solar panels and 8,388 kilowatts of energy storage capacity.

"The solar panels work in tandem with the energy storage devices on-site, creating a self-

sustaining 'battery bank'. When there's an abundance of sunlight, the energy is stored for later use.

When electricity is needed, the batteries discharge it back into the system," said Lu Jixing, an employee at State Grid Anji County Power Supply Co, the station's operator.

With the ability to charge 76 vehicles per hour, it now features 30 fast-charging stations, 400 slow-charging ones and two battery-swapping stations, supporting the charging and parking needs of up to 400 heavy trucks, said the power operator.

"Previously, driving a diesel truck cost us around 600 yuan (\$84) per day. Now, with electric vehicles, daily expenses have dropped to just over 100 yuan, saving us a significant amount on fuel costs," said Xu Yongzhong, a driver of a new energy heavy truck.

In its first year, the station is expected to generate 4.4 million kilowatt-hours of electricity, reducing carbon emissions by 4,020 metric tons and saving 3.15 million yuan in energy costs, Lu said.



An employee works at an air conditioner production line in Jiujiang, Jiangxi province.  
ZHANG HAIYAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

## Home appliances from China a hit overseas

Domestic makers demonstrate agility, adaptability in meeting global demand

By WANG KEJU  
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Chinese home appliances are garnering significant eyeballs globally because of their increased focus on user-centric innovation and advanced technology, analysts said.

These days, upgraded versions of Chinese robotic vacuum cleaners come equipped with precise mapping technology and mopping functionalities, and these are making daily cleaning routines a breeze for overseas users.

Similarly, air purifiers integrated with various sensors are not only quieter and more energy-efficient but also offer remote control features for one-touch formaldehyde removal and fresh air circulation.

Customs data show that China's home appliance exports grew for 17 consecutive months as of July.

In the first seven months, the cumulative export value of domestically manufactured home appliances was 409 billion yuan (\$57 billion), up 18.1 percent year-on-year, data released by the General Administration of Customs showed. The rate of growth has outpaced the overall export growth by 11.4 percentage points.

"China's home appliance industry has developed an edge because of fierce competition over decades from a super-sized domestic market," said Zhang Jianping, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation.

With a diverse range of offerings that cater to various consumer

China's home appliance industry has developed an edge because of fierce competition over decades from a super-sized domestic market."

Zhang Jianping, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation

needs, Chinese home appliance manufacturers have demonstrated agility and adaptability in meeting the demands of international markets, Zhang added.

Traditional large appliances have exhibited robust growth rates, with exports of air conditioners, refrigerators and washing machines increasing by 21.4 percent, 25.6 percent and 22.8 percent year-on-year, respectively, according to official data.

While traditional appliances have long been industry stalwarts, the spotlight has increasingly turned toward smart home appliances that offer enhanced connectivity, automation and intelligence.

In a notable trend, smart electric fans have captured the hearts of consumers in the African market.

One such electric fan, produced by Shenzhen Ani Technology Co, caters to cooling, lighting and

charging needs, and has become a sensation in over 30 countries across Africa.

Zhao Xiping, the company's general manager, said the multifunctional electric fan has not only resonated with consumers for its versatility, but has also garnered an impressive 70 percent repeat purchase rate.

Chinese home appliance brands are intensifying their presence and market reach in regions across South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, as they strategically position themselves to tap into burgeoning demand in these emerging markets, said Xu Hongcai, deputy director of the China Association of Policy Science's Economic Policy Committee.

With sustained demand coming from these regions, Chinese home appliance brands are forging new paths for growth and expansion, Xu added.

However, the Chinese home appliance sector is contending with fierce competition from emerging markets in Southeast Asia and India, which leverage lower labor costs to challenge the dominance of Chinese products in the market, analysts said.

As businesses navigate the impact of emerging markets on their industries, the imperative to invest in research and development and bolster autonomous innovation capabilities is becoming increasingly apparent, Xu said.

Despite the lower labor costs in the aforementioned regions, there still exists a significant gap between these markets and China in terms of industrial efficiency, labor productivity and quality control. Consequently, China's competitive edge in the home appliance sector remains pronounced, he added.

## 'Mutually beneficial development' achievable

By ZHUANG QIANGHE  
and PANG BO

As Asia, the Americas and Europe have numerous outstanding enterprises and vast markets, cooperation among them can bring immense business opportunities, said a Chinese business council leader.

Speaking in Beijing on Monday, Quan Shunji, president of the China Asia Economic Development Association, said gathering entrepreneurs and politicians from the three continents to explore cooperation models can "achieve mutually beneficial development".

Quan said the First Asia-America-Europe Business Cooperation and Development Forum, to be held Nov 2-3 in Bali, Indonesia, will group government officials, former political leaders, business representatives as well as top experts and scholars, to promote exchanges among enterprises.

China has always been an important promoter of international cooperation and multilateralism, said Quan, a co-chairman of the forum's Organizing Committee, during a news briefing.

In his speech, Djauhari Oratman-gun, Indonesian ambassador to

China, said the forum will help strengthen cooperation among enterprises from various countries, achieving mutual benefits and win-win results.

He said Indonesia is willing to bolster high-level exchanges with China, deepen cooperation in economic and cultural fields, and elevate the comprehensive strategic partnership and the building of a human community of a shared future between the two countries to new levels.

Former Chinese ambassador to the United Nations Shen Guofang said that in recent years, China has actively participated in global governance, advocated multilateralism, and promoted the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, contributing both Chinese wisdom and solutions to global challenges.

Sun Yingjie, vice-president of the China Asia Economic Development Association and secretary-general of the forum's Organizing Committee, said with the themes of "Cross-Continental Cooperation" and "In-depth Development of Asia-America-Europe Business Cooperation", the forum will gather over 500 senior delegates.

These include government offi-

cial, former political leaders, delegates of business councils, representatives from Fortune Global 500 companies and renowned enterprises from Asia, the Americas and Europe, Sun said.

Sun added that the forum will be held in a hybrid format, with sub-forums covering such topics as biomedicine and medical care integration, the Global Maritime Fulcrum and the Belt and Road Initiative, new energy sectors and mineral resources.

She said that as the world is an interconnected whole, entrepreneurs attending the forum will have opportunities to enter new markets, access valuable resources and technical support, optimize resource allocation, and drive product and service innovation.

In her speech, Jiang Dan, initiator of the Beijing Yaoyang Public Welfare Foundation and co-chair of the forum's Organizing Committee, said enterprises are not only important drivers of economic development, but also bear the honorable mission of social welfare and promoting social harmony.

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## Take a look at your underwear, is it from Shantou?

By LI XIAOYUN and  
LI WENFANG  
in Shantou, Guangdong

As a major production base of undergarments in China, Shantou in Guangdong province is seeking a future supported by high-tech businesses with a comprehensive industrial chain.

As a global lingerie production hub — which cooperates with many of the world's top brands — the coastal city is home to more than 10,000 textile and clothing companies, covering a complete industrial chain from spinning, weaving, dyeing and production to sales.

According to Shantou government, local large-scale companies in the sector achieved an output of 111.8 billion yuan (\$15.4 billion) in 2023, making it the undisputed pillar sector in the city.

The story was not quite the same before 2021, when such businesses in Shantou still relied on purchasing nylon from provinces like Fujian and Zhejiang.

Since then, there has been an increase in investments to this end. In 2023, a total of 157 new projects, with a total investment of 35 billion yuan, were launched or started operations, contributing to an 18-fold increase in nylon production capacity.

Chen Ruipeng, deputy general manager of a local fiber company, said his company was among the investor group, and had launched two nylon production lines since last July.

"This is a real shift in the industry," said Yu Shaofen, secretary-general of the Shantou Textiles and Clothing Industry Association.

"This shift was seen in the industry's recent production of nearly 30,000 running outfits for the Shantou Marathon in December, with the entire process — spinning, design, production and packaging — completed within 25 days."

Shantou's nylon production is expected to reach 310,000 metric tons this year from 17,000 tons in 2022. However, capacity still falls short of the local production demand of 1.3 million tons, Yu said.

To bridge the gap, the city is cooperating with Dananhai Petrochemical Industrial Park in Jieyang, Guangdong, to enhance key material production capacity.

Additionally, local companies are ramping up efforts in research and development to produce better fabrics.

Such efforts have borne fruit, as a provincial-level lab in Shantou focusing on high-end materials developed a functional dyeing agent that improves the feel and quality of fabrics.

"This new agent makes fabrics look smoother, feel softer, more skin-friendly, and more durable," said Tan Lilin, head of the lab.

Shantou's Dingtaifeng Industrial Co has also taken a step forward in textile innovation with its new water-resistant fabric. Acting like a miniature drainage system, the fabric's mesh structure can quickly whisk away sweat or water to the outward-facing side, keeping the wearer dry and comfortable.

"The price of clothing made from this kind of fabric can be increased by about 30 percent," said Chen Junjian, head of the company's fabric department.

Shantou is building a 2,090-mu (139 hectare) International Textile and Clothing City, which will house businesses across the entire value chain, including design, R&D, production, marketing and logistics.

So far, the number of companies interested in settling in the complex's fabric sector has doubled the number of available shop spaces, with 35 percent of these companies being from outside Shantou.

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## SME exports remain on steady track in July

By QIU QUANLIN in Shenzhen, Guangdong  
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Exports by China's small and medium-sized enterprises remained in positive territory in July, with the purchasing managers' index for the sector above a threshold separating expansion from contraction, according to an industry report.

The PMI for SMEs (B2B) Merchandise Export — an index tracked by B2B cross-border trade payment platform XTransfer — reached 50.4, reflecting the resilience of these mid-sized firms.

According to the report, clothing, furniture and home appliances — "old three items" — formed the major export items of SMEs.

Categories related to emerging industries, such as auto parts of new energy vehicles and intelligent audio-video in-car equipment, performed well in terms of export volume.

The report was compiled through sampling surveys of SMEs covering foreign trade on XTransfer's platform, and analyzing information related to the complete export process, such as those concerning export orders, prices and procurement.

The report aims to provide guidance and strategic basis for export-oriented SMEs in their export trade business in the near future, said Deng Guobiao, founder and CEO of XTransfer.

Among the polled SMEs, the number of major export markets reached 152 over the past three months, with the United States, the Hong Kong special administrative region, the United Kingdom, Germany and Australia being the top five.

"According to indexes, the SMEs did well in trade with emerging economies of ASEAN, Africa and Latin America, indicating continued exploration of new markets," Deng said.

A trade summit held recently in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, attracted more than 3,000 Chinese SME owners, with discussions focused on the digital transformation within the foreign trade sector.

According to indexes, the SMEs did well in trade with emerging economies of ASEAN, Africa and Latin America, indicating continued exploration of new markets."

Deng Guobiao, founder and CEO of XTransfer

"It is worth noting that the logistics efficiency index for exports to Latin American countries is significantly higher than other regions, mainly due to the increasingly mature air and sea freight routes between China and Latin American countries this year," Deng said during the summit.

Founded in 2017 and serving over 550,000 SMEs, the Shanghai-based XTransfer's cross-border trade payment platform provides one-stop solutions for companies, including foreign trade collection, multicurrency cash management, investment and risk management services.

"With our comprehensive services, we are able to cover more business scenarios, providing fast payments to more markets worldwide," Deng added.

XTransfer also has branches overseas. By cooperating with well-known multinational banks and financial institutions, XTransfer has built a unified global multicurrency clearing network and a data-based, automated, internet-based and intelligent anti-money laundering risk control infrastructure centering on SMEs.

"We use technology as a bridge to link large financial institutions and SMEs around the world, allowing them to enjoy the same level of cross-border financial services as large multinational corporations," he said.



Employees work at a garment production facility in Fuzhou, Fujian province, in March. XIE GUIMING / FOR CHINA DAILY

## BUSINESSFOCUS

CHINA UP-CLOSE

## County tourism carves niche in China

Convenient access, affordable hotels, travel policies, new experiences stoke expansion

By ZHU WENQIAN  
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A niche tourism segment has emerged in China this summer with a focus on small counties, in spite of the fiercely competitive nature of the market.

Counties with convenient transportation and those that are close to scenic spots are expected to witness further growth in the tourism and accommodation markets, industry players said.

Hotel bookings in fourth- and fifth-tier cities and county-level areas grow the fastest among different tourist areas, according to Qunar, a Beijing-based online travel agency.

In particular, high-end hotel bookings in small cities have jumped nearly 50 percent year-on-year this summer, and the most sought-after counties are in western China that are relatively cooler, Qunar researcher.

"Libo, a scenic county in Guizhou province, Southwest China, renowned for its karst mountains, has seen hotel bookings surge more than seven times over last summer. The growth rate tops the list nationwide," said Xiao Peng, a Qunar researcher.

Besides Libo, some other counties in Guizhou, as well as counties in Qinghai and Gansu provinces, are most popular with local hotel bookings surging. The top five hotels with the highest booking volumes in Libo this summer are high-end hotels and hotel chains, with an average price of over 397 yuan (\$55.5) per night, the travel agency said.

Meanwhile, Guizhou's scenic areas have issued policies that by the end of this year, domestic college students, middle-school students and primary school students, and some other groups such as teachers, police officers and medical staff, will get complimentary admission to all A-level scenic spots in the province. Some consumers said

they chose to visit Guizhou mainly because of such preferential policies.

"More travelers have been obtaining travel-related information through livestreaming sessions online," said Qiao Chengwei, a director of domestic travel products at Tuniu Corp, a Nanjing, Jiangsu province-based online travel agency.

"Still, there exist some unreasonably low-priced products for certain travel groups, and there are various self-paying trips indirectly included in the travel itinerary. We suggest tourists choose legitimate tourism products offering guaranteed after-sales service."

For long-distance travelers, what is important is whether or not a chosen county-level destination is conveniently accessible.

Some 80 percent of the top 20 domestic counties that have seen the highest growth in hotel bookings are either directly accessible by air, high-speed railway trains or regular trains, or located within a two-hour drive from the nearest train station, Qunar said.

For instance, the high-speed railway

train station of Libo is only 11 kilometers away from Xiaoqikong (seven small arches) scenic area in the county, making it convenient for travelers to visit the sight-seeing spot.

In August 2023, the high-speed railway line connecting Libo and Guiyang, the provincial capital of Guizhou, began operations. It takes a mere 57 minutes now to reach the other city. The number of tourists that Libo receives has since grown significantly, making it one of the most popular tourist destinations in Guizhou.

Guanling, another county in Guizhou, boasts rich tourism resources and convenient transportation facilities. The Shanghai-Kunming high-speed railway line has a stop at the county, and the fastest high-speed railway train journey from Guiyang to Guanling takes only 47 minutes.

Fusong, a county surrounded by dense forest, is located in Northeast China's Jilin province, northwest of Changbaishan Airport, which serves as China's first airport dedicated to forest tourism.

The airport has direct flights connect-

ing Fusong with more than 20 domestic cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Qingdao in Shandong province and Guangzhou in Guangdong province.

It is expected that by the end of 2025, the high-speed railway connecting Shenyang, the provincial capital of Liaoning province, and Changbaishan, will start operations. By then, passengers will need no more than about three hours in a high-speed train to travel from Beijing to Fusong.

"The level of tourism development of counties is highly correlated with the maturity of local infrastructure construction," said Cai Muzi, a Qunar researcher.

"The popularity of county-level tourism this year is expected to further accelerate the building of local infrastructure, which will then contribute to the growth of county-level tourism, thus shaping a virtuous cycle," Cai said.

She also said that an increasing number of hotel chains and midrange to high-end hotels are accelerating their expansion in fourth- and fifth-tier domestic cities and county-level markets to meet growing travel demand.

With hotels in many parts of the country lowering their prices this summer, accommodation prices in most counties remain flat compared with last summer, but higher than the levels seen in the summer of 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prices of rooms in high-end hotels in counties, however, have edged up 15 percent on average over the 2019 level, Qunar data showed.

Unlike in major cities where a large number of luxury hotels compete with each other fiercely, urban residents prefer to book high-end hotels in counties, boosting demand, market insiders said. Travelers from Chengdu, Chongqing, Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou have topped the

list of tourists visiting counties.

"The number of high-end hotels in counties is relatively small, and in some popular areas, supply even falls short of demand. This is influenced by the shift in people's travel habits, as more travelers are willing to venture into smaller cities to explore different landscapes and gain some unique experiences," Cai said.

"Besides, the number of parent-child trips have increased significantly in summer, and parents who take their children to counties often prefer to stay at better hotels."

A booming tourism market has fueled the demand for both the air and rail routes this summer. China is expecting 860 million railway passenger trips in July and August, averaging 13.87 million daily. The strong demand mainly comes from summer vacationers and family visitors, according to China State Railway Group Co Ltd, the country's railway operator.

From July 1 to Aug 31, China's air travel market is expected to continue its robust momentum and handle 133 million passenger trips via domestic and international flights, with the daily average reaching 2.15 million passenger trips, up 5 percent year-on-year and 10 percent over the summer of the pre-pandemic period in 2019, according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China.



**Above:** A tourist train departs Beijing for the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region in July. JIA TIANYONG / CHINA NEWS SERVICE **Below:** Tourists take balloon rides at a Danxia geopark in Zhangye, Gansu province, in July. WANG JIANPING / FOR CHINA DAILY



## Cool places turn hot spots for summer-weary travelers

By ZHU WENQIAN

With many regions in China seeing scorching temperatures this summer, more and more travelers are seeking respite in some cities that boast cool weather.

In July, online searches for travel products designed to avoid the summer heat surged 150 percent over the level seen in June, according to Trip.com Group, China's largest online travel agency.

This summer, the frequency of high-temperature days has increased due to global warming, affecting many areas that saw the mercury levels touching or exceeding 40 C, according to the China Meteorological Administration.

"Urban residents have been interested in going for forest walks, and experiencing grassland scenery and bamboo raft drifting. Many tourists are unwilling to gather in big cities with large flows

of people, and tend to look for small towns or mountain villages with cooler weather to enjoy a peaceful summer," said Shen Jiani, a senior researcher with Trip.com Group.

Northeast China, especially Harbin in Heilongjiang province, went viral online last winter with its distinguished winter tourism resources and food. Its famed ice sculpture and frozen pear attracted many tourists. Now, the region has become popular again with its daily average temperature staying below 25 C.

The region has attracted a large number of tourists. Since July, among those who stayed at hotels in the three provinces of Northeast China, the highest number of visitors came from Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Nanjing in Jiangsu province and Hangzhou in Zhejiang province. Hotel bookings have jumped more than 60 percent over the levels seen

in June, Trip.com found.

Besides, Guiyang in Guizhou province, Hohhot in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region and Qinhuangdao in Hebei province are listed as some of the most sought-after places in summer.

Such popularity has driven sales of China's summer tourism market to the range of 1.2 trillion yuan (\$167.8 billion) to 1.5 trillion yuan, indicating strong demand and high growth potential of the segment, according to a report by the China Tourism Academy.

An assistant manager surnamed Xiao of a rural resort located in the Qinling Mountains, operated by Trip.com in Foping, Shaanxi province, said the resort has received a large number of phone inquiries recently. Most tourists, he said, called to inquire about the temperature levels there.

Located deep in the mountainous area, the average temperature

of Foping is about 10 C below that of Xi'an, the provincial capital of Shaanxi. Frequent rainy days have made the weather even cooler recently, and many tourists from nearby cities flock to the place to beat the summer heat.

Indoor skiing resorts have also become trendy summer entertainment, especially for consumers from southern China.

Simply going to ski resorts in northern China in winter is no longer enough to meet the demand of skiing enthusiasts in the south, and it has become a new trend for them to check out large-scale indoor skiing resorts in the surrounding area during summer.

In July, bookings at skiing resorts jumped 15 percent month-on-month. Last winter, among the top five cities that saw the highest booking volumes of skiing-related products in China, four of them were southern cities: Shanghai,



Tourists play at Harbin Ice Snow World in Heilongjiang province on Aug 13. SHAO GUOLIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Chongqing, Hangzhou, and Chengdu in Sichuan province, Trip.com said.

Since the Beijing Winter Olympic Games in 2022, ice and snow sports have seen widespread popularity in southern China where the skiing

economy has experienced sustained growth.

Annual countrywide sales related to various ice and snow sports have exceeded 150 billion yuan, according to a recent report by the General Administration of Sport of China.

## COMMENT

## Editorials

## Athletes take plaudits but it was all-round breakthrough performance for China

The gathering to honor those who have made outstanding contributions to the Chinese delegation's dazzling performance at the Paris Olympics has conveyed not only the whole nation's pride in the athletes' best medal haul at an overseas Olympics but also the significance the country attaches to the development of the sports sector.

The Chinese delegation, consisting of 404 athletes, who competed in 232 events across 30 sports at the Games from July 27 to Aug 12, clinched 40 gold, 27 silver and 24 bronze medals. Yet as President Xi Jinping noted in his speech at the gathering, held in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Tuesday, it is not only the medals won by the Chinese athletes at the Games that have motivated and inspired the nation, but more importantly the sportsmanship, confidence and openness they have demonstrated on the world stage.

Advancing Chinese modernization will create better conditions and inject strong impetus into the development of China's sports industry, Xi pointed out. He urged the nation to continue to vigorously develop its people-centered sports industry, promote the deep integration of people's physical fitness and national health projects, and continue to move toward achieving the goal of building a strong sports country and a healthy China.

Considering that it was not until the Los Angeles Games in 1984 that New China appeared at the Olympic Games, when it stunned the world with a 15-gold-medal debut, and how far China has gone to make it to where it is today, the next LA Games four years away is set to be another milestone occasion for China to impress the world, not only with the performances of its sportsmen and sportswomen, but also its capabilities as a nation with vitality and vision.

To some extent, the Paris Olympics was a platform for the world to see the prospects of a confident and vigorous China. The country distinguished itself not only by competing in more events, but also with the high-visibility of its technology, products and sponsorship. The Made-in-China and Designed-in-China equipment and the ubiquitous advertisements of Chinese corporations during the Games all speak volumes of the remarkable progress the country has made in different fields.

Pursuing excellence means perseverance, dedication and meticulousness. If there's one word to summarize Team China's achievement in Paris, it's "breakthrough," because apart from the six traditional sports in which China excels, which include diving, table tennis and weight lifting, the Chinese athletes have made rapid progress and shown huge potential in some sports in which it has been a late starter. This can be attributed to the club-based and market-oriented training approaches that have been adopted, in order to identify and nurture young talents through targeted and personalized training programs.

That has been the peak of the wave of the robust development of mass sports and youth sports in the country over the past decade, which has not only markedly expanded the talent pool for the country's competitive sports but also served to enhance the overall level of national fitness.

In Paris, the young Chinese athletes born in the new century have done a good job in demonstrating that they have inherited their predecessors' patriotism and unyielding spirit, and also possess a global vision, self-confidence, adaptability and inclusiveness that have become the hallmarks of their generation.

The Olympic Games is the biggest stage for athletes around the world to realize their dreams as well as an important platform for enhancing cultural exchanges among countries and regions. The Chinese athletes have shown the sincerity and friendliness of the Chinese people and promoted the building of a community with a shared future for mankind by strengthening mutual understanding and friendship among different peoples through their demeanor and interactions with other athletes and teams.

With so many hotspot issues caused by parochial calculations and selfishness taking their toll on the world, it is to be hoped the moments that shone with humanity at the Paris Games are not only cherished as a common memory of the world but also motivate all nations to show respect to each other and put aside their shortsighted differences for the common good of the people. Only by staying the course in working together can being faster, higher and stronger have any practical meaning.

## Seize every cease-fire chance in Gaza

In a seemingly positive step toward achieving a truce in Gaza, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Monday that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had accepted a "bridging proposal" presented by the United States to tackle disagreements blocking a cease-fire deal in the territory, and urged militant group Hamas to do the same.

The top US diplomat, on his ninth trip to the region since October, said it was a "decisive moment," and "maybe the last" opportunity to secure a cease-fire and free the Israeli hostages being held by Hamas. However, he said that even if Hamas accepts the proposal, negotiators will have to spend the coming days working on "clear understandings on implementing the agreement," adding there are still "complex issues" requiring "hard decisions by the leaders".

Israel started the war against Hamas after the group's cross-border Oct 7 attacks in which more than 1,200 Israelis were killed and 250 taken hostage, according to Israeli authorities. More than 100 of those hostages remain in Hamas' hands in Gaza. The peace deal currently under discussion calls for a three-phase process in which Hamas would release all the Israeli hostages, in exchange for the Israeli forces' withdrawal from Gaza and a release of Palestinian prisoners.

Such a deal is desperately needed given the dire situation in Gaza after more than 10 months of the Israeli campaign to wipe out Hamas, which has basically devastated the territory and plunged the 2.3 million Palestinians living there into an "epic humanitarian catastrophe". Israel's military operations in Gaza have killed more than 40,000 Palestinians, according to local health authorities.

The ongoing peace talks have gained a sense of urgency in recent days after the targeted killings of Hamas' political leader in Teheran, capital of Iran, and a top commander of military group Hezbollah in Lebanon that were blamed on Israel. The assassinations have raised fears of a larger scale regional war as Iran and Hezbollah have vowed revenge. Many believe that should a peace deal be forthcoming, it would help prevent any further escalation of tensions and diminish the chance of a full-scale war.

The major obstacle to reaching an immediate cease-fire comes from the deep mistrust that Hamas harbors of the US as a mediator, which the group believes is siding with Israel. Hamas has accused Israel of trying to prolong the war with new conditions set in the peace deal. Other remaining sticking points include the number of Palestinian prisoners to be released and how far back Israeli forces should withdraw.

While details of the latest "bridging proposal" are still unavailable, there are concerns how far it will go, given the strong opposition that exists within Israel to any compromise with Hamas. Some far-right members of Netanyahu's governing coalition have previously threatened to withdraw their support for Netanyahu should there be a cease-fire deal that stops short of Hamas' total destruction.

Given all this, it will be extremely hard to clinch a cease-fire deal. Yet despite that, the international community must not cease making efforts to contribute to a permanent and comprehensive cease-fire in Gaza, and work together to bring an end to the conflict there as soon as possible. The US, in particular, has an obligation to spare no efforts to rein in the radical forces in Israel so as to prevent the peace process from being derailed, again.

Luo Jie



## Opinion Line

## Stress on doing away with formalism to reduce burden at grassroots level

The Chinese central authorities have introduced a guiding document that rolls out a series of specific provisions and targeted measures to crack down on formalism and reduce the burden on grassroots-level departments.

The guiding document consists of seven parts and 21 specific provisions. It talks of effectively reducing the number of official documents, streamlining meetings, reducing supervision, inspection and assessment activities from higher-level departments, clarifying the rights and responsibilities of grassroots departments, and reducing the number of demonstration activities assigned by higher authorities. It stipulates against borrowing cadres from the county-level or below, while controlling the borrowing of cadres from municipal and above units.

The document extends a series of new practical measures for the old existing problems related to formalism while strengthening current institutional provisions to reduce the burden on grassroots departments and people at the root.

The central authorities have always attached great importance to the rectification of formalism to reduce the burden on grassroots governments, and regarded it as an important way to follow the Party's style of working and an important measure to care for grassroots government workers.

In recent years, a special working mechanism for rectifying formalism and reducing the burden on grassroots departments has been established at the central level, and a series of effective measures have been taken, achieving remarkable results. However, it should be noted that formalism and bureaucracy were not born in a day. Therefore, long tireless efforts will be needed to get rid of them.

After the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in July, arrangements have been made for the continuous rectification of formalism to reduce the burden on grassroots governments. The plenum made it clear that a long-term mechanism will be established for this

goal and the central authorities have renewed and further intensified a crackdown on formalism by issuing the latest guiding document, which will provide a strong guarantee for further deepening reform in an all-round way and promoting Chinese-style modernization by rectifying formalism to reduce the burden on grassroots government departments and their workers.

The root cause of the formalism problem is that some senior leaders have poor working styles and are disconnected from grassroots realities. Some grassroots cadres, too, have misplaced views about performance and lack a sense of responsibility, focusing on pleasing superiors rather than serving the people. That explains why the document urges higher-level governments and leading officials to set an example in rectifying formalism.

The formulation of the document will also mark an important move to promote the comprehensive and strict governance of the Party.

— WU YIXUE, CHINA DAILY

## Innovations make country major player in robot sector

Altogether 56,000 industrial robots were sold in the Chinese market in 2014, a year before the first session of the World Robot Conference in Beijing. However, only 12,000, or about 26 percent of those, were manufactured in China, and they were mostly low-end products.

As the 10th session of WRC kicks off on Wednesday, the domestic production of robots for industrial use had risen to 430,000 in 2023, while 7.8 million others were service robots, making China a major player in the global robot sector. The past 10 years, in which 10 WRC sessions have been organized in Beijing, have seen the fast, comprehensive growth of the robot industry, which would not have been possible without innovations in technology.

Modern robots have four key parts,

namely a controller to send commands, servo drive to generate appropriate electric current to drive the motor, servo motor to move the joints, and a reducer to decrease speed so as to enhance precision. Some articles have equated the four key parts to the brain, nerves, muscle and ligament of a person, the aim being to help the robots move their "limbs" as precisely as human hands. For all these four key parts, China relied heavily on imports in 2014; now, 10 years later, according to the WRC, comprehensive production lines for the four key components have been formed, with their technological levels significantly enhanced to be competitive in the international market.

Another example might be artificial intelligence, which is being increasingly

used in the manufacture of robots in China. In 2014, the domestically manufactured robots were in their nascent stage. Today, armed with the latest AI technology, they have turned into six-leg guide dogs helping the visually impaired, as displayed by Shanghai Jiao Tong University in July; or evolved into robotic nurses guiding senior citizens, as shown at the 2024 China Humanoid Robot Developers Conference in Shanghai in June.

These are just the tip of the tech iceberg, for mode recognition, machine learning, brain science, big data and more are involved in the latest generation of robots. It's because of innovations that China has enhanced both the quantity and quality of its robots over the past 10 years.

— ZHANG ZHOUXIANG, CHINA DAILY

## What They Say

## Coordination on financial risks serves common interests

The People's Bank of China, China's central bank, and the US Treasury have exchanged letters in support of coordination and appropriate information sharing during times of financial stress, according to the readout of the fifth meeting of the China-US financial working group held in Shanghai from Thursday to Friday. The two sides also exchanged key points of contact to make it easier to quickly coordinate in instances of financial stress or at times when there are operational resilience issues.

That means the two sides have more means to avoid misunderstandings through timely exchanges in their joint response to common financial challenges. In the meeting, the two sides also communicated extensively on the global economic and financial situation and coordination

in monetary policymaking, financial stability and supervision, bilateral capital market cooperation, management of cross-border data flows, and International Monetary Fund reform as well as the anti-money laundering legal system, the filing and registration of beneficial owner information, and anti-money laundering supervision of specific nonfinancial institutions.

All these topics and the fruits of the meeting are of urgent relevance against the backdrop of the spillover effects of the US Federal Reserve's high interest rates, which it will reportedly cut next month, and the snowballing US national debt. At present, the US debt has exceeded \$35 trillion, accounting for more than 124 percent of its gross domestic product, putting the federal debt on an unsustainable long-term trajectory.

Notably, some representatives of financial institutions of the two countries participated in a roundtable to exchange

views on a range of topics related to climate financing, including transition planning and carbon markets.

China and the US have already laid a sound basis for cooperation in those areas. They jointly lead the G20 sustainable finance work to promote global green and low-carbon transformation on international multilateral platforms.

Shanghai hosted the meeting for the first time — previously it was held in Beijing and Washington — enabling the US side to gain firsthand knowledge on the financial center of China, the construction of which is a priority of the country's financial development. That is also conducive to them gaining a deeper understanding of the latest reform and opening-up policy portfolio in the financial work that China has unveiled after a key reform-focused session of the top decision-makers of the country in July.

— LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

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## COMMENT

Liu Litao

## China, Vietnam start novel chapter of traditional ties

That Vietnamese President To Lam chose China as the destination of his first foreign state visit after being elected as the general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) shows the new Vietnamese leadership attaches great importance to its relations with its northern neighbor. Lam's three-day visit to China that concluded on Tuesday will help carry forward the Sino-Vietnamese relationship.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, pointed out that the CPC and the CPV have passed down their shared ideals and beliefs from generation to generation, forging the traditional friendship of "comrades-plus-brothers" between the two countries.

Lam has vowed to enhance the Vietnam-China comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, and push forward the building of the Vietnam-China community with a shared future that carries strategic significance, firmly pursue the one-China policy and support China in achieving national reunification.

The important talks, as well as a series of concrete bilateral cooperation agreements on industry, finance, education and health, etc., show China and Vietnam have begun a new chapter of traditional friendship.

**Strategic significance to both countries**

First, during Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to Vietnam in December last year, the two sides agreed to build a China-Vietnam community with a shared future, which carries strategic significance for the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries.

During Lam's visit both parties have unequivocally stated their commitment to advancing the establishment of a China-Vietnam community with a shared future through tangible actions. And Lam has reiterated that the new Vietnamese leadership will continue the Southeast Asian country's foreign policy vis-à-vis China.

Second, Lam has indicated that his country wants to develop friend-

ly political relations with China by increasing communication and engaging in mutually beneficial cooperation. The fact that China and Vietnam are both socialist countries makes their inter-party communication a distinctive feature of the overall bilateral relationship.

The top Chinese leader and late CPV Central Committee general secretary Nguyen Phu Trong exchanged visits three times, with the two sides' senior leaders visiting each other's country several times, which is unprecedented in the history of the two countries. In fact, the two countries' deep understanding has facilitated the development of bilateral relations. As the new top leader of Vietnam, Lam has a clear understanding of the complexity of China-Vietnam relations, and his visit to China is expected to help promote the long-term development of bilateral relations.

**Visit to boost economic ties**

Third, Lam's visit will inject new momentum into the two sides' economies. Since the Chinese top leader's visit to Vietnam last year, the two countries have been engaging in high-quality trade and economic cooperation.

According to China's official data, the two-way trade volume hit \$145 billion in the first seven months of this year, with China continuing to be Vietnam's largest trading partner and leading investor in new projects in the country.

Vietnamese media reported that China is still the largest consumer of Vietnamese fruits and vegetables, with its imports in the first half of this year accounting for 64 percent of Vietnam's total exports of agricultural products. China is also the largest market for Vietnam's durian exports, accounting for 92.4 percent of the total exports of the fruit by Vietnam.

Of course, the two sides are aware that the trade traffic bottleneck has seriously restricted their economic exchanges because of Vietnam's unnecessary security concerns. For-



SHI YU / CHINA DAILY

Hence, China and Vietnam are expected to deepen cooperation and fulfill their responsibility of safeguarding regional peace and promoting development.

unately, the spillover effects of the China-Laos Railway have reduced some of Vietnam's security concerns and Lam's visit may help improve infrastructure connectivity between the two sides.

In the first seven months of 2024, a total of 6,850 twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) containers of goods were shipped via China-Vietnam

freight trains departing from South China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, marking a 16-fold increase year-on-year.

Fourth, China and Vietnam can promote people-to-people exchanges because people-to-people bonds are an important part of international relations. In recent years, cultural exchanges between the two sides have flourished, with more than 23,000 Vietnamese students studying in China. People-to-people exchanges have the potential to enhance the perception of Chinese people among certain Vietnamese individuals, which may have been distorted due to conflicts and external influences during certain periods.

Fifth, China and Vietnam are expected to manage their differences and improve bilateral relations by overcoming the existing and emerging challenges, not least because they have vowed to prevent individual issues from affecting their overall relationship.

The South China Sea issue is the source of the biggest difference between the two countries. The Chinese government issued a statement in March on the baseline of the northern part of the Beibu Gulf, which was not welcomed by Vietnam. And in July, China firmly opposed Vietnam's submission to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf to extend its undersea shelf in the South China Sea, and lodged stern representations with the Vietnamese side on the issue.

However, since both China and Vietnam have made the pursuit of peace and development in the region a main goal of their foreign policy, they are not likely to intensify their disputes over the South China Sea. Instead, during Lam's visit, both sides said they should better manage the differences and prevent the disputes from escalating.

China has achieved the goal of building a moderately prosperous

society in all respects by 2020, while the year 2021 marked the centenary of the founding of the CPC. China is pursuing to build a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious by the middle of this century, while 2049 marks the centennial anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

On the other hand, Vietnam's two centennial goals are to develop the country into a modern industrial base and upper-middle income society by 2030, the centenary of the founding of the CPV, and transform the country into a high-income society by 2045, the centenary of the establishment of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

And sixth, Vietnam's "bamboo diplomacy" allows it to develop comprehensive strategic partnership with many countries and continue to view its relations with China as the top priority in its foreign policy. That's why Vietnam is not likely to join any bloc to constrain or isolate China, because it acknowledges that China has helped it become a peaceful and prosperous country. In short, Vietnam will not become a tool of other countries to check China's peaceful rise.

Although Vietnam has been developing its relationship with the United States and hopes to upgrade Hanoi-Washington ties, the US has not removed Vietnam from its list of countries to which export of advanced technologies is restricted, and continues to consider Vietnam a non-market economy. Also, Vietnam has realized the US' true intention of driving a wedge between Beijing and Hanoi is to fulfill Washington's narrow political goals.

Hence, China and Vietnam are expected to deepen cooperation and fulfill their responsibility of safeguarding regional peace and promoting development. In short, although China and Vietnam differ on certain issues, the differences will not dictate their overall relationship.

The author is an associate professor at the School of International Studies, Nanjing University. The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

Ömer Sahin Ganiyusufoglu and Wang Yan

## Embracing a new era of global research collaboration

**You'll Never Walk Alone.** This song, originally a show tune from the 1945 Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *Carousel*, has become synonymous with showing support and solidarity, or seeking support to achieve higher common goals. The song, however, was made famous by British band Gerry and the Pacemakers in the early 1960s.

It echoes a Chinese saying inherited from ancient times: If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.

**Supportive partners needed in all walks of life**

In many areas of life and world affairs, too, one needs supportive partners to walk difficult paths together to achieve success together and to celebrate it.

Research drives development, including that of world affairs. Without research, there can be no systematic development, no innovation. Without research, progress can only come about by chance. Research today is gaining power thanks to the rapid development in electronics engineering, and information and communications technology, with innovation cycles around the world becoming shorter and more and more new technologies emerging.

On the other hand, global challenges are becoming ever more serious. The global population is growing, but as a result of digitalization and the internet, communication channels have become

shorter and distance is no longer a major barrier.

Achieving sustainability remains a big global challenge. Yet major global problems need to be overcome quickly in order to ensure future generations lead a higher quality of life.

These challenges demand that countries work closely together to intensify research in different fields. The song, *You'll Never Walk Alone*, applies to research, too, because joint research can produce useful results for humankind, much faster than isolated, individualized research can. Incidentally, global research and global cooperation in research have also become easier thanks to tools such as digitalization and new media.

In China, "expanding international scientific and technological exchanges and cooperation" will likely become a new trend as mentioned in the resolution of the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. In this regard, perhaps China and Germany should contemplate expanding collaboration on research.

Essentially, research can be divided into two general groups: fundamental (basic) research and applied research. Alternatively, research collaboration can be categorized as parallel research, complementary research, bilateral research cooperation, and multilateral research cooperation.

After all, basic research is the cornerstone of "organized fundamental research", as highlighted in the resolution of the third plenum. Basic research means working scientifically on a specific topic and going to the depth of the

topic. The result of basic research may not necessarily be useful for practice.

In the case of global collaboration in basic research, countries can divide the task among themselves according to "work blocks" and each side can work on its own work block. At the end, the results of the different work blocks can be discussed and summarized in order to produce a result for a large research package.

Indeed, research is both craft and art. By collecting and analyzing data, one can arrive at findings, but that might not help us to see the holistic picture, especially in today's increasingly globalized world. Hence, the division of research among different countries and regions can help us understand the advantages of basic research from several cultural and geographical perspectives.

**Applied research needs more global cooperation**

Applied research, usually carried out to solve a problem in industry or to facilitate innovation, creates better, higher value. Even the education system in Germany favors applied research, which means applied research is central to vocational education and training in Germany where students learn through practice in centers jointly established by industry and academia.

In Germany, young people's education consists of both theory and practice. What is learnt in the classroom is then put into practice in laboratories under industrial conditions. Applied research, especially those involving interdisciplinary studies, offers great

opportunities for global cooperation. For example, a research project can be aimed at helping solve a practical industrial problem. In such a case, institutes could ask companies with similar needs based in their home country to conduct research to solve the industrial problem.

In order to attain synergy, the project partners could exchange their results through bilateral or multilateral discussions, thus learning from each other and achieving mutual benefit from the project.

This type of cooperation can be realized through academia-industry collaboration, which can be realized through an institutionalized research platform or network, and that is exactly what Chinese Education Minister Huai Jinpeng has advocated for.

The formation of a research platform can help divide the task into several "work packages" and distribute among specialised research institutes, whose job would involve identifying industries/users for which the research results could be of use. Although this type of cooperation is time- and resource-consuming, it can be beneficial to larger industrial sectors and can thus be put into practice.

Such cooperation can also be expanded to a global scale. But for that, researchers should also have language skills, knowledge of and respect for other cultures and political systems. In this regard, the resolution of the third plenum has generated good news. The resolution calls for setting up international science and technology organizations in China, so as to optimize global professional

exchanges and cooperation management mechanisms of higher education institutions, research institutes, and science and technology associations.

Another advantage of international research collaboration is complementarity, that is, to build research partnerships based on the strengths and research capability of each side. If we look at Germany and China from this perspective, the following form of cooperation is conceivable.

Germany is very strong in traditional industries, including mechanical engineering, the automotive and electrical industries, and chemical and environmental technologies. These are industries that have grown in Germany and rely on the skills of the people.

**China has advanced as a digital economy**

China, on the other hand, is very strong in digital-based industries, including ICT and artificial intelligence. Overall, China has advanced more than most countries as a digital economy.

As for future-oriented research projects for the benefit of industries, they can be divided into work packages based on the strengths of each country. For example, in a bilateral project between Germany and China, the mechanical engineering-oriented work packages could be undertaken by a German research institute and German companies. Similarly, the digital-orientated work packages could be taken up by Chinese research institutes and companies. In this way, the strengths and talents of the countries involved can be used to

achieve promising results.

The collaboration between German car manufacturers and Chinese IT companies has already set an example of how China and Germany should approach such projects.

In addition to the cooperation opportunities described above, there are also global platforms where scientific exchanges can be realized and potential collaborations evaluated. In addition, there is the "International Academy for Production Engineering", where many production engineering professors from all over the world hold regular meetings and present their works in production engineering. Through open, friendly discussions in these committees, cross-border research projects can be initiated.

The new era of international research will create more opportunities for China and other countries, with the new policy helping build an enabling environment for global cooperation in research. In the new era, we will succeed only if we walk together. *You'll Never Walk Alone.*

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## GLOBAL VIEWS

HUSSEIN ASKARY

## Master key for peace

Justice and economic development for Palestine are the basis for stability in Middle East

China opened a major opportunity for peace in the Middle East when 14 Palestinian factions signed the Beijing Declaration for reconciliation and national unity on July 23, ending many years of division that weakened the Palestinian front and allowed Israel and its allies to further disregard the rights of the people in the occupied territories. Simultaneously, the Beijing Declaration provided an important window for the United States and Israel to redeem themselves by stopping the crimes they are committing against the Palestinian people in Gaza and reach a ceasefire agreement and prisoner exchange.



In this context, one very important element of the Beijing Declaration is that Hamas would concede its government power in Gaza to the Palestinian Authority under the Palestine Liberation Organization. This would remove one of the major excuses of Israel and the US for pursuing this war, because the two consider Hamas a "terrorist organization" and its control of Gaza legitimizes the horrific military actions that have claimed the lives of more than 40,000 Palestinians. "The core outcome of the reconciliation dialogue is to specify that the Palestine Liberation Organization is the sole legitimate representative of all the Palestinian people," said Wang Yi, minister of foreign affairs and the host of the Palestinian reconciliation process.

He added that "the most significant highlight is the agreement to form an interim government of national reconciliation focusing on the post-conflict reconstruction of Gaza, and the strongest call is for establishing a truly independent Palestinian state in accordance

with relevant United Nations resolutions". China has strongly advocated for the Palestinian people's right to an independent and sovereign state as a first step to peace and stability in the whole region. Thus, the Beijing Declaration spurred a process of negotiations in which Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Qatar backed a ceasefire and prisoner exchange.

It is a well-known and unfortunate fact that the international community cannot force Israel to take a positive course of action, and only the US government can. However, the Joe Biden administration has failed to get Israel to end the ongoing military operations in Gaza and move to the negotiation process. Instead, the US has amassed a massive naval force in the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf to deter Iran and protect Israel. A dangerous regional war can easily develop out of this situation. The reckless actions of Israel and its backers are to blame for this situation.

While the US position seems to be tactical and pretentious, the position of China is more principled, long-term, and strategic. While China is among a vast majority of nations who consider establishing a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital as the first step to peace in accordance with a two-state solution with Israel, it has added the very important element of wisdom that justice for the Palestinian people will not be achieved by retribution and revenge against Israel, but by building a future for the Palestinian people, starting with the immediate reconstruction of Gaza as the first step toward regional peace and stability through economic development.

Chinese diplomats have presented several proposals and policy papers for ending the conflict and

establishing sustainable peace to the United Nations Security Council. Wang presented a position paper on Nov 29, 2023 presenting a five-step solution under international law that emphasized the necessity of organizing an international conference to discuss a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue. The Chinese proposals focus on tackling the root causes of the issue and its solution is anchored in the context of the three major initiatives put forward by President Xi Jinping in recent years, namely the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Civilization Initiative.

The Chinese representative to the UN, Ambassador Zhang Jun, made a very eloquent presentation on the symbiosis between economic development and peace and security during an open debate organized by the Chinese side on Nov 20, 2023 in the UNSC. He said that peace, development, and human rights are the three pillars of the United Nations, but that "among them, development holds the master key to solving all problems and constitutes the basis for promoting peace and protecting human rights". This correctly identified that many of the conflicts the UNSC deals with have their roots in economic backwardness and lack of development.

The Global Security Initiative advocates that prosperity and security are indivisible and that lasting peace cannot be achieved without development. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a paper on Feb 21, 2023, that defines in detail the Global Security Initiative. The paper states from the start that "the issue of security bears on the wellbeing of people of all countries, the lofty cause of world peace and development, and the future of humanity". The paper upholds

world peace and security as the common pursuit of all countries.

China is not intending to reinvent the wheel of international relations. The hard-won UN Charter is the basic law of the global governance that China supports. This has been the traditional foreign policy of China since the 1950s when it introduced the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. However, with the complex crises facing the world today, it was necessary for China to redefine and elucidate some of these principles. Many powers are inventing new concepts such as "the rules-based order" which is an attempt to bend the UN Charter to fit their own interests and ambitions.



SONG CHEN / CHINA DAILY

Chinese diplomacy is growing in clarity and impact in proportion to the growth of its global economic impact. Its achievement of the breakthrough in brokering the normalization of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran in March 2023 proved that fact and also that China is a trustworthy mediator. Therefore, China's proposals for ending the conflict in Palestine in particular, and West Asia in general, should be heeded by the international community. This region has witnessed a century of wars and conflicts since World War I.

However, turning back the clock of history is not possible, only looking forward to a better future for the Palestinians and for the people

of this region is still possible. This must start with ending the killing immediately and preparing the ground for a sustainable Palestinian state, with a clearly defined reconstruction and economic development plan. The Chinese proposal for an international conference on this matter would be an appropriate launchpad.

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ZHANG JIAN

## Protectionism a lose-lose scenario

Curbing politicization and securitization will benefit the EU's interests, the development of China-EU relations, and global development and security

Over the past few years, the United States has relentlessly pressured its allies to comprehensively contain China, leading to dramatic shifts in global geopolitics. The outbreak of the Ukraine crisis and the Israel-Palestine conflict, coupled with the European Union's declining competitiveness, has



increased negative factors in the EU's policy toward China, resulting in a growing trend toward politicization and securitization.

The EU has inherent economic openness needs. Historically, it has pursued a generally free trade-oriented foreign economic policy. However, as the EU's economic competitiveness has declined, protectionist sentiments in some member states have risen, prompting the EU to adopt numerous trade relief measures. In recent years, the EU has frequently intervened in market operations under the guise of anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures, with many targeting China.

Since the beginning of 2024, the EU has launched multiple investigations against Chinese companies, including the Chinese train manufacturer CRRC Corporation, under the Foreign Subsidies Regulation, and conducted raids on the offices of Chinese enterprises in Europe. Since July 5, the EU has imposed provisional countervailing duties on imports of battery electric vehicles from China.

The EU has also imposed various restrictions on bilateral investment between China and Europe and intensified controls on high-tech exports, which has fostered an atmosphere of politicization and securitization. The EU's trade and economic policy toward China has become increasingly suspicious and defensive.

The difference in political systems between China and the EU is not a new issue. For a long time, this difference has not impeded



LI MIN / CHINA DAILY

cooperation between China and Europe, whether in the economic field or in international affairs, where they have been good dialogue and cooperation partners. However, since the EU's 2019 EU-China Strategic Outlook labeled China as a key partner for cooperation but also an "economic competitor" and "systemic rival", ideological factors have increasingly influenced the EU's China policy.

In recent years, the EU has significantly increased its negative rhetoric and actions regarding "human rights" and other issues related to the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region and the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative

regions. The European Parliament has issued several reports on China focusing on values and ideological concern. Some European politicians, including members of the European Parliament, have frequently visited Taiwan, to highlight the so-called democracy versus authoritarianism issue. In the economic field, the EU has also started viewing China more through an ideological lens, as evidenced in recent legislations such as the "directive on corporate sustainability due diligence", which has strong ideological and value orientations.

In terms of diplomacy, the EU is more focused on geopolitical competition. When Ursula von der Ley-

en took over as president of the European Commission in 2019, she declared the intention to form a "geopolitical commission". The EU has strengthened its coordination with the US, setting up the US-EU Trade and Technology Council to project a unified Western voice. Meanwhile, EU member states such as France, Germany and the Netherlands have released "Indo-Pacific" strategies and enhanced their engagement with countries in the Global South.

The EU's geopolitical orientation has become more apparent in its competition with China and its efforts to counter what it perceives as Chinese influence. For instance,

the EU's Global Gateway strategy is aimed at countering China's Belt and Road Initiative. The discussion of the US-EU Trade and Technology Council meetings, as well as the communiqués from G7 and NATO summits, have increasingly centered on China. Notably, NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept defined China as a "systemic rival" for the first time.

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that the foundation of China-EU relations remains strong, and the EU's necessity for collaboration with China has not decreased but rather heightened.

First, the economic foundation of China-EU relations is deep-rooted with significant mutual benefits. The EU is China's second-largest trading partner, second-largest source of imports, and second-largest export market, while China is the EU's second-largest trading partner, largest source of imports, and third-largest export destination. Despite a decrease in trade volume in 2023, trade between China and the EU reached \$783 billion. EU investment in China increased by 5.5 percent year-on-year, totaling \$10.6 billion in 2023. In terms of both imports and exports, China is crucial to the EU economy, and damaging this relationship would harm the EU's own economic interests.

Second, the EU needs to collaborate with China to address global issues and challenges. The EU is confronted with a range of problems such as the Ukraine crisis, the Israel-Palestine conflict and climate change. Unlike the US' hegemonic "America First" approach, China and the EU share many similar or aligned positions on upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, basic norms of interna-

tional relations, and multilateralism.

Third, there are numerous dialogue and communication mechanisms between China and the EU that facilitate mutual trust and the exploration of more cooperation opportunities. Bilateral face-to-face exchanges between officials, scholars and business circles have increased remarkably since 2023. This helps enhance political trust and guide the healthy and stable development of China-EU relations.

Currently, the EU's politicization and securitization pose challenges to China-EU relations. There is an urgent need for China and the EU to build mutual trust, manage differences and reduce misunderstandings. First, by strengthening practical collaboration in areas such as trade, climate and global governance, both sides should uphold the spirit of openness and win-win results to deepen mutually beneficial cooperation. Second, efforts should be made to reduce negative aspects by strengthening candid dialogue and exchanges at all levels and in all fields between China and the EU. Last, facilitating people-to-people exchanges is crucial for the long-term, healthy and sustainable development of China-EU relations.

China's policy toward the EU is consistent and predictable, and China welcomes a strong and prosperous EU with strategic autonomy. While China attaches great importance to China-EU relations, the EU needs to reciprocate by reducing suspicion and prejudice and adopting a more calm and objective approach. Curbing the tendencies toward politicization and securitization will benefit the EU's own interests, the development of China-EU relations, and global development and security.

*The author is vice-president and a researcher at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations. 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.*

## Z WEEKLY

All about Gen Z

## Z WEEKLY

## Social Media Digest

## Bubble tea buzz

Bubble tea, a beloved beverage among many young people in China, has recently become the center of attention due to the emerging issue of "bubble tea-induced insomnia."



Bubble tea is believed to cause insomnia. vcg

This concern has ignited extensive discussions on the Chinese lifestyle-sharing platform Xiaohongshu, amassing over 6.46 million views on this topic.

Bubble tea, like all teas, inherently contains caffeine. As a result, some social media users have created personalized rankings evaluating the potential of different bubble teas to cause insomnia, featuring mainly popular brands available on the Chinese market.

These rankings involve subjective evaluations, taking into account factors like the frequency and duration of sleep disturbances. For example, some bubble teas are considered more likely to cause insomnia, while others might keep you awake longer if consumed in the afternoon.

On Aug 15, Heytea, a popular Chinese bubble tea brand, took a proactive step by publicly disclosing the caffeine levels of its drinks both online and in-store, with this information also displayed on cup labels. The beverages are categorized into four levels based on caffeine content: no caffeine, green light, yellow light, and red light.

Zhong Kai, the director of the China Food Information Center, told Yangtze Evening Paper that there are currently no compulsory regulations in China requiring caffeine labeling on ready-to-drink beverages. "When companies voluntarily provide this information, they not only increase consumer awareness but also help individuals make more informed choices," he said.

## Seagull insurance

Imagine a serene beach scene: you're about to take a perfect photo of the trendy cafe sandwich you just bought when a cheeky seagull swoops down and snatches it away.

This type of incident is not unusual at one sandwich shop in Scotland, UK.

"The gulls are super aggressive and terrifying. We are a family-run business, and I can't just sit and watch a sandwich get stolen and not replace it, so I always give another for free," said Kate Carter-Larg, 35, co-owner of the shop, in an interview with The Mirror.

According to Carter-Larg, they have tried several tactics to ward off the seagulls, such as playing recordings of raptor calls and flying a raptor kite. Unfortunately, none of these methods have successfully driven the seagulls away.

This shop faces a daily loss of hundreds of pounds as they provide free replacement sandwiches to too many customers whose food is stolen by seagulls. In response, they are considering introducing a new charge — seagull insurance — to tackle this ongoing problem.

Customers now have the option to purchase insurance for an extra £1 (\$1.29) on top of the standard £6.75 sandwich. With this insurance, if a seagull grabs their food, they can receive a free replacement, which helps the shop reduce its losses.

"We are not just a faceless business, and we want people to remember the nice gestures we make," Carter-Larg told The Mirror.

So next time you head to the beach, be sure to protect your food!

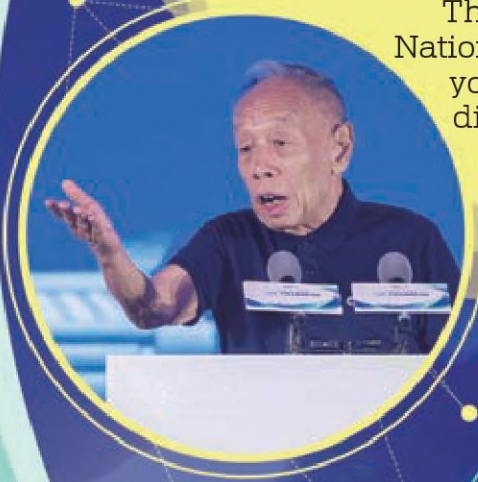
MENG WENJIE



Seagulls are known for their aggression and tendency to snatch people's food. vcg

## Youth diplomacy takes center stage

The 2024 China Daily Model United Nations Conference highlighted the role of youth in global diplomacy through diverse discussions and activities.



**Counterclockwise from top left:** Li Zhaoxing, former foreign minister, speaks at the opening ceremony of the 2024 China Daily Model United Nations Conference. Li Jiayan, a student at the Naval Medical University in Shanghai. Students representing different countries at CDMUN. Qian Mingchang, a student at the Air Force Engineering University. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By GUI QIAN  
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Themed "Energizing Youth, Saluting the Nation", the 2024 China Daily Model United Nations Conference (CDMUN) marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and the 70th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

Established in 2019, CDMUN is an educational project focused on international understanding and public diplomacy. It aims to promote the building of a community with a shared future for mankind through the power of youth.

This year's conference was held from Aug 1 to 4 at the Yao Lake International Convention Center in Yixing, East China's Jiangsu province. Hosted by China Daily's 21st Century English Education Media, the event attracted over 1,300 participants, including students and teachers from middle schools, high schools, and universities across China.

At the opening ceremony, former foreign minister Li Zhaoxing delivered a keynote on patriotic education titled "Serving the Country Through Diplomacy." He shared his personal experiences and growth while working in Europe, Africa, and the UN, encouraging students to love their country and people, study hard, and take on the responsibilities of national rejuvenation.

Wang Hao, deputy editor-in-chief of China Daily, emphasized the crucial role of youth in driving global progress and sustainable development.

"The baton of addressing contemporary issues and taking historical initiative has been passed to the younger generation," he said. "Today's Chinese youth are the most energetic and creative group in society."

This level of intelligence and diligence is precisely what CDMUN expects from young students. "Not drifting in empty fantasy, not pursuing trivial fame" is a phrase written by Li Dazhao (1889-1927), one of the founders of the CPC, a century ago, and it has become the guiding principle of CDMUN.

The four-day event featured keynote speeches, face-to-face sessions with ambassadors, a teachers' forum, a Global Village event, and 17 parallel sessions

As a national representative, a delegate must conduct comprehensive research on the topic to speak confidently. If you only need a glass of water on stage, you should prepare a bucket of water offstage."

Zhang Wenjie, a professor at the National Defense University

— 16 Chinese or English committees and one media center.

Students engaged in in-depth discussions on global governance issues, guided by the UN Sustainable Development Goals, covering topics such as strengthening ethical governance of artificial intelligence (AI) for sustainable development, emission reduction and climate finance in the post-Paris Agreement era, improving global mental health services, and enhancing international cooperation and mechanisms for conventional arms control.

During the event, experts and professors provided on-site guidance to various committees.

Liu Biwei, vice president of the China Public Diplomacy Association, advised that when representing a country, delegates should clearly state the country's stance on the topic, and speak loudly, slowly, and logically.

Professor Zhang Wenjie from the National Security College of the National Defense University emphasized the importance of knowledge accumulation and thorough preparation.

"As a national representative, a delegate must conduct comprehensive research on the topic to speak confident-

ly. If you only need a glass of water on stage, you should prepare a bucket of water offstage," he said.

A highlight of this year's conference was the participation of over 30 cadets from military academies nationwide.

Huang Junhao, a student at the National University of Defense Technology, explained that Model UN is a simulated academic activity replicating the UN General Assembly and other multilateral institutions, designed as a civic education exercise for youth.

"Students can not only enhance their academic research, writing, speaking, and debating skills but also develop organizational, planning, management, conflict resolution, and consensus-building abilities through challenging sessions," he said.

Li Jiayan, 23, is a PhD candidate in clinical medicine at the Naval Medical University in Shanghai. Her roles in Model UN activities have evolved significantly: she started as a delegate, then became a committee dais member, and this year, she served both on the dais and as a teacher, instructing high school students on how to write Model UN documents.

As a member of the dais for the UN Women Committee this year, she chose the topic "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality by addressing poverty with a gender perspective."

Li Jiayan explained that Model UN events hosted by military academies often feature committees with a military focus, such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the First Committee of the UN General Assembly (GA1), which address topics like disarmament and international security. However, as a young person who is "deeply concerned about international issues", she hopes to "hear more voices" at each Model UN event.

"Poverty is one of the key focuses of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. By combining it with gender issues, I aim to diversify the committee's discussions and encourage more expansive thinking among the delegates," she said.

Qian Mingchang, 22, is a senior at the Air Force Engineering University in Xi'an, Northwest China's Shaanxi province. With extensive experience — this

being his 10th Model UN — he served as the team leader for his university. He led five fellow students in the Model UN Security Council (UNSC), representing Russia, South Korea, and Chad to discuss the topic "Countering terrorism in the Sahel region."

Qian noted that military academy students and young officers tend to be more sensitive to their country's interests and positions, demonstrating a strong sense of patriotism.

At this year's CDMUN, Qian had the opportunity to interact closely with diplomats, listen to their speeches, and feel the strong sense of pride they exuded, which deeply inspired him.

"One of my career aspirations is to join the Air Force or the Ministry of National Defense's foreign affairs department, and possibly to be stationed abroad or participate in future UN missions," he said.

According to Qian, there are relatively few military academies and their interactions with each other are closer than with civilian universities. Most military academies concentrate more on science and engineering, resulting in students having a more comprehensive understanding of STEM rather than global governance and international perspectives.

"By participating in Model UN, I hope to become well-versed in various fields — military strategy, diplomacy, economics, and more — broadening my knowledge and enhancing my critical thinking," he said.

The outstanding performance of the student delegates at CDMUN received high praise from experts.

Zhao Yali, vice president of the China National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation, highlighted the importance of Model UN activities in shaping students' global perspectives, understanding the workings of the UN, and improving their overall abilities.

"CDMUN has left a deep impression on me," he said. "Its topics cover almost all the major challenges humanity faces today. It provides a great platform for young students to explore and engage with international developments."

Wu Qian contributed to this story.

# Z WEEKLY

## Paris 2024: behind the scenes

Chinese volunteers at the Paris 2024 Olympics reflect on their transformative experiences, from navigating their roles to forging international friendships.



From left to right: Chen Penghan (front) poses for a photo with athletes from Burkina Faso. Luo Xiaosong holds a Paris Olympic torch. Liu Jinyu (left) poses for a photo with a boxing coach from Uzbekistan. Xu Jiarui at the Stade de France. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By LI XINRAN  
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"I was just 5 years old during the 2008 Beijing Olympics," reminisced Chen Penghan, a 21-year-old student at Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU). "But I vividly remember watching the captivating opening ceremony with my family and seeing the Chinese delegation enter the stadium. From that moment, I told myself: one day, I want to be part of this grand event!"

The 2024 Paris Olympics, held from July 27 to Aug 12, saw records broken and friendships forged. The success of this monumental event wouldn't have been possible without the efforts of 54,000 volunteers, and Chen was one of them.

Chen, along with 26 other students from 14 universities partnered with the Alliance Francaise, a French language institute, was chosen as a volunteer.

Since their selection in the summer of 2022, the volunteers have attended free French lessons and participated in various cultural activities provided by the institute.

Liu Jinyu, 23, a recent graduate of BLCU with a bachelor's degree in international relations, was fluent in English at the time of recruitment but had only just begun learning French.

"The language lessons were incredibly helpful; I was able to reach a B2 level (the highest level) in the DELF (Diplome d'Etudes en Langue Francaise) in just over a year," Liu said. "The cultural activities also helped me adjust to life in Paris more quickly."

### On the field

Chen served as an Olympic Family Assistant, accompanying the president of the National Olympic Committee of Burkina Faso, as a guide and translator.

"The only challenge was at the beginning; since I wasn't used to their accent, I sometimes had trouble following everything 100 percent," Chen said. "But the president and the athletes were very understanding. They would



"The tension was real, and I almost cried when the national anthem of the People's Republic of China played in the stadium."

Luo Xiaosong, a student at Zhengzhou University of Aeronautics

repeat themselves or speak more slowly?"

Chen mentioned that in the Olympic Village, exchanging pins is a great way to build friendships.

For example, the president gave Chen an Olympic pin of Burkina Faso, which has since become his favorite. In return, Chen gifted the president a key-chain of Hehua, one of the most beloved pandas at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding in Sichuan province, which the president also cherished.

"Volunteers would often compete to see who had the most pins," Chen said. "However, we all knew that the true essence of these exchanges was the friendship and the emotional value behind the pins."

Xu Jiarui, 22, a student at Wuhan University in Hubei province, was a member of the Event Services Team stationed at the Stade de France, the national stadium of France, where the track and field events and the closing ceremony took place.



"Just like my time in France, an immersive experience is often the best way for international friends to truly understand China."

Liu Jinyu, a recent graduate of Beijing Language and Culture University

Xu's responsibilities varied daily, from checking tickets at the gate and staffing the information desk to guiding spectators to their seats inside the stadium. While these tasks might seem minor, Xu found satisfaction in them.

"The most rewarding part of this job is capturing people's Olympic moments," Xu recalled, sharing how a French spectator once thanked her for "taking the best family photo of their lives".

In addition to the daily changes in her duties, Xu was assigned to different volunteer teams in the stadium, which gave her the chance to interact with a broader range of international volunteers than many other positions.

Like Chen, Xu was also enthusiastic about collecting pins, and one of her favorite pieces came from a Japanese volunteer. It was a pin featuring Mount Fuji, and Xu gave her one with the Chinese version of the Olympic Rings. They then took a photo together, holding the pins they had exchanged.



"No matter what history our countries may have, we were there, volunteering side by side for an event that symbolizes peace for humanity."

Xu Jiarui, a student at Wuhan University

The Japanese volunteer also wrote her name in kanji and asked Xu how it was pronounced in Chinese. Xu explained the pronunciation and added that her name means "beautiful, red-crowned crane" in Chinese.

"It was a sentimental moment for me," Xu said. "No matter what history our countries may have, we were there, volunteering side by side for an event that symbolizes peace for humanity."

Liu was assigned to the transport team, a post somewhat removed from the main Olympic events. Her job was to provide assistance and information at the shuttle bus station of the Olympic Village.

Despite the challenges of working under the sun for almost seven hours a day, she felt a strong sense of achievement in helping athletes get to their training sessions and competitions on time.

Liu also built friendships with other volunteers and shared insights about China. For example, when a Mexican volunteer asked her about 3D-printed figurines, she explained that they had been available in China for several years. She also mentioned eyeglasses that can translate in real-time.



"However, we all knew that the true essence of these exchanges was the friendship and the emotional value behind the pins."

Chen Penghan, a student at Beijing Language and Culture University

"He couldn't believe it and kept asking if they really exist," Liu recalled with a laugh, adding that the most effective way to see it is probably to come to China and experience it for himself.

"Just like my time in France, an immersive experience is often the best way for international friends to truly understand China," she said.

While Liu didn't get the chance to watch any of the games in person, another volunteer, Luo Xiaosong, was able to cheer for Team China firsthand.

Luo, 21, is a French major at Zhengzhou University of Aeronautics in Henan province. He served as a National Olympic Committee Assistant for the athletes from the Republic of Sudan, helping with tasks like carrying luggage and running errands.

Luo had the opportunity to attend events such as badminton and table tennis, where Chinese

athletes won gold medals.

"It was completely different from watching the games at home," Luo said. "The tension was real, and I almost cried when the national anthem of the People's Republic of China played in the stadium."

He also mentioned another perk of being a volunteer: getting to see Olympic athletes every day. However, he emphasized the importance of managing excitement and showing respect to the athletes.

"We would only approach them when they were free and in a relaxed mood because we were representing our country at all times," said Luo. "If a Chinese volunteer disturbs the athletes, it could negatively impact the selection of Chinese volunteers for future events."

### Olympic spirit

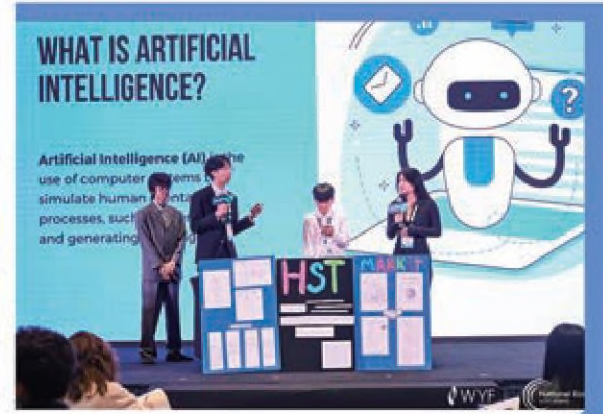
"I was just a kid during the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Now, as a volunteer at the Paris Olympics, I've come to realize what an arduous task it must have been to organize such an event," Liu reflected. "The Paris Games faced many challenges, but everyone behind the scenes did their best to make it happen. The result was more than satisfactory, creating new, classic moments in Olympic history."

Liu highlighted that her favorite part of the Olympic motto, "Faster, Higher, Stronger — Together", is the word "together". "Athletes, volunteers, and representatives from different countries, races, and backgrounds all come together in the Olympic Village, making the Games feel like a huge party for the whole world," said Liu.

Xu echoed Liu's sentiment. "The Olympics allow humanity to pursue self-improvement and breakthroughs," she said.

"I believe the essence of the Olympic spirit is about looking beyond external factors like appearance, ethnicity, or international disputes, and celebrating what humans can achieve with their bodies, striving to reach new heights."

## Z WEEKLY



# Young minds explore FQ and AI trends

The World Youth Forum 2024 in Hong Kong brought together over 300 high school students from around the globe to explore financial quotient and AI, highlighting their role in shaping the future economy.

By GUI QIAN  
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People often discuss IQ (intelligence quotient) and EQ (emotional quotient), but financial quotient, or FQ, is another crucial skill in modern society.

FQ refers to a person's ability to manage financial matters, reflecting their survival skills as an economic agent in a market-driven world.

Alongside IQ and EQ, many educators now include FQ as part of the "three quotients" essential for youth education.

An event centered around FQ — the first World Youth Forum Future Economics Leadership Summit 2024 & SKT-NEC Global Round (Asia) (WYF) — was held at the Asia-World-Expo in Hong Kong from Aug 5 to 10.

Over 300 high school students from nearly 10 countries and regions gathered, including the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong, the United States, India, South Korea, and Türkiye.

These students were selected from over 20,000 participants in global economics challenges to advance to this high-level global youth leadership summit.

The event was co-organized by China Daily 21st Century Media and Education, SKT Education Group, a global leader in youth literacy education, and the Council for Economic Education (CEE), a renowned institution in financial education.

The WYF was held during the opening of the 2024 Hong Kong Youth Day. Tan Yan, deputy general manager of the Asia-Pacific Bureau of China Daily, stated in her speech that Hong Kong, as a global economic and cultural hub, is an excellent host city for this event and an ideal location for global youth to explore diverse perspectives of the world.

Houston Hou, founder and CEO of SKT Education Group and one of the initiators of the WYF, emphasized that the most crucial aspect of



Students from around the world participate in discussion panels and project presentations at the first World Youth Forum Future Economics Leadership Summit 2024 & SKT-NEC Global Round (Asia) held in Hong Kong from Aug 5 to 10. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

having a global perspective is the ability to view all of humanity as a unified whole.

"I believe that this generation of young people, as well as future generations, have the responsibility to share the Chinese culture of universal harmony with the world through the World Youth Forum," he said.

The summit focused on economics and artificial intelligence (AI)

with the theme "Future Economy in the AI Era".

During the event, students participated in challenges and discussion panels, communicated with industry experts and scholars, attended social parties, and visited prominent financial and technology institutions such as Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX), Hong Kong University of

Science and Technology, and the Hong Kong Productivity Council.

Through these activities, the WYF encouraged students to explore how technology can better serve humanity, mitigate risks, and how the youth can seize opportunities in the AI era.

A total of 28 groups from seven countries participated in the U20 challenge. Among them, four high

school students from the US teamed up to present a multimedia project on AI, incorporating board games, documentaries, and videos. Their presentation focused on two main aspects: regulations and policies for AI innovation and risk management, and AI's impact on the economy.

According to them, the most crucial aspect for high schoolers is to

"stay informed and educated about AI because we live in a time where there is a lot of disinformation".

They emphasized that it is important for everyone, even those not pursuing a career in computer science, AI, or machine learning, to be prepared for the future.

Justin Wang, a student at Lambert High School in Georgia, US, and one of the four members, described his experience at the WYF as "unique".

"There has been no comparative economics research competition in the past, so we were very excited to essentially compete in the new lens beyond just showing economic knowledge through tests and case competitions," he said.

He also noted that the curriculum in the US is uniform across states, so students learn 90 percent of the same content. In contrast, students from other parts of the world come with varied curricula from their respective countries.

"So, I'm looking forward to seeing the different perspectives toward economics and just learning and expanding my worldview," Wang said.

Shao Ruohan, an 11th grader from Jinan Foreign Language School in East China's Shandong province, participated in an economics challenge and a critical thinking competition during this forum.

As the team leader for both events, she stressed the importance of recognizing team members' strengths and delegating tasks accordingly.

By adjusting strategies over three rounds, her team improved performance and achieved commendable results in the end.

Shao found the experience valuable for her career aspirations. "I plan to be a manager or start my own company. Participating in the challenge made me realize that managing a business is much more complicated than I initially thought. It's very demanding, and I still need to put in a lot of effort," she said.

## Harvard summit sparks US-China youth dialogue

"It's very easy to get caught up in what you see and hear on TV, but you don't really know a place or its people until you come in, experience it for yourself, and get your feet on the ground," said Wydmayer Trente Et Un, a freshman at Harvard University studying psychology and economics, at the end of the Harvard Summit for Young Leaders in China (HSYLC).

This August, around 150 Harvard students gathered in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Hangzhou to participate in the HSYLC, a 19-year-old liberal arts summer program and Harvard's largest overseas exchange initiative.

In 2023, during his visit to San Francisco, President Xi Jinping said, "To increase exchanges between our peoples, especially between the youth, China is ready to invite 50,000 young Americans to China on exchange and study programs in the next five years."

This makes 2024 a particular year

for people-to-people exchanges between China and the US. This summer, HSYLC brought the largest cohort of young American students to China in the summit's history. The event featured not only seminars on various topics but also visits to notable locations such as the Summer Palace in Beijing, a tea museum in Hangzhou, the Harvard Center in Shanghai, and major technology companies like Tencent and DJI in Shenzhen.

Among these young Americans, some have been studying Chinese for years and have visited China multiple times, while for others, this is their first time in China.

Matylda Urbaniak, a senior at Harvard studying history, Chinese, and French, emphasized how her first-ever visit to Shenzhen exceeded her expectations. "I didn't know what to expect before I came. All I knew was that Shenzhen has grown rapidly in the past 40 years. However, being here has shown me not



Chinese and US students pose for a photo during their visit to Tencent in Shenzhen, Guangdong, on Aug 9. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

only how technologically advanced the city is but also how welcoming everyone is," she said.

At Tsinghua Shenzhen Interna-

tional Graduate School (SIGS), 30 young Chinese scholars specializing in fields such as environmental science, biomedical engineering, and

electronics and information science engaged in discussions with Harvard students, exploring cutting-edge topics and interdisciplinary research.

Zhao Zhouhao, a second-year master's student at SIGS, shared his experience of befriending US student Andre Ramsey, who works in social sciences and American minority studies.

"I've gained a new perspective on the potential application of my research in electronic information," Zhao said. "Our conversations made me realize that electronic information technology could also be applied to social science research, such as using big data for ethnic behavior analysis or even employing artificial intelligence to assist in policymaking."

Addressing the audience at the summit's opening ceremony in Beijing, Shmuel Padwa, a student of statistics and philosophy who led the US staff team organizing the HSYLC, said, "I implore you to say

'hello' or 'nihao' to as many people as possible; I hope you remember what you learn in your seminars, but also the people you meet along the way."

Andre Ferreira, who obtained his bachelor's degree in government and history last year at Harvard, shares Padwa's sentiment.

"We stand at a pivotal and unprecedented moment in history, where the importance of fostering understanding, collaboration, and mutual respect between our two great nations — the US and China — has never been more crucial," he said. "As I look out into this crowd, I'm confident in our generation's ability to enact positive change and bridge the divide. HSYLC is not just an academic exchange; it is an opportunity to build friendships that will last a lifetime."

Written by Zhong Yutong, a Schwarzman Scholar at Tsinghua University.