

For the sake of future

Nation's green energy capacity grows amid pursuit of low-carbon economy
BUSINESS, PAGE 6



Country initiates investigation into Canada's restrictions
TOP NEWS, PAGE 3



Mutual understanding
Former Harvard professor highlights youth exchanges
WORLD, PAGE 15

CHINA DAILY

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Hurricane drowns Cuban town



A family from the coastal town of Guanimar, southwest of the Cuban capital of Havana, move to safety in a boat on Wednesday after their homes were flooded by torrential rain brought on by Hurricane Helene. Heavy rain and strong winds lashed Cuba as Helene passed by the island nation. On Thursday, the fast-moving hurricane was advancing across the Gulf of Mexico toward Florida. YAMIL LAGE / AFP

Leadership sets out priorities for economy

Stabilizing real estate sector, policy support among steps to enhance market confidence

By ZHOU LANXU and OUYANG SHIJIA

The top leadership of the Communist Party of China called for stabilizing the real estate market and strengthening fiscal and monetary policy support at a meeting to analyze the economic situation on Thursday, vowing to strive to hit the targets for this year's economic and social development.

Economists and market analysts said the meeting reflected top policymakers' intensified emphasis on reviving market confidence and stabilizing economic prospects amid headwinds.

A number of concrete measures to stabilize the property market and boost fiscal spending are expected, which will lay the foundation for the world's second-largest economy to achieve steady growth this year and next, they added.

The Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee held the meeting on Thursday to analyze and study the current economic situation and make further arrangements for economic work.

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, presided over the meeting.

It was agreed at the meeting that the Chinese economy has posted a generally stable performance this year, making progress while ensuring stability. It is necessary to take a comprehensive, objective and sober view of the current economic situation, face the difficulties squarely and remain confident, said a statement issued after the meeting.

The country should effectively implement existing policies, step up efforts to roll out incremental policies and strive to accomplish the targets and tasks for this year's economic and social development, it added.

"The meeting took place in September, ahead of the typical arrangements in previous years, underscoring the central leadership's heightened focus on the economic situation and macroeconomic policy," said Luo Zhiheng, chief economist at Yuekai Securities.

Luo said the meeting sent a clear signal that policy measures will be reinforced to tackle the downward pressure facing the economy since the second quarter, including lukewarm sentiment and demand, the real estate downturn and the ailing stock market.

It was decided at the meeting to strengthen countercyclical adjustments of fiscal and monetary policies, ensure necessary fiscal expenditure and implement impactful interest rate cuts, the statement said, after the country's central bank

unveiled a package of monetary easing measures on Tuesday.

The meeting also underlined promoting the stabilization of the real estate market and stopping it from further declining, outlining measures including strictly managing new commercial housing construction, increasing loans for "white list" projects, vitalizing idle land stock and adjusting housing purchase restrictions.

Chang Haizhong, executive director of corporates at ratings agency Fitch Bohua, said, "The meeting has set a very positive tone for the macro policy mix to be introduced.

"Given the supportive policies that are either being or are soon to be introduced, we believe it is still possible for China to achieve the annual growth target (of around 5 percent) this year."

Chang added that the upcoming policy mix may include the issuance of additional central government bonds to expand fiscal spending, with the top legislature likely to approve an adjusted central budget next month, and government-backed plans to purchase the idle land stock of real estate companies.

Wang Qing, chief macroeconomic analyst at Golden Credit Rating International, said: "The meeting has placed real estate in an unprecedentedly important position, and has made specific arrangements for significantly strengthening the policy support for both the supply and demand sides of the real estate industry."

"This will help effectively boost market confidence and help the real estate industry achieve a soft landing as soon as possible," he added.

China will also work hard to boost the capital market and address the hurdles facing social security, insurance and wealth management funds in entering the market, the meeting's statement said.

Chinese equities surged following the meeting. The Shanghai Composite Index rose for the seventh day on Thursday, climbing 3.6 percent to 3,000.95 points, closing above the 3000 milestone for the first time in about three months. The offshore yuan also strengthened past the 7-per-dollar benchmark on Thursday evening.

In a sign that the policies decided at the meeting are being implemented rapidly, the office of the Central Financial Commission and the China Securities Regulatory Commission released a guideline to usher mid- and long-term funds into the capital market on Thursday evening.

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US students impressed by vibrant Chinese culture

By MO JINGXI
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Rich and vibrant culture is what has deeply impressed a delegation of high school students from the United States who completed on Tuesday a 10-day trip to China that took them to Guizhou, Sichuan and Shandong provinces.

The delegation of nearly 100 teachers and students from more than 10 high schools in the state of Washington is part of China's initiative to invite 50,000 young people from the US for exchange and study programs in China over a five-year period.

Since the initiative was announced by President Xi Jinping in November, in San Francisco, more than 10,000 US teenagers have visited China so far.

Ronda Litzenberger, a member

of the delegation, said the hospitality, culture and beautiful scenery far exceeded her expectations, and it was a rich cultural exchange that will leave a lasting impression on her.

"This trip has been an incredible experience. Every adventure has been special, but our visit to the Miao village stands out. The delicious food, vibrant ethnic dancing and the opportunity to learn batik from local students were truly memorable," she said.

In Guizhou, the students played the *lusheng*, a Miao ethnic reed-pipe flute, participated in a local drum dance and tasted sour fish soup and rice wine to fully experience traditional Chinese culture. They also joined a local basketball event in Taipan village known as a "Village Basketball Association" competition.

Kenneth McKee Cryan, from Tri-Cities Prep School, said the *lusheng* is a very interesting instrument that he never knew about until he learned about it while in China.

"I really like it because it's pretty simple. And I like the sound of it," he said.

Isabella Ferguson, from Westlake High School, and her fellow students had the wonderful opportunity to discover the diverse aspects of Sichuan province.

They visited the lush, beautiful home of the giant pandas, learned about the historical bonds of the two countries at the Hall of the Heroes of the Flying Tigers in Sichuan, expanded their knowledge of Sichuan's architecture and bamboo culture, and got to taste Sichuan's mouthwatering cuisine.

"I think everything that we have

learned and experienced here helps us form a more well-rounded view of China and its culture and people. Everything that we've learned is helpful and new and exciting," she said.

Bea Kelzenberg, a senior at Stadium High School, who just got back from a journey to Shandong province on Tuesday, said her trip to universities in Shandong was an exciting experience.

"We all experienced such rich and vibrant culture from the different schools we visited, especially from Shandong University. While there, we were graced with dance and opera performances with opportunities to play Chinese musical instruments as well as try on the beautiful costumes of their culture," she said.

See *Hope*, page 3

National Endowment for Democracy: A scientific debriefing

Despite its claims of being a champion of the universal values of democracy and equality, the National Endowment for Democracy, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit foundation, has become one of the biggest enemies of world peace, stability and harmony with its double standard, sinister conflict provocations and disruptive regime change operations. Unmasking the NED has shattered the illusion of the United States' high democratic values.

Increasingly the NED's shameful deeds, especially in the Middle East, South East Asia, Africa and South

WORLD WATCH
By Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

America, are being exposed. It has often acted in close collaboration with the Central Intelligence Agency and the US Agency for International Development to support insurgent forces in other countries in a bid to overthrow regimes the US administration disliked.

Initially, the NED was created and sponsored by the US adminis-

tration as a "beacon of real democracy" in the world. In reality, it has actively been a party to all kinds of anti-democratic norms, inhuman initiatives, propaganda and anti-development plans to sabotage democratically elected governments that do not appease the Western bloc.

The NED's political maneuvers, social manipulations, media control and propaganda against the emerging countries in the Global South have been aimed at the inception of new national narratives aligned with the US.

The US trinity of CIA, Pentagon

and the NED have been jointly working to subvert, incite, confront and distort public opinion through ideological infiltration, political hyping and dissemination of false propaganda. Often they target China, Russia, Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and all countries that are allies of the "Axis of Resistance" in the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region, under the pretext of promoting and saving so-called democracy and human rights.

See *Threat*, page 3

INTEREST IN SCIENCE A BOON FOR TOURISM, INQUISITIVE MINDS

Hefei leverages its technology, innovation advantages to attract visitors

By ZHU LIXIN in Hefei
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Astronomy, education and tourism appear to be strange bedfellows, but the stars aligned last month in Hefei, Anhui province, to bring all three together for the Mid-Autumn Festival.

The Hefei Science and Technology Museum organized a series of tours combining information on the development of astronomy

In-depth

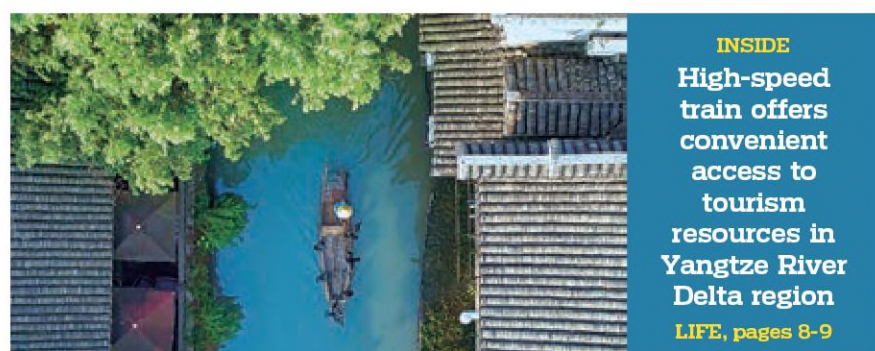
with cultural traditions related to the annual celebration, also known as Moon Festival, which fell on Sept 17.

The museum received 17,427 visitors from Sept 15 to 17, with about 600 of them taking the special tours. "The exhibits at the museum

were so exciting, and there were also science instructors explaining the exhibits to us," said Zhu Yuhan, a local student.

"It was the exhibits about animal knowledge and the experience of observing the surface of the moon through a telescope that impressed me most," said Zhu, who visited the museum on the day of the festival.

See *Education*, page 2



INSIDE
High-speed train offers convenient access to tourism resources in Yangtze River Delta region
LIFE, pages 8-9

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PAGE TWO

Students play with robots while visiting Hefei Royalstar Electronic Appliance Co in the capital of Anhui province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Education: Holidays filled with science, fun



A boy tastes the air during a science study tour in Qingdao, Shandong province, on July 25. LI ZHENG / XINHUA

From page 1

The provincial capital is at the forefront of national efforts to combine scientific knowledge, with educational and cultural activities. The idea is to not only improve people's scientific literacy but also boost the development of the tourism industry.

A series of cutting-edge technological achievements were also showcased nationwide from Sept 15 to 25 to mark the 2024 National Science Popularization Day.

Hefei has become renowned in recent years for its rapid development in science and technology innovation and manufacturing, both of which are emerging as high-lights of the city's tourism industry.

By the end of August, the city had received 3.5 million visitors for science and technology popularization activities, a 16.2 percent year-on-year increase, according to the latest statistics from the Hefei municipal bureau of culture and tourism.

Of the visitors, 494,000 came from outside the province, it added.

Growing trend

In December 2021, the State Council issued the 14th Five-Year Plan for Tourism Development, which proposed strengthening the utilization of science and technology venues and developing science and technology tourism based on related major projects and achievements.

It also encouraged the development of industrial tourism based on industrial production sites and processes, and industrial heritage, and encouraged the construction of a number of national industrial tourism demonstration bases.

The Chinese educational tourism market is showing an upward trend for the period from 2018 to 2026, according to a recent report by market analyst iMedia Research. The size of this market is expected to reach 242 billion yuan (\$34.5 billion) by 2026, the report said.

Development of China's science popularization and educational tourism market has been rapid in recent years and has great potential, according to an article released by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in August 2023.

The article, written by experts from the Institute of Geographic

Sciences and Natural Resources Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, also pointed out the sector faces challenges such as insufficient product supply, weak market regulation, low standardization, and a lack of industry talent.

Hefei is tackling these issues and is trying multiple measures to remedy the situation, according to the municipal bureau of culture and tourism.

Experts have suggested increasing product supply, enhancing existing science popularization services, strengthening market regulation and standardization, and improving talent training to promote the development of science popularization and educational tourism.

Leading hub

Hefei is a hub for mega-science facilities. In 2017, it secured approval from central authorities to construct the Hefei Comprehensive National Science Center, one of four such centers nationwide.

"The educational tourism themes in Hefei highlight the city's positioning as a national science center, focusing on eight major research and study themes such as AI (artificial intelligence), quantum technology and new energy vehicles," said Wu Yajuan, director of the municipal bureau of culture and tourism.

The proportion of Chinese citizens with scientific literacy was 14.14 percent in 2023, an increase of 7.94 percentage points from 2015 and 1.21 percentage points from 2022, according to the 13th National Survey on the Scientific Literacy of Chinese Citizens.

The survey was jointly conducted by the China Association for Science and Technology and the National Bureau of Statistics.

The proportion of residents in Hefei with scientific literacy reached 18.8 percent in 2023, ranking it 8th nationwide among all cities, the Hefei Association for Science and Technology said.

The city's development of its science popularization tours has contributed greatly to its high scientific literacy rate, according to local authorities.

Hefei currently boasts Science Island, along with one national-level industrial tourism demonstration

base, 16 provincial-level educational tourism demonstration bases, and 230 municipal-level science popularization bases.

The local government plans to add 20 more various bases this year.

Crowded venues

During the summer vacation, the Hefei Science and Technology Museum was one of the most popular destinations in the city, especially its new site based in the Hefei National High-tech Industry Development Zone.

Since its inauguration in August 2023, the site has become a hot spot for locals and visitors alike, and has positioned itself as a primary venue for scientific exploration in Hefei.

On July 28, the number of online reservations for daytime visits to the site increased from an average daily high of 5,000 people to 6,000. On Aug 5, it climbed further to reach 7,000 visitors.

In addition, night sessions on Fridays and Saturdays were introduced from Aug 5 to Sept 1, and accommodated 2,000 visitors each night. However, tickets were still hard to get.

The first nighttime visits to the new exhibition hall fell on Aug 9. Prior to the venue opening its doors in the evening, long queues formed at the entrance, with many visitors saying exploring the museum at night was a novel experience.

"The museum allows children to relax while gaining knowledge, combining education with entertainment, and stimulating children's interest in learning science," said Zhu Daohong, director of the museum.

Anhui Innovation Pavilion, based in Hefei, is China's first venue themed on innovation and is also a national base for science popularization education.

"Relying on its own science and technology resources, the pavilion launched a series of educational

courses during the recent summer vacation," said Zhou Lamei, manager of the science popularization section at the pavilion.

Study courses

Hefei authorities have been collaborating with educational tourism bodies and travel agencies to develop over 1,000 courses that cover topics such as AI, quantum computing, green energy, and aerospace.

The educational tour programs have evolved from simple industrial tourism ones to diverse, multi-themed courses.

Hefei is home to several mega-science devices, including the Steady High Magnetic Field Facility and the Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak, or EAST, which is key to a nuclear fusion reactor, also known as an artificial sun.

The EAST program is crucial to both the China Fusion Engineering Test Reactor project and the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project.

The area where the mega-science facilities are based is called Science Island, which has been listed as one of China's top 10 science and technology tourism bases.

Innovative exhibitions at the Anhui Innovation Pavilion, such as "Entering the Realm of Mega-science" and "Quantum Mysteries", offer students firsthand insights into national scientific advancements, said Zhou.

The venue hosted over 300 educational tours by the end of August for this year, attracting nearly 30,000 young participants.

Joining in

Science popularization and educational tourism products currently rely on museums, science centers, natural and cultural heritage sites and renowned universities, said the article by the Institute of Geographic



Students participate in a study tour at the Kunpeng Ecological Innovation Center in Harbin, Heilongjiang province, on May 31. WANG SONG / XINHUA

Sciences and Natural Resources Research.

These facilities and venues usually stand alone, with limited activity spaces and subject matter, leading to a greater emphasis on sightseeing rather than education.

However, integrating educational, industrial and cultural tourism is creating more opportunities.

"Visiting large enterprises for research and study is a trend this year, which is both a part of industrial tourism and sci-tech tourism," said Zhong Hui, Chairman of Shangyouhui International Travel Agency.

Xiang Xiang, a Chinese businessman based in Australia, said, "You can see that many manufacturing plants in Hefei are actively incorporating intelligent experiences and cultural tourism visits."

Xiang made the remarks during a tour of international travel agencies as part of the 14th Anhui International Culture and Tourism Festival, which kicked off in Hefei on Sept 10. "Integrating technology with cultural tourism is a very good practice, and it is a feature of Hefei," said Xiang, who visited high-tech firms including AI developer iFlytek, and NEV startup Nio.

Leveraging its experience in the field, the Hefei-based iFlytek officially launched AI research and study courses last year tailored to students of different levels to help them understand various AI technologies and their latest applications.

This year, iFlytek also initiated the "AI Planet Adventure 2024" national tour, inviting students to immerse themselves in the applications of AI in their daily life and inspiring them to actively explore and research the technology.

Gui Yang, a student from neighboring Lu'an city, recently explored technological innovation through one of iFlytek's research and study activities.

"After experiencing the multidimensional applications of AI in the research and study courses, which are integrated into various aspects of life, I have gained many insights," he said. "I believe innovation not only refers to inventing something new, but also signifies continuous development and progress, provided that one understands science and learns to innovate," said Gui.

Zhao Mei, from the China Tourism Association, thinks Hefei has fully tapped into its industrial civilization, technological culture, and tourism resources, and promoted the deep integration of tourism and industrial parks.

"This initiative is a crucial step in enhancing Hefei's visibility and influence, helping to establish high-quality new businesses for technology and industrial tourism in Hefei," said Zhao.

Teens visit factories

NIO's automobile manufacturing base in the Hefei Economic and Technological Development Area was completed in 2017 and officially opened to the public in October the next year. It has seen a continuous increase in visitor numbers, with the average annual visitor count now 100,000 people.

During the summer break, NIO's factories organized 140 summer camps, with 5,932 students participating in study programs.

"In the past, visits to these enterprises were mainly by adult groups, such as entrepreneur study tours, but now there is also a demand from teenagers, so it has become a trend that aligns with the national strategy," said Zhong from the travel agency.

"For enterprises, the significance of launching research and study is more about taking on social responsibility, promoting science and technology externally, and the need for corporate brand promotion," he said.

ChaCha Food Co, a leading nut producer based in Hefei, is also a research and study base for food safety in Anhui.

The company hosts over 300 research and study tours every year, and welcomes about 2,000 visitors. Among them are primary, middle, and high school students.

ChaCha's research and study tours provide students with information about the company's history and give them the opportunity to observe on-site operations.

"They also gain insights into the company's technological capabilities, innovation, and product quality and safety, deepening their recognition and trust in the company's brand," said Yao Yalan, who is in charge of branding for ChaCha.



A guide at the Hefei Science and Technology Museum explains a fire tornado to the children in Hefei, Anhui, on July 20. ZHU LIXIN / CHINA DAILY

TOP NEWS

Expert: Developing countries look to not take sides in conflicts

By MINLU ZHANG at United Nations
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An African expert on renewable energy said developing countries "don't want to take a side," calling for global collaboration instead of rising conflicts and competition.

"There's a lot of talk and discussion about what's happening between the US and China. But there's an African saying I like to refer to: 'When two rhinos fight, it's the grass that gets hurt,'" Wangari Muchiri, Africa director at the Global Renewables Alliance, said at a panel discussion on Wednesday.

Amid the ongoing trade wars and supply chain conflicts, "We really don't want to take a side," said Muchiri, who also represents the Global Wind Energy Council. Their membership includes the top five original equipment manufacturers from China and the West.

China Daily moderated a panel discussion on "Renewable Energy — Powering a Safer Future" at the SDG Media Zone on the sidelines of the 79th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The SDG Media Zone, organized by the UN Department of Global Communications, is a media program that aims to accelerate action on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The discussion occurred a day after the Global Renewables Summit on the sidelines of the General Assembly. The summit emphasized the goal of the UAE Consensus: to triple global renewable energy capacity by 2030 to keep the 1.5 C target within reach.

"When I speak from an African perspective, it's not just about tripling — it's about multiplying renewables fivefold. If we're aiming for five times the renewable energy capacity, we don't have time for disagreements on policy or comparing approaches," Muchiri said.

"If we're trying to deliver five times the renewables, we don't have time to fight," she said. "We don't have time to differ on policy."

To gain more accessible renewable energy technology, Muchiri called for global North-South and South-South collaboration.

"Coming from a developing country myself, when I try to import a solar panel into Kenya, I have to pay 30 percent more in capital costs, then I have to pay all the import duties, and finally, wait for the solar panel to arrive so I can deploy it in a solar farm," she said, adding that the process needed to be faster and ensure easier access.

"That means diversifying our supply chains, working through global North-South and South-South collaboration to transfer technology," she said.

The concern about diversifying clean-energy supply chains stems from the concentration of critical mineral production — such as cobalt, lithium, and rare earth elements (REEs) — in

a few regions, posing risks to supply chain stability.

For instance, the Democratic Republic of Congo supplies 70 percent of the world's cobalt, and China provides 60 percent of REEs. Australia and Chile dominate lithium mining.

China also refines 90 percent of REEs and 60-70 percent of lithium and cobalt, while leading the global output of materials like crude steel, cement and aluminum, though much of it is used domestically, according to a report by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

"Now, to reach the target of a tripling of new renewable energy by 2030, we are going to need a significantly larger amount of critical minerals. We need to create the opportunities for these resource-rich developing countries to really draw the benefit through value addition and industrial development, and investments," said Ditte Juul Jørgensen, co-chair of the UN Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals.

Jørgensen, who is also the director-general for energy at the European Commission, called for diversifying the supply chain.

Muchiri called for changes in intellectual property laws to facilitate the sharing of technology.

"We need some movement around IP laws to figure out how we can share. Remember, China wasn't always a leader in supply chain production," she said.

Many of the technology experts in Chinese manufacturing companies were educated in Australia, which once played a leading role in the development of renewable energy technologies, and "it's no longer a manufacturing hub for renewables" — China learned the technology, worked with counterparts in Australia and other parts of the world, and now they're able to scale and deploy those technologies," Muchiri said.

"Why can't we replicate that in other regions of the world? Why can't we bring technology transfer to other areas in Latin America or the Global South?" she said.

China was responsible for more than 50 percent of the 510 gigawatts of newly installed renewable energy capacity globally in 2023, according to data from China's National Energy Administration.

By 2028, China is projected to account for nearly 60 percent of the new renewable capacity expected to be operational worldwide. The IEA said that this positions China as a key player in the global effort to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030.

Francesco La Camera, director-general of the International Renewable Energy Agency, said at the panel that time is the most crucial factor in fighting climate change, as "the physics of climate doesn't allow us to delay. If we don't act now, we'll pay for the damage later."



Food for thought

Visitors admire the fare on display at a Chinese vegetarian food tasting event held on Wednesday in Washington, DC. The event, co-hosted by Shanghai Longhua Temple and the Chinese American Museum, aims to enhance people-to-people exchanges between China and the United States.
CHEN MENGTONG / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Canada's restrictive practices being probed

Discriminatory trade measures target imports of Chinese-made EVs

By WANG KEJU
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China has launched an anti-discrimination investigation into Canada's recent trade restrictive measures targeting imports of Chinese-made electric vehicles and steel and aluminum products, the Ministry of Commerce said on Thursday.

He Yongqian, spokeswoman for the ministry, said at a news conference that preliminary information and evidence gathered by the ministry indicate that Canada's planned imposition of additional tariffs and other restrictive measures on Chinese imports are discriminatory trade practices under Chinese law.

The anti-discrimination probe, which started on Thursday, will continue for three months and, if deemed necessary under special circumstances, its duration will be further extended, the ministry said in an online statement.

In late August, Canada announced a 100 percent surtax on the import of EVs manufactured in China, which will take effect on Oct 1. It also announced a 25 percent surtax on imported Chinese steel and aluminum products, which will take effect on Oct 15.

While Canada's tariff plan follows those of the United States and the European Union, Brussels has recently agreed to push forward negotiations with Beijing on a price undertaking — an alternative to imposing hefty duties — and reach a solution acceptable to both sides through dialogue and consultation.

Analysts said that even though Canada's actions are blatantly discriminatory and protectionist, countermeasures taken by China are being carried out within the boundaries of compliance and legality under the framework of the World Trade Organization.

This is the first such probe initiated

by China, and also the first of its kind in the world, said Tu Xinquan, dean of the China Institute for WTO Studies at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

"Canada has blindly followed the US and the EU, without conducting its own investigation or research. It has been extremely subjective, malicious and reckless in announcing these restrictions," he said.

The WTO's core principles can be summarized as nondiscrimination, fair trade and transparency — all of which Canada's actions have flagrantly violated, Tu said.

China's "anti-discrimination investigation is aimed at taking compliant and legal measures to defend the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises," he added.

In 2023, China maintained largely balanced goods trading ties with Canada, with the total import and export value reaching \$88.99 billion, according to data

from the General Administration of Customs.

Out of the total value, China's exports to Canada amounted to \$45.08 billion, while its imports from Canada were worth \$43.91 billion, resulting in a near equilibrium in the flow of bilateral trade.

The export of Chinese EVs to Canada accounts for around 2 percent of China's total goods entering the Canadian market.

It is clear that Canada's actions reflect some political calculations and are not based on legitimate economic concerns, said Liang Ming, director of the Institute of International Trade at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation.

The deep integration of economic globalization means the interests of all countries are now intensely intertwined, Liang said, adding that Canada's excessive protectionist trade policies will undermine the stability of global supply chains, ultimately harming the interests of its own consumers and other participants.

China has also initiated an anti-dumping probe into the import of Canadian canola and certain petrochemical goods.

China imported about 5.49 million metric tons of canola in 2023, with around 5.05 million metric tons of the total imports, or 92 percent, coming from Canada. The total value of Canadian canola imports reached \$3.47 billion last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Threat: NED creates unrest, uncertainties in regions

From page 1

Since its inception, the NED has been acting against the true principles of liberal democracy which is based on respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, noninterference, socioeconomic prosperity and unconditional international cooperation.

The NED has been trying to impose its own self-devised principles of governance, human rights, gender development and freedom of expression, which are solely for the purpose of strengthening Western hegemony and have resulted in massive socioeconomic, geopolitical and geostrategic unrest in the world.

It is good at planting the seeds of instability, disharmony and displeasure among different segments and stakeholders, ultimately creating massive political chaos, economic uncertainty and societal division to hostage the states, systems and societies in developing countries.

It is famous for financing and promoting pro-US nongovernmental organizations, think tanks, journalists, puppet media outlets and gluttonous politicians whose views align with that of the West. Moreover, it has intentionally prolonged the traditions of the Cold War by promoting a "small yard, high fence" approach in Europe, the US Military-Industrial Complex Theory, containment of China, the "China collapse" theory in the Asia-Pacific, the "Arab Spring" in the Middle East, "color revolutions" in Central Asia, ethno-social division in Africa, and sectarian polarization in Southeast Asia for its vested interests.

Obviously, it is the biggest ally of the CIA's covert operations. The private voluntary organizations in Eastern Europe, the political Islam factions in the Middle East, terrorist sanctuaries in Syria, Iraq, Sudan, Libya, Afghanistan and Pakistan and widespread network of suspect NGOs in the Association of South-east Asian Nations and Latin

America, violent groups in Africa and Mediterranean regions have all been aligned with the NED to sabotage peace, hijack prosperity and hinder peaceful rise of these societies to perpetuate white supremacy, human miseries, ethnic cleansing, genocide, borrowed and dangerous tendencies in local cultures, energy and food terrorism against other countries.

The NED has nurtured "Taiwan independence" separatist forces to inhibit the economic growth of China as the US cannot match the country's economic growth. In 2022, the NED and Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party authorities cohosted the Global Assembly of the World Movement for Democracy.

Iran has been a prime target of the NED which has been trying to overthrow the successive Iranian governments and when it was unsuccessful in doing so it declared Iran as a "global threat" and tried to alienate it. The same model was applied to Venezuela, Brazil, Cuba and numerous African countries

through sponsored think tanks and social security centers.

Furthermore, through many funded operations in Russia and by supporting Russian opposition figures in exile and by financing dissidents against the Russian government at important political junctures, such as the State Duma, presidential and local elections, it has tried to create difficulties for Vladimir Putin's administration.

However, it is certain that the NED will meet its doom as it goes against trends of our era which feature Chinese wisdom creating bridges of mutual respect, better understanding, connectivity, multiculturalism, economic globalization and international cooperation for sustainable development.

The author is president of Pak-China Corridor of Knowledge and executive director of the Islamabad-based Center for South Asia & International Studies. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

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Hope: Future of China-US relations rests on young people

From page 1

"Not only this, but to be able to converse with the students and learn about their culture firsthand was truly inspirational and moving," Kelzenberg said.

Before flying back to Washington state, the students also played a basketball game with their Chinese peers at Beijing No 8 High School on Tuesday.

Litzenberger said she was deeply moved by how the US and Chinese students played together.

"They were evenly matched, and you could see the mutual respect and care they had for one another," she said.

She added that she believes that sports have the unique ability to break down barriers and create connections.

Peng Liyuan, wife of President Xi,

watched the match and met with the delegation. Peng said she expected the young people of the two countries to get to know each other better and inject positive energy into bilateral relations.

Noting that the future of China-US relations rests on the young people, Peng expressed the hope that the US students will share their experiences with their families, friends and classmates when they

return to the US.

David Chong, president of the US-China Youth and Student Exchange Association, said he felt greatly encouraged to continue working to foster friendship between the countries after meeting again on Tuesday with Peng. Xi and Peng visited Lincoln High School in the state of Washington in 2015.

"I really appreciated their sup-

port for our association, and we will be committed to working as envoys for China-US friendship," Chong said.

According to Chong, young people from both countries have gained a deeper understanding of each other's cultures through the cultural exchange programs between China and the US, particularly since the initiative was put forward by Xi.

"The traditional Chinese culture is attracting more and more American young people with its uniqueness," he said.

Shen Xin, secretary-general of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, said it is hoped that the trips to different places in China will help plant the seeds of friendship in the hearts of the young people.

"Hopefully, the seeds will gradually grow into tall trees, making positive contributions to the healthy and stable development of China-US relations," he said.

CHINA

Network enhances pollution control

By HOU LIQIANG
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China has established the world's largest, most comprehensive and technologically advanced environmental monitoring network, according to Dong Baotong, vice-minister of ecology and environment.

The number of monitoring stations across the country directly overseen by the ministry has reached more than 33,000. About two-thirds of the stations focus on soil monitoring, 1,734 monitor air quality and 3,646 oversee groundwater, the official said at a news conference organized by the State Council Information Office on Wednesday.

"The system has covered all cities at and above prefecture level, as well as key river basins and seas under China's jurisdiction," he noted.

Beyond traditional focus areas such as water, air and soil, the monitoring network has expanded to include ecological quality, biodiversity, greenhouse gases and new pollutants, he said, adding that this broad scope ensures nearly complete coverage of all essential environmental factors.

Previously, the monitoring system mostly involved manually operated facilities.

"Now, however, automatic monitoring has become the primary method, with drones, mobile vehicles and laser radar being standard fixtures at monitoring stations across the country," Dong said.

He also said the ministry is now taking advantage of seven satellites that provide support for its monitoring work.

Dong vowed the ministry would make consistent efforts to further digitalize and intelligently transform the environmental monitoring system, as it strives to make the system more space-air-ground-sea integrated.

One of the ministry's key priorities is to improve data collection from various sources and enhance data analysis, in order to make the monitoring of data better serve the nation's pollution control efforts, he said.

Dong stressed that the ministry will intensify efforts to crack down on the falsification of monitoring data, with a particular focus on addressing violations involving third-party service providers.

During the news conference, Minister of Ecology and Environment Huang Runqiu also noted the significant achievements that China has made in promoting green transformation.

Outdated facilities that were capable of producing over 1 billion metric tons of coal, 300 million tons of steel and 400 million tons of cement have been phased out. As a result, the country has seen its industrial structure increasingly optimized, the minister said.

He added that over 95 percent of coal-fired power generation facilities in the country and more than 45 percent of crude steel production plants have undergone ultralow emission transformation, meaning that China has established the world's largest clean electricity and clean steel production systems.

Wall weeding



A worker clears weeds on the Fuguishan section of the Nanjing City Wall in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, on Wednesday. Recently, a restoration and maintenance project has been launched for the section of the wall, which boasts a history of over 600 years. Workers will endeavor to reinforce the bricks and repair the weathered parts of the wall. YANG BO / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Foreign tourists flocking to Hainan

By CHEN BOWEN in Haikou
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The number of overseas visitors in Hainan province has been increasing thanks to the convenient immigration policies of the Hainan Free Trade Port, local authorities said.

The entry and exit policies at the province are considered the most favorable in China, said Wang Haixing, director of the Haikou General Station of Exit and Entry Frontier Inspection, at a news conference on Thursday.

In February, the National Immigration Administration implemented new policies to enhance visa-free entry opportunities for people from 59 countries who want to visit Hainan. In May, a 15-day visa-free entry policy took effect for foreign tour groups arriving in Hainan via cruise ships, and in July, visa-free entry for foreign tour groups entering the island province from Hong Kong or Macao was permitted for up to 144 hours.

As of Thursday, 1.514 million inbound and outbound personnel have been inspected this year, up 278.5 percent year-on-year, according to the station.

So far this year, 238,500 foreign tourists have entered Hainan visa-free, a 6.5-fold increase compared to last year, constituting over 80 percent of the total number of overseas visitors to the island.

Wang said that visa exemptions have become the primary method for foreigners who want to visit Hainan, and they have facilitated

the hosting of major international events such as the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference and the China International Consumer Products Expo.

Luo Zhengyu, deputy director of the station, highlighted that the border inspection authorities have implemented a series of effective measures to ensure the smooth implementation of travel policies. For instance, the number of passenger inspection channels at all provincial airports has increased from 39 to 98, with the activation of 44 inbound and outbound express channels.

"This expansion has significantly reduced passenger waiting times and improved customs clearance efficiency," he said.

Additionally, passengers from 59 nations who are eligible for visa-free entry in Hainan, as well as foreign tourist groups entering Hainan from Hong Kong or Macao visa-free for 144 hours, no longer have to fill out entry cards. Furthermore, passengers arriving by cruise ships are no longer required to provide fingerprint information.

"We will introduce innovative measures to enhance the travel experience for Chinese and foreign individuals, further creating a more convenient and streamlined border inspection atmosphere," Luo said.

Two of Hainan's major airports have launched 58 international passenger routes — 36 at Haikou's airport and 22 at Sanya's — connecting 31 cities in 18 countries and regions.

This week alone, two international

routes have been launched, and a third will open this weekend, bringing the total number of international flights to and from the island to 61 by the end of this month, according to Hainan Airport Group.

On Tuesday, the route linking Taiyuan, Shanxi province, and Singapore via Sanya commenced operations. On Thursday, Haikou Meilan International Airport inaugurated its first route to the United States, offering service to Seattle, Washington. On Saturday morning, Boao International Airport will host the inaugural flight ceremony for the first international route from Qionghai to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

"For many foreign visitors, a trip to Hainan without plans has become a reality," said Mai Weiwen, CEO of Hainan Wenhua Tourism Group. "Thanks to the increasing number of international flights being launched in Hainan, local travel agencies are seizing opportunities to expand their market by venturing abroad to overseas tourist source markets."

Russian expatriate Andreev Aleksei, a lecturer at Hainan University, is excited about the preferential visa-free policies.

"I plan to invite my family members to Hainan due to the ease of travel without the need for visa applications," he said, also highlighting the convenience of direct flights from Moscow to Haikou and Sanya, as well as from other international cities to Hainan, making travel to the tropical island more accessible for foreign visitors.

PLA publishes rare photos of missile launch

Release of images shows increased level of transparency, professor says

By ZHAO LEI
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In a rare publicity move, the Chinese military on Thursday morning published pictures of its intercontinental ballistic missile launch that took place on Wednesday.

The People's Liberation Army Rocket Force published four pictures showing a big, green-painted missile soaring up into the sky after lifting off from a launch vehicle among what appeared to be tropical shrubs.

It was an unusual move for the PLA, which has seldom published photos of its intercontinental ballistic missiles, let alone images of a launch of one.

The military announced on Wednesday that the missile, carrying dummy warheads, was launched into open waters in the Pacific Ocean. It did not specify the missile's type, nor where it was launched from.

According to information published previously by the Chinese military, the PLA Rocket Force now has various types of intercontinental ballistic missiles, including the DF-31AG, the DF-5B and the DF-41.

The newly published pictures have excluded the possibility of the launched missile being from the DF-5 series, because those types are fired from either large, fixed launch towers or missile silos. The missile shown in the pictures had features that resembled those on the DF-31AG, which was declassified and debuted in July 2017 at a parade marking the

90th anniversary of the PLA's founding.

Senior Colonel Zhang Xiaogang, a spokesman for the Defense Ministry, said at a news conference on Thursday that the test was part of the PLA Rocket Force's annual training plan and was intended to examine the weapon's capability and performance, as well as to test the soldiers' operational skills.

When responding to a question about whether the missile test indicates a shift in China's nuclear weapon policy, Zhang said, "China's nuclear policy has a high degree of stability, continuity and predictability. We always adhere to our policy of 'no first use' of nuclear weapons, firmly stick to our nuclear strategy that is defensive in nature, and refrain from arms races. We have made a clear commitment not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against nations and areas without nuclear weapons, and have maintained our own nuclear forces at the lowest level required by national security needs."

Shao Yongling, a retired professor of military strategy at the PLA Rocket Force Command College, said the fact that the Chinese military published news and pictures soon after the missile test represents an increased level of openness and transparency.

"Another implication is that the PLA must have wished to use this intercontinental missile test to show the world that China's nuclear deterrence power is real and reliable, given that the country has been facing complex challenges to its national security," she said.



An intercontinental ballistic missile carrying dummy warheads blasts off from an undisclosed location in China on Wednesday. LIU MINGSONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Manila's latest provocation 'risky, futile'

By JIANG CHENGLONG
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China urged the Philippines to refrain from "making risky and futile provocations" in the South China Sea, a defense spokesman said on Thursday.

Senior Colonel Zhang Xiaogang, spokesman for the Ministry of National Defense, made the remarks at a news conference in Beijing in response to the recent comments and actions by some Philippine politicians on the South China Sea issue.

"Actions that violate the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the

South China Sea and undermine regional peace and stability are not welcomed. We urge the Philippine side not to have illusions and miscalculations and stop making any risky and futile provocations," said the spokesman.

According to media reports, the Philippine Coast Guard said it would send another ship to the Xianbin Reef after its vessel No 9701, which had been illegally anchored in the reef since April, left the region earlier this month.

In addition, the Philippine defense secretary reportedly claimed that if China removes the Philippine warship that has been

illegally grounded at the Ren'ai Reef in the South China Sea for 25 years, it would be an act of war.

Zhang said that pulling vessel No 9701 out of the lagoon of the Xianbin Reef is the "only right way forward" for the Philippines and is conducive to restoring peace and stability in relevant waters.

"China has indisputable sovereignty over the Nansha Islands and its adjacent waters, including the Ren'ai Reef and the Xianbin Reef," he said. "We will take firm countermeasures against any act that infringes on China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests."

Leizhou kiln continues to stand the test of time

By DOUGLAS DUENO
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The rich history of Chinese ceramics is well-known globally, yet nestled within this tradition is the Leizhou kiln, a unique craft from the Leizhou Peninsula near Zhanjiang in southwestern Guangdong province.

The ancient pottery craft has not only endured, but has also adapted to modern demands. Thanks to the efforts of the China Storyteller Partnerships tour, the story of the Leizhou kiln has been brought to light.

Today, the legacy of the Leizhou

kiln lives on through intangible cultural heritage inheritors who ensure the craft's techniques are preserved and shared globally.

The Leizhou kiln first emerged during the Song Dynasty (960-1279), a period often regarded as a golden age for Chinese pottery. The kilns produced ceramics that were functional and held deep cultural significance. Characterized by simplicity, elegance and distinctive craftsmanship, Leizhou ceramics reflected the era's aesthetics while drawing from local traditions and materials.

The pottery of Leizhou, with subtle bluish streaks and orange-

stained hues, is particularly renowned for its color and texture, and shaped by the unique composition of local soil and firing techniques.

During the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), the Leizhou kiln flourished, becoming a center for producing everyday items such as jars, bowls and tea sets. These items were valued for their practicality and durability, and artisans infused their work with artistic flair, adding birds and floral designs that elevated the pottery to a form of cultural expression.

While many ancient kiln traditions faded due to modernization,

the Leizhou kiln has thrived, thanks to the dedication of the artisans and their proteges who recognize the historical value of the craft.

One such inheritor, Li Xiaoming, has played a significant role in preserving the authenticity of Leizhou pottery. He has dedicated his life to safeguarding and revitalizing this ancient art. Under his guidance, contemporary artisans collaborate with cultural institutions and museums to document the kiln's history and techniques, adding a scholarly dimension to the craft's preservation.

While preservation is crucial, the craft is also experiencing a renaiss-

sance that combines traditional techniques with modern aesthetics. Globalization has opened new opportunities for Leizhou ceramics in international markets, which is key for its sustainability.

With support from municipalities and cultural organizations, efforts are underway to protect the Leizhou kiln, leading to its recognition as part of China's intangible cultural heritage.

The kiln has gained popularity overseas, particularly in countries that value fine craftsmanship. The unique blend of history and cultural significance in Leizhou pottery appeals to collectors and enthusiasts seeking rare, handmade items that connect to the past.

International exhibitions and

trade fairs have played a vital role in this global reach, showcasing Leizhou ceramics alongside other prominent Chinese pottery. Partnerships with international galleries and retail collaborations have further expanded the craft's visibility, while online platforms and e-commerce have created new avenues for reaching global buyers.

The Leizhou kiln exemplifies the resilience and adaptability of traditional Chinese craftsmanship. Its preservation over centuries highlights the essential role of cultural heritage inheritors in safeguarding intangible arts. As the kiln's products gain international recognition, they not only endure, but also thrive, forging a timeless connection between past and present.

BUSINESS

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Ganfeng eyes more lithium ties with Africa

By LIU YUKUN
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Mining company Ganfeng Lithium will further expand investments in Africa and deepen cooperation in the mining sector, a top executive said during a recent interview with China Daily.

Currently, the company is advancing its Mboukoumassi potassic salt ore project, a major potash project under construction in Africa. The main ore type in the mine is sylvite, accompanied by resources such as bromine. The lithium reserves are still under exploration.

Ganfeng Lithium also planned the Goulamina spodumene mine project in Mali.

The project is currently planned for a Phase 1 capacity of 506,000 metric tons of lithium concentrate and is under construction, with production expected to start this year. Phase 2 capacity can be expanded to 1 million tons of lithium concentrate.

Ganfeng Lithium Chairman Li Liangbin said, "With the orderly progress of the Mboukoumassi project, we hope to introduce more cutting-edge technologies to the region, train more local talent and bring more beneficial changes to the surrounding community."

\$8.85 billion

investment of Chinese enterprises in overseas lithium mines between 2002 and 2022

With China's electric vehicle and battery industries rapidly advancing, demand for battery metals like nickel, lithium and cobalt is on the rise.

To bolster critical mineral supply chains, Chinese mining companies are increasing overseas investments, particularly in lithium, nickel, and cobalt. Between 2002 and 2022, Chinese enterprises invested \$8.85 billion in overseas lithium mines, primarily in countries like Australia, Canada, Argentina and Chile, said a recent report from the institute of world economics and politics under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Many Chinese enterprises, including Ganfeng Lithium, Chengxin Lithium and others, are ramping up their presence in African lithium mines to secure future supplies of raw materials for EV batteries.

Africa is projected to contribute nearly 11 percent to global lithium supply this year, with expectations of this figure increasing to over 14 percent by 2028, according to estimates from S&P Global.

The Republic of the Congo, home to Africa's richest lithium reserves, has identified a total reserve of 3 million tons of the metal. CITIC Securities highlighted Africa as the primary arena for expanding lithium production capacity globally, in its recent research report.



A humanoid robot on display at the ongoing third Global Digital Trade Expo in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province. DONG XUMING / FOR CHINA DAILY

Digital trade a new engine for growth

Nation's cross-border e-commerce reached 2.37 trillion yuan last year

By FAN FEIFEI in Hangzhou
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While China's digital trade sector made significant progress in 2023, it is fast becoming a new engine in the country's drive to strengthen its position as a strong trading nation and injecting new momentum into global economic growth, officials and experts said.

China's import and export of digitally-delivered services trade rose 8.5 percent year-on-year to 2.72 trillion yuan (\$387.5 billion) in 2023, a record high, the Ministry of Commerce said on Thursday.

The import and export scale of the country's cross-border e-commerce reached 2.37 trillion yuan last year, up 15.3 percent year-on-year, according to a report on China's development of digital trade released by the ministry during the ongoing third Global Digital Trade Expo in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province.

Zhu Guangyao, an official with the ministry, said digital technologies such as big data, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and blockchain are increasingly integrating with various fields of social and economic development, and the booming digital trade sector has shown strong resilience and profoundly impacted the models, structure and rules of global trade.

China boasts abundant data resources, a huge domestic market and rich application scenarios for digital technologies, all of which have laid a solid foundation for the development of digital trade, Zhu said.

The scale of digital trade of all countries worldwide rose from \$6.02 trillion in 2021 to \$7.13 trillion in 2023, with an average annual growth rate of 8.8 percent, said a report on global digital trade development.

The European Union, the United States and China ranked as the top three in regard to digital trade volume, maintaining a steady growth trend. The report was jointly released by the organizing committee of the Global Digital Trade Expo and the International Trade Center during the expo.

The report also noted that the digital transformation of international trade continued to accelerate between 2021 and 2023, with the proportion of digital trade in the overall scale of international trade increasing from 19.6 percent to 22.5 percent, with an average annual growth rate of 6.2 percent.

The scale of global digitally ordered trade exports also experienced steady growth, reaching \$2.88 trillion in 2023, with the largest numbers recorded by China, the EU and the US.

In addition, the report highlighted that China is committed to building an open, innovative and shared digital economy ecosystem and providing basic institutional guarantees for cybersecurity, data security and personal information protection rights in the digital era.

Digital trade has become a transformative force that is reshaping the global economy, connecting the entire world and encompassing the seamless movement of goods, services and data across borders, driven by technological

advancements, said Ashish Shah, director of country programs at the International Trade Center.

Shah highlighted that AI is quickly improving all parts of digital trade from supply chains to how businesses interact with customers, while the shift toward digital platforms, e-commerce, fintech, AI and data-driven trade opens new frontiers for businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, which now have the tools to engage with international markets.

"Governments, businesses, and international organizations must work together to create systems that encourage innovation, protect data privacy, and make sure the digital economy benefits everyone, especially SMEs in developing countries," he added.

It is noteworthy that Chinese cross-border e-commerce platforms are ratcheting up resources to develop digital trade and help Chinese manufacturers and brands expand their presence in overseas markets. The move is expected to give a strong boost to the transformation of traditional industries by making use of digital and flexible supply chains.

For instance, fast-fashion online retailer Shein last year announced plans to extend its outreach to industrial belts in 500 cities in China. It hopes to facilitate the digital upgrade of more industrial chains, thereby helping them achieve on-demand supply in terms of production.

The company is accelerating steps to build a supply chain project in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, covering operations, warehousing, stocking, order-picking, distribution, logistics and delivery.

CRRC unveils green hydrogen train tech at Berlin fair

By ZHAO RUIXUE
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China debuted its first hydrogen-powered intelligent intercity train, CINOVA H2, at InnoTrans 2024, a leading international trade fair for transport technology, held in Berlin on Tuesday.

Developed by CRRC Qingdao Sifang Co Ltd, a Shandong province-based subsidiary of China Railway Rolling Stock Corp, the groundbreaking train runs on hydrogen power, achieving zero carbon emissions throughout its journey. It offers faster speeds, higher passenger capacity and an extended range, providing a new green solution for nonelectrified railway passenger transport.

Hydrogen energy, widely considered one of the most promising clean energies of the 21st century, is a key focus in the green transformation of railway technology.

Liang Caiguo, a senior designer at CRRC Qingdao Sifang, said CINOVA H2 uses hydrogen fuel cells to generate electricity via an electrochemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen. The four-car train is equipped with high-power fuel cells capable of producing up to 960 kilowatts, enabling sustained speeds of 160 kilometers per hour and a top speed of 200 km/h.

"The train boasts an ultra-long range of 1,200 kilometers at a cruising speed of 160 km/h, with full refueling taking just 15 minutes," said Liang, adding that with its lightweight design and integrated saloon, CINOVA H2 can carry over 1,000 passengers, adding to its appeal as a high-capacity, eco-friendly transport solution.

As a pioneering piece of green rail technology, CINOVA H2 is an "environmental champion." Liang said that the hydrogen fuel cells produce only water as a byproduct, resulting in zero carbon emissions and no air pollutants throughout the entire journey.

CRRC Qingdao Sifang estimates that each train, if operating 300,000 km annually, can reduce carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 730 metric tons per year, equivalent to 37.8 hectares of forests.

Moreover, the new train employs innovative recycling technology to turn wastewater and waste heat into resources.

Liang said that the water emitted from the hydrogen fuel cell reaction is purified and recycled to meet the onboard water needs for passenger services, thus effectively



CINOVA H2 can be used in nonelectrified railway areas, replacing traditional diesel-powered alternatives."

Wang Xueliang, deputy director of the technology center, CRRC Qingdao Sifang

ly saving water. The waste heat from the cooling of the hydrogen fuel cells is recycled for heating during the winter, making it even greener and more environmentally friendly.

CRRC Qingdao Sifang said the train's energy consumption is very low, consuming less than 0.3 grams of hydrogen per passenger kilometer at a speed of 160 km/h when fully loaded.

Not only is it environmentally friendly, but it is also highly intelligent. The train is equipped with an advanced Smart Care integrated intelligent operation and maintenance platform that enables intelligent fault diagnostics and maintenance decision-making functionality, enhancing operational reliability and reducing vehicle maintenance costs, said the company.

It said passengers can enjoy advanced intelligent amenities such as hearing assistance systems, variable transmittance curtains, smart interactive windows, digital interactive screens and onboard Wi-Fi to create a more high-tech and intelligent travel experience.

The hydrogen system of the train has undergone stringent safety tests in various scenarios and working conditions, with multiple safety protection systems, including intelligent detection and isolation protection, thus ensuring safety.

Wang Xueliang, deputy director of the technology center of CRRC Qingdao Sifang, said: "CINOVA H2 can be used in nonelectrified railway areas, replacing traditional diesel-powered alternatives. It effectively reduces carbon dioxide and other air pollutant emissions, showcasing significant environmental benefits, and will strongly promote a new green upgrade for passenger transport equipment on nonelectrified railways."



China's first hydrogen-powered intelligent intercity train seen at InnoTrans 2024 in Berlin. DENG WANGQIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Unilever ups R&D of eco-friendly laundry goods

By ZHU WENQIAN
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Unilever Plc, a British consumer goods company, has announced that it will continue to strengthen research and development efforts of more high-end and green laundry products in China to meet growing demand of such products by Chinese consumers.

Sales growth of high-quality and environmentally friendly laundry products in China, one of Unilever's three largest markets globally, has been faster than the average growth rate of overall categories, fueled by a rising number of middle-income consumers who are willing to pay for high-quality and economical home care products.

Unilever said that in the future, it aims to invest 1 billion euros (\$1.1 billion) of climate and nature fund to support its sustainability

goals and develop green products globally.

"We have actively promoted the research of green and low-carbon products. We will further reduce laundry products' dependence on fossil fuels, and integrate the concept of circular economy into product formulations and packaging designs," said Zhang Haitao, general manager of home care products of Unilever North Asia.

"Chinese consumers have shown a higher awareness of pursuing high-quality and green products and they are willing to pay for such products. Enterprises have also continuously made technological innovations of products, fueled by higher demand and policy support," Zhang added.

China aims to peak its carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060, and the nation's home care industry has continued to improve

production standards to align with these goals.

Unilever, which has had a presence in China for 101 years, said it launched four kinds of new cleaning and laundry products this year and all of them adopted low-carbon design and bio-based materials for production.

The company says it will further increase efforts in technological innovation in China.

"From upstream to downstream, we will use green and renewable raw materials. And after the use of laundry products, the packaging materials will get biodegraded and returned to nature, and thus form a closed loop," said Shen Jun, R&D head of home care products at Unilever North Asia.

The scale of China's laundry care market has steadily grown in the past decade. Sales in the sector totaled 75.12 billion yuan (\$10.7 billion) last year, growing 32 per-

cent from 57.08 billion yuan in 2014, according to a report by the Qianzhan Industry Research Institute.

The positive trend indicates a growing demand for laundry care products, driven by consumers' improved living standards and higher awareness of cleaning and hygiene. A stable market size also shows that laundry care products have been widely popularized in people's daily lives, with a high penetration rate in the China market, the Qianzhan report said.

"Low-carbon development is a necessary measure to address environmental issues, and also a critical opportunity for enterprises to enhance their competitiveness," said Wang Minyan, chairwoman of the China Cleaning Industry Association, adding that the industry should strengthen cooperation and jointly address the challenges of green transformation.

Briefly

China home to over 4m 5G base stations

The number of 5G base stations in China exceeded 4.04 million at the end of August, said the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology. The figure accounted for 32.1 percent of the total number of mobile base stations nationwide. The number of 5G mobile subscribers hit 966 million in China. The country has seen its 5G network and commercialization develop rapidly in recent years. Its 5G network now covers every city and town, as well as more than 90 percent of villages.

EV maker BYD enters Kenyan market

Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer BYD on Wednesday announced its entry into the Kenyan market, partnering with local auto dealer Loxea Kenya for distribution. Steve Chang, general manager of BYD South Africa, said in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi that the Atto 3, Seal and Dolphin models, which are designed to meet the diverse needs of the local market, will be available to consumers.

XINHUA - CHINA DAILY

BUSINESS



Employees install solar panels at a power station in Zhangye, Gansu province, on Sept. 7.
YANG XIAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

Nation's clean energy drive marches forward

Non-fossil fuel power capacity surged 78.5% since 2021

By ZHENG XIN
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China's renewable energy capacity surged to 1.27 billion kilowatts by the end of August, accounting for 40.7 percent of the nation's total power generation capacity, amid the country's accelerating efforts to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and transition toward a greener low-carbon economy, said the China Electricity Council.

The growth in renewable energy — such as wind, solar and biomass — has driven a significant rise in non-fossil fuel power capacity, said Yang Kun, executive vice-chairman of the council, at the 2024 New Power System Development (Chongli) Forum on Thursday.

China's push to build a new power system has supported the rapid expansion of renewable energy. Since the start of the 14th Five-Year

Plan (2021-25), China's non-fossil fuel power capacity has surged 78.5 percent, Yang said.

Data from the council revealed that in August alone, non-fossil energy accounted for 40 percent of the nation's total electricity consumption, an increase of 53.4 billion kilowatt-hours year-on-year, covering two-thirds of the monthly rise in power demand.

Green electricity refers to power generated from renewable sources such as wind, solar, biomass, hydropower and geothermal energy. In recent years, sectors like energy, steel and digital services have led the way in green electricity consumption, as companies increasingly adopt low-carbon production methods to support China's energy transition and carbon goals, said the council.

Zhu Yicong, vice-president of renewables and power research at global consultancy Rystad Energy, said renewable installation has surged since last year and the momentum has not been slowing down.

"We have seen combined wind and solar capacity surpass coal capacity in June this year, which is

an important milestone for China's power sector energy transition," Zhu said.

"This rapid development has also posed challenges, as rising curtailment rates, grid congestion issues as well as land resource shortages for utility-scale projects emerge in certain areas. Actions to tackle these challenges are underway, including promoting development of energy storage, enhancing grid system capabilities, encouraging integrated energy source development, and formulating locally adapted development strategies for different areas."

"Thanks to strong and sustained policy support, a mature domestic supply chain and reliable grid systems, we expect China's renewable capacity to continue such strong growth going forward," Zhu added.

The green energy push has also spurred the growth of China's green power market. From January to August, green electricity transactions soared to 177.5 billion kWh, a 223 percent year-on-year increase, reflecting the growing demand for renewable power from sectors including energy, steel and internet services, said the council.

IKEA opens fourth store in Shanghai

By WANG ZHUOQIONG
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Global home furnishing giant IKEA has opened its first integrated store in Shanghai in collaboration with Livat, a mixed-use shopping center operated by Ingka Group.

The new store, located in Shanghai's Hongqiao area, marks IKEA's fourth store in the city, reinforcing its presence with an online and offline shopping experience that prioritizes sustainability and affordability, the company said.

Highlighting the importance of the Shanghai market, Cindy Ruan, vice-president of IKEA China, said, "The continued development of the Shanghai market offers significant innovation and opportunities, and IKEA remains committed to providing high-quality products and services while growing alongside the city."

Covering a total area of 21,623 square meters across two floors, the new store offers over 9,500 home furnishing products, catering primarily to young people and families in Shanghai and the surrounding areas.

Sara Del Fabbro, deputy retail manager of Ingka Group, attended the opening ceremony in Shanghai, and underlined the importance of the Chinese market to IKEA's global strategy, acknowledging China as "one of our most important strategic markets".

"Retailing is developing so quickly, and consumer needs are constantly changing. This is a great place to be, not only for China but for global IKEA," Fabbro said, adding that she was impressed by the omnichannel retailing in the Chinese market where both the physical and digital dimensions of shopping are converging.

"For retailers, it's not about steering people toward one channel or another, but rather being present where they are and meeting them where they want us to be," Fabbro said.

Affordability and accessibility remain key drivers for IKEA in China, especially amid economic pressures across the globe.

"In times when consumers have thinner wallets and face higher everyday pressures, our everyday low-price strategy is more relevant than ever," Fabbro said.

Last year, IKEA invested in reducing the prices of 500 key products, resulting in a 70 percent increase in sales of lower-priced items compared to the previous year.

"This positive consumer response reinforces our belief that this is the right approach," she added.

IKEA plans to further lower prices on an additional 500 products this fiscal year, with an investment of about 273 million yuan. Fabbro said that a combination of affordable pricing and innovative solutions that address consumer needs is driving the company's growth in China.

Globally, IKEA continues to expand while adapting to changing consumer behaviors. In China, the company is exploring new store formats, such as its "Plan and Order Points", where customers can order, buy and plan their home furnishing solutions. This concept was tested in Shenzhen, Guangdong province earlier this year.

In addition to its physical expansion, IKEA is strengthening its digital capabilities, with online sales now accounting for 25-26 percent of the company's total revenue in China.

Hangzhou setting green transition example for country

By ZHUANG QIANG and PANG BO

Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, is developing a new type of power system by incorporating such clean energy resources as hydropower, wind, solar and storage, so as to raise its proportion of clean energy.

Recently, the city facilitated the Shuangxi Kou Reservoir — the first medium-sized reservoir with a gravity-arch dam in Zhejiang — to begin to store water and the associated hydropower station begins operations. The

city's power supplier, State Grid Hangzhou Power Supply Co, has acknowledged the hydropower facility management.

In its transition to green electricity, Hangzhou is shifting its focus from coal-fired power dominance to wind, solar and hydropower, said Fu Yunxiao from the local State Grid unit.

"Shuangxi Kou Hydropower Station consists of two 2-megawatt generating units, and its annual power generation is expected to exceed 10 million kilowatt-hours," said Meng Tianqi, who is in charge of Shuangxi Kou Reservoir, operated by Shandong Water Conservancy Group Co Ltd.

This equates to reducing the burning of 3,000 metric tons of standard coal and cutting carbon emissions by 7,850 tons, which is equivalent to planting 400,000 trees, Meng said.

The hydropower station, located upstream along the Changxi waterway — a major river resource in Lin'an district — shoulders such functions as flood control, water supply, power generation and water quality improvement.

In fact, downstream of Shuangxi Kou, there are five medium-sized and small hydropower stations, which originally depended on water current conditions for power generation — generating electricity when water flow was good and failing to do so during dry periods.

The operation of Shuangxi Kou station is akin to adding a large faucet at the source, allowing for the coordinated operation of upstream and downstream stations with a single release of water, thus maximizing the utilization of water resources, Meng said.

Fu noted that to fully explore the potential of small hydropower and photovoltaic resources, State Grid Hangzhou has developed a digital and visual wide-area smart control platform for source network load storage, enabling coordinated power generation of hydropower stations along the same riverway.

With a history of over 5,000 years and now acting as a semi-provincial level city, Hangzhou administers 10 districts, one county-level city and two counties, including Lin'an.

"Simply put, this digital supply assurance platform can send dispatch instructions to multiple hydropower stations in just one minute, increasing power generation by

about 13 percent," said Jia Lei, a staffer at State Grid Lin'an District Electric Power Co.

"With this visual energy supply scheduling management model, we can manage over 70 hydropower stations in Lin'an in a tiered and orderly manner, maximizing water resource utilization efficiency," Jia said.

Currently, transmission lines of green electricity weave through the mountains and plains of Hangzhou, bringing renewable energy from rugged terrain to the homes of its 12.5 million residents, he said.

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CHINA-ASEAN EXPO

China-ASEAN FTA set for key upgrade

By YANG HAN in Nanning
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A "substantial upgrade" of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (CAFTA) may be announced during an upcoming summit in Laos, said Kao Kim Houn, secretary-general of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, on Wednesday.

Noting that China and member economies of ASEAN have been working actively to accelerate negotiations for the CAFTA 3.0, Kao said the announcement is likely to be made in October during the ASEAN-China Summit.

"This is going to be a very substantial upgrade of the CAFTA because we want to see this free trade area (FTA) become more relevant for business," said Kao on the sidelines of the 21st China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region.

CAFTA came into force in 2010, with zero tariffs covering more than 90 percent of the imported items from both parties. The pact was upgraded to CAFTA 2.0 in 2019.

Negotiations for CAFTA 3.0 began in November 2022, focusing on fields such as reducing non-tariff barriers, increasing connectivity, and promoting both digital and green economies.

China has been ASEAN's largest trading partner for 15 consecutive years, and ASEAN became China's top trading partner in 2020. In the first seven months of this year, trade value in US dollar terms between ASEAN and China reached a total of \$552 billion, up 7.7 percent year-on-year.

Together with the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement, Kao said he believes that the two free trade agreements will bring new dynamics to the trade relations between ASEAN and China.

The RCEP agreement, which

entered into force in 2022, covers all 10 ASEAN member economies and ASEAN's five major trading partners, including China.

Kao said he hopes to see wider and deeper cooperation between China and ASEAN, not only in trade, but also in people-to-people exchanges.

"In 2024, for the very first time, the number of flights connecting ASEAN and China, on average, was about 2,300 flights per week, and the number is set to increase," he said.

Kao Kim Houn, secretary-general of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

This is going to be a very substantial upgrade of the CAFTA because we want to see this free trade area become more relevant for business."

Increased two-way travel is not only about tourists since interactions between businesspeople, students and others are also significant in terms of having more dynamic people-to-people exchanges, Kao added.

China and ASEAN have designated 2024 as the China-ASEAN Year of People-to-People Exchanges and Kao expects it to be extended by another year to further encourage exchanges and communication between people from both sides.

Noting that this is the second time he has attended the CAEXPO, Kao said he is excited to see that the expo is moving forward by covering more fields and engaging a wider range of stakeholders, expanding from the traditional areas to new sectors such as digital trade.

He also appreciates the innovative programs such as the China-ASEAN young leaders' growth program that reaches out to the younger generation and hopes CAEXPO will contribute more to the cooperation between ASEAN and China, since both sides have the shared interest of bringing greater prosperity to their people.



Visitors inquire about products at the China-ASEAN Expo in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, on Tuesday.
ZHANG AILIN / XINHUA

\$2.1b deals inked with Malaysia

By YANG HAN in Nanning

Cooperation agreements worth a total of 14.6 billion yuan (\$2.1 billion) were signed on Wednesday to facilitate a China-Malaysia industrial park project and commodity trading and supply chain finance, the meeting promoted collaboration on 15 industrial projects, 15 bulk commodity trading projects and six financial innovation projects.

Among the projects, the "Two Countries, Twin Parks" project is a major cooperative result achieved with the Belt and Road Initiative. As part of the project, the China-Malaysia Qinzhou Industrial Park (CMQIP) in Guangxi was launched in 2012, and its sister park — the Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park (MCKIP) in Kuantan, Malaysia's Pahang state — was set up in 2013.

The conference saw participation of more than 300 delegations from economic and trade authorities, business associations, research institutions, bulk commodity trading platforms and representatives from over 240 companies in China and ASEAN member states.

The industrial park (MCKIP) is not only an economic cooperation project, but also an important engine that changes the economic landscape of Kuantan and Pahang state."

Sim Chong Siang, an executive council member of Pahang

"The industrial park (MCKIP) is not only an economic cooperation project, but also an important engine that changes the economic landscape of Kuantan and Pahang state," said Sim Chong Siang, an executive council member of Pahang.

The building of the MCKIP has made Kuantan a vital trade hub, while attracting international investors and creating high-quality job opportunities for the local community, Sim said.

Noting that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of China-Malaysia diplomatic relations — and the Year of China-Malaysia Friendship — Tan Pichuang, vice-chairman of Guangxi, said the region is willing to work with all partners concerning the twin parks to jointly

promote infrastructure connectivity and cooperation in industry, investment, trade and finance.

Tan said he looks forward to jointly developing the twin parks into an example of economic and trade innovation, as well as a demonstration zone for high-quality BRI cooperation on industrial capacity.

Since the launch of the Beibu Gulf Mercantile Exchange in 2023, the platform has become a comprehensive supply chain service system, covering manganese-based products, new energy materials, palm oil, non-ferrous metals and fruit from ASEAN markets, said Wang Xiongchang, Qinzhou's mayor and director-general of the administrative committee of the CMQIP.

"To date, the platform has achieved a cumulative transaction volume of 50.8 billion yuan," Wang said.

Noting that Malaysia and China celebrated the 10th anniversary of the establishment of a comprehensive strategic partnership last year, Tan Tian Meng, secretary-general of the Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia, said the bilateral relationship is at its best point in history.

Tan said the twin parks of Malaysia and China have injected new vitality into the economic development of both countries, and he wishes to see more exchanges in the business sector to explore more opportunities in each other's markets.

BUSINESSFOCUS



Visitors check out Chinese tech company iFlytek's large language model during the 2024 World Artificial Intelligence Conference in Shanghai in July. FANG ZHE / XINHUA

Chinese market enthusiastic about emerging technologies

Practical AI adoption, feasibility remain chief challenges, but acceptance broad

By LI JIAYING
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As the development of generative artificial intelligence continues to grab headlines, more value is expected to be derived from the combined use of multiple AI techniques, which may help boost businesses with different characteristics in a more pragmatic way, said an industry report.

With the original excitement beginning to wane and early adopters reporting lower-than-expected returns on investment, GenAI is showing its limitations amid some inflated expectations, according to research company Gartner's latest report of Hype Cycle for Data, Analytics and AI in China.

Despite the current fierce competition in the field, at least two-thirds of GenAI projects are expected to be abandoned by 2025 after proof of concept due to factors such as poor data quality, insufficient risk control, rising costs and unclear business value, the report said.

"For China, it will take about two to five years for its GenAI technologies to become mature and enter a stable status of productivity," said Ben Yan, director analyst at Gartner.

Yan said the country's adoption rate of GenAI in production now lags behind global levels and is lower than originally anticipated, which is somewhat surprising.

The adoption rate of GenAI in production stood at 8 percent in China at the end of June, merely 2 percentage points higher than a year earlier, while the global average level stood at over 21 percent at the beginning of this year, Gartner said.

Lack of proper use cases, unjustifiable business value, insufficient model capability and maturity, as well as deficient corporate data AI readiness are believed to be the major challenges for enterprises to deploy GenAI in their production, the data showed.

As for the biggest challenge — proper use of GenAI in production — Yan said that state-of-the-art large language models are not necessarily always the best choice for all kinds of businesses. For example, a service robot doesn't require a programming module as most LLMs do, in which case small LLMs and mid-tier LLMs may be more practical options.

"We have noticed a clear trend from the enterprise side that their pursuit of AI has shifted from an LLM-focus to an integrated application focus that

attaches more weight to final implementation," Yan said. "It is all about matching the right AI technique with the right scenario."

He said other innovations in AI technology — such as domain-specific GenAI models, multimodal GenAI and decision intelligence — are also on the rise and merit due attention.

To deliver maximum benefits and returns, business leaders are advised to base future system architecture on composite AI techniques by combining approaches from innovations at all stages of the development cycle, instead of sticking to one solution, Yan said.

However, despite the relatively low level of implementation efficiency, Chinese companies and consumers are still showing huge interest in embracing AI.

According to a recent Vodafone Business report, 65 percent of surveyed Chinese companies firmly believe that the application of new technologies can help them overcome business challenges, exhibiting a stronger confidence in emerging technologies compared with other markets in the Asia-Pacific region.

"Chinese companies have shown distinct enthusiasm in adopting emerging technologies like GenAI, enabling them to build a competitive edge on the global stage," said Eliza Kwok, senior vice-president

and head of North Asia at technology communications company Vodafone Business.

"AI technology has become a catalyst for business trust in the Chinese market. If used wisely and effectively, it can help narrow the trust gap between business operators and consumers," Kwok said.

At the consumer level, 35 percent of surveyed customers in China say the use of GenAI will increase their trust in an organization, compared to customers in Singapore (23 percent) and Australia (19 percent), the Vodafone Business report said.

In addition, the majority of customers in China (71 percent) demonstrate higher levels of trust and confidence in the way businesses use new technologies, far higher than that of consumers in other Asia-Pacific markets such as Singapore (45 percent) and Australia (34 percent).

"Compared with other Asia-Pacific markets, Chinese consumers are more open to AI technologies," Kwok said. "Your consumers may be more tech-savvy than you think."

While the market has shown huge enthusiasm for AI, companies should also deploy such new technologies in a more responsible way, prioritizing issues such as data transparency and security, in order to enhance consumer trust and achieve long-term sustainable growth, she added.

Artificial intelligence makes e-commerce even more efficient

BEIJING — "Unbelievable! I thought she was a real person!" a visitor exclaimed in amazement after finding out that the live-streamer selling beauty products on a large screen was a digital production.

1.22 trillion yuan
value of China's cross-border e-commerce trade in the first half

The digital livestreamer named Yanxi has completed over 400,000 hours of livestreaming for more than 5,000 brands, attracting at least 100 million views, said a staff member at the booth of Chinese e-commerce giant JD.com at the 2024 China International Fair for Trade in Services, which was held in Beijing earlier this month.

With the help of Yanxi, merchants can set up an e-commerce livestreaming room within just two hours, at a cost only one-tenth of that required for a human live-streamer, enabling them to provide consumers with services 24/7.

JD.com also launched an AI-generated content platform, which assists merchants in making product images, marketing copy and short product videos with a simple click. This innovation helps increase efficiency by more than 90 percent.

It was evident at CIFTIS that AI, with its diverse array of products, is bringing new vitality and momentum to e-commerce.

Alibaba.com, a Chinese cross-border e-commerce giant, announced at CIFTIS the launch of a comprehensive AI application in foreign trade. Every step of cross-border trade, including procurement, search, product launch, reception and logistics, is now connected to AI technology.

When a product is sold in different countries and regions on Alibaba.com, the priorities of the display models and prices provided to sellers are different, said Jiang Lin, head of the capital brand of Alibaba.com.

The platform helps merchants gain a better understanding of the markets in different countries and

regions through big data and AI analysis, Jiang said.

Last year, Alibaba.com launched an AI business assistant that's now utilized by over 30,000 small and medium-sized enterprises. It can automatically generate a full set of product information such as title, keywords, price and pictures according to a product image or several keywords, reducing the time for sellers to publish goods from 60 minutes to around 60 seconds.

Lyu Hongwei, co-founder of Hebei Hangfa Technology Co Ltd, said that the company's tedious and repetitive work like publishing goods has been handed over to the AI business assistant.

China's cross-border e-commerce imports and exports reached 1.22 trillion yuan (\$174 billion) in the first half of 2024, an increase of 10.5 percent, according to an analysis report on China's e-commerce regional development big data released at CIFTIS.

Digital trade services in the era of AI are expected to provide one-stop export services for enterprises, thereby creating new growth points for services trade, said Liu Guangjun, head of the Chinese merchants division of Alibaba.com.

As digital technology continues to advance, it will further promote the development of global services trade in the future, said Long Guoqiang, deputy head of the Development Research Center of the State Council, at CIFTIS.

XINHUA



A robot poses during the 2024 China International Fair for Trade in Services in Beijing on Sept 12. ZOU GUANGPING / XINHUA

Thriving digital industry spurs emergence of new cutting-edge professions

BEIJING — Riding in a self-driving car may seem effortless, but piecing together the jigsaw of intricate artificial intelligence systems behind it still requires a human touch.

Smart vehicle testers are newly created career positions made available by AI transportation. They are responsible for conducting tests in autonomous vehicles, checking braking and steering functionality and recording critical test data.

Smart vehicle testers are among 19 new professions officially recognized by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security in July. Over half of these new jobs involve digital and smart technologies, such as operators of generative AI systems and industrial-internet maintenance workers.

The ministry also released a guideline defining the work of the new professions. For example, a generative AI system operator uses AI-related technologies and tools to design, train, update and maintain an AI system.

Additionally, the ministry unveiled 28 newly classified types of work, such as livestreaming recruiters, increasing the number of job openings.

"The emergence of these new professions reflects the latest demands of Chinese society and the marketplace," said Zhang Chenggang from



An intelligent connected vehicle tester conducts tests at an automobile inspection center in Tianjin in June. SUN FANYUE / XINHUA

Capital University of Economics and Business.

Zhang, who leads a research center on new professions, added that sectors like the digital economy and

information technology are driving China's industrial transformation and upgrades.

"Many jobs will be created by these sectors, considering the wide-

spread use of AI technology."

China's digital industry has seen robust growth in recent years, reporting a total revenue of 32.5 trillion yuan (\$4.63 trillion) in 2023.

"The emergence of these new professions reflects the latest demands of Chinese society and the marketplace."

Zhang Chenggang, a researcher at Capital University of Economics and Business

A report from the 7th Digital China Summit in May shows that the output of core sectors of the digital economy constituted 10 percent of China's GDP in 2023, with the number of major AI firms exceeding 4,500. The rapid expansion in the sector has led to a talent shortage of 25 to 30 million experts.

Meanwhile, an increasing number of young people are seeking opportunities in China's digital economy, as the country's advancements in technological innovation and industrial upgrades are fueling a boom in job prospects.

According to official data, digital

sector jobs have surged in popularity among new graduates in 2024, with IT, internet and AI roles being the most sought after.

However, despite the emergence of new professions and rapid development of the country's digital industry, challenges remain in matching talent with industry needs.

As China accelerates digital transformation of its manufacturing sector and promotes new industrialization driven by AI, optimizing the training of skilled personnel is essential to better meet the evolving needs of the sector, said Gao Ziping, a researcher at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.

Gao added that job seekers should strengthen their professional skills to qualify for these emerging roles.

To cultivate more professionals, nine central government agencies jointly released a three-year action plan this year, aimed at expediting the development of digital talent to support the growth of the digital economy.

A comprehensive cultivation framework integrating industry associations, enterprises and higher education institutions will be established to better align talent supply with market needs, according to the plan.

XINHUA

LIFE

EXPERIENCE THE YANGTZE RIVER DELTA REGION ON THE G8388

High-speed rail loop offers convenient access to rich tourism resources, Zheng Zheng and He Qi report in Shanghai.

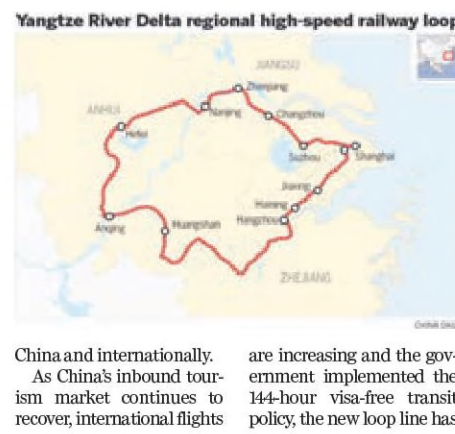


Visitors board the G8388 high-speed train. PHOTOS BY GAO ERQIANG / CHINA DAILY

Every evening, the G8388 high-speed train pulls into Shanghai Hongqiao Station, its terminal stop — 15 kilometers from its starting point of Shanghai Railway Station — after a loop spanning over 1,200 kilometers.

Since its launch on June 15, the G8388 loop has witnessed soaring demand, with about 349,000 riders as of Sept 9 and an average occupancy rate of 90 percent.

Along the way, the rail route provides access to rich historical sites, scenic mountains and waters, and ancient cultures including classical gardens, the "hometown of honey peaches" of Yangshan, Huangshan Mountain, Qiandao Lake, West Lake and Shanghai's only preserved fishing village — destinations celebrated across



China and internationally are increasing and the government implemented the 144-hour visa-free transit policy, the new loop line has

seen many foreign passengers. Additionally, rail authorities have released supportive measures to facilitate smooth traveling.

Shanghai Railway has added bilingual volunteers and information at ticket windows and entrances, with a dedicated window for passport verification.

Mobile payment via WeChat and Alipay has also been enabled at windows and station shops, allowing international visitors to easily make purchases using foreign bank cards.

Contact the writers at zhengzheng@chinadaily.com.cn

Online See more by scanning the code.



ZHENG ZHENG

The loop train G8388

Route length: 1,288 kilometers

Duration time: 8 hours and 9 minutes

Stations: 21 along the loop

Departure and arrival: The train departs from Shanghai Railway Station at 10:27 am and arrives at Shanghai Hongqiao Railway Station at 6:36 pm.

ZHENG ZHENG

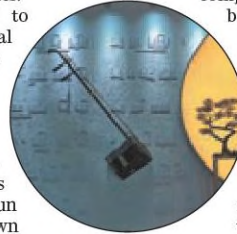


The G8388 high-speed loop line, an 8-hour journey, covers the much populated and economically vital Yangtze River Delta region.

Wuxi — Musical instrument evolves with modern vigor

Wuxi, Jiangsu province, represents a vital cultural hub of Jiangnan (lower reaches of the Yangtze River) civilization and a popular tourist destination with acclaimed attractions and historical sites.

Meicun became Ma's new home, where dozens of erhu workshops uphold storied brands and are housed.



The erhu (two-stringed fiddle) is the most recognized machine-made from handcrafted erhu.

When it comes to Wuxi-made musical instruments, the erhu (two-stringed fiddle) is the most widely recognized. Arriving at the Wuxi New District Railway Station provides easy access to Meicun village, which is known to be "China's capital of the erhu" for over 50 years.

From its clusters of over 10 renowned workshops and brands, the village crafts nearly 50,000 erhu annually, accounting for approximately one-quarter of the domestic market share for mid-range to premium models.

Yet Meicun's cultural resonance extends beyond its erhu makers' efforts into new generational realms. A social media sensation has injected new enthusiasm for this traditional two-stringed fiddle among young audiences worldwide.

From the 1960s onward, Meicun fostered folk instrument workshops to elevate its erhu craftsmanship. "People from home and abroad come here to see how these iconic instruments are made traditionally," says Bu. "It sparks pride once they realize the skill involved, instead of just viewing it as antiquated."



Erhu Cultural Park in Wuxi, Jiangsu province. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Huishan — Blossoming into peachy tourist venue

The Wall Street Journal once dubbed "the most delicious peaches in the world". In recent years, Huishan, also part of the city of Wuxi in Jiangsu province, has undergone a significant transformation, evolving from its roots as the "Hometown of Honey Peaches" to a multidimensional tourist destination centered on its iconic fruit.

Traveling by train from the Wuxi New District Railway Station to Huishan Railway Station takes only 15 minutes. If you're not familiar with Huishan, you've probably heard of Yangshan honey peaches, which

Huangshan Mountain — Ancient attraction gets slice of American pizza pie

There is an old saying that, "after visiting Huangshan, you don't need to visit any other mountains in China". Huangshan Mountain in East China's Anhui province is a national treasure and a wonder of the world, as well as a symbol of the province.

Left: Huangshan Mountain in Anhui province is a national treasure and a wonder of the world, as well as a symbol of the province. Right: Adrien Brill's unique "Chou Guiyu" (stinky mandarin fish) pizza at his restaurant.

hamlet steeped in ancient tradition, a forerunner has fused East and West in an aromatic, unlikely creation — the "Chou Guiyu" (stinky mandarin fish) pizza.

Left: Qiandao Lake features over 1,000 islands. Right: Caviar from fish in the lake. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

combining rural tourism, country living, wellness retreats and family vacations. One example is the Yangshan Peach Blossom Festival, which began in 1997 and has grown into an annual celebration attracting thousands of visitors who come to admire the blooms and peaches and indulge in an ever-expanding array of peach-infused products.

Using its billion-year-old volcanic resources and vast peach orchards, the town created a pastoral integrated resort concept

more than 1.6 billion yuan (\$225.47 million). Yangshan's scenic highlights include the peach island scenic park, which consists of peach-themed islands, gardens and more.

While sitting in the rustic countryside of Nanxinan, Brill remains energized by the warmth and support from locals like his neighbor Lao Wu (one surname Wu). On his first day renovating the restaurant space years ago, Wu insisted Brill join his family for a home-cooked lunch.

Left: Qiandao Lake features over 1,000 islands. Right: Caviar from fish in the lake. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Left: Qiandao Lake features over 1,000 islands. Right: Caviar from fish in the lake. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Qiandao Lake — Asian Games location finds new life

Left: Qiandao Lake features over 1,000 islands. Right: Caviar from fish in the lake. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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Left: Qiandao Lake features over 1,000 islands. Right: Caviar from fish in the lake. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Jinshanzui — The city's last fishing village

The Jinshan North Station offers visitors a unique opportunity to experience nature and history in this coastal district.

While new things go viral, old memories are also preserved. In the village lived a former fisherman Yang Huogen, who records memories of life at sea through vivid paintings.



Seafood dishes at Jinshanzui fishing village.

One of the centerpiece is Yang's 30-meter scrolling panorama depicting the working lives of fishermen across all four seasons. Additional albums document the village's evolution from his childhood.

Left: Qiandao Lake features over 1,000 islands. Right: Caviar from fish in the lake. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

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Fengting ancient village in Jinshan district. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



LIFE



Industry insiders talk about the production ecosystem of micro-dramas at a forum held during the 2nd Beijing Internet Audiovisual Arts Conference earlier this month. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Micro-dramas make big impact

Short series surge in domestic market, expecting to match scale of film industry, **Xu Fan** reports.

In the hustle and bustle of daily subway commutes, many frequently witness such a scene — passengers wearing headphones engrossed in short videos on their smartphones.

Amid this unprecedented expansion of the internet era, China's entertainment landscape is rapidly evolving. Younger generations have become more accustomed to consuming short tales in bite-sized moments, whether during their daily commutes or leisurely dinners.

The latest statistics indicate the domestic market size of micro-dramas reached 37.39 billion yuan (\$5.31 billion) last year, marking a sizable surge of 267.65 percent year-on-year, according to a forum during the recently concluded 2nd Beijing Internet Audiovisual Arts Conference.

"This figure accounts for around 70 percent of the domestic film industry's annual box-office receipts last year. We anticipate that by the end of 2024, the overall scale of the micro-drama industry could match that of the film market," says Wang Chen, head of Douyin's micro-drama division, one of the country's leading short-video platforms.

"The micro-drama industry has expanded rapidly in recent years, already shifting from a niche new market to a mainstream, established one," adds Wang.

Li Jiang, chief executive officer of Dianzhong Tech, a Beijing-based company that focuses on digital content for mobile devices, says that in a survey, they found over 10,000 micro-dramas on the market last year, 70 percent of which were adapted from internet literature.

As a product of China's mobile internet ecosystem, micro-dramas typically feature episodes that range from tens of seconds to 15 minutes, showcasing fast-paced storytelling that easily resonates with audiences, providing entertainment and alleviating negative emotions such as stress and anxiety.

Recognizing the huge market potential, Wang reveals that Douyin has partnered with major television production companies and



Clockwise from top left: A visitor uses a virtual reality device at one of the conference's exhibitions; the poster for a sci-fi micro-drama inspired by the archaeological site Sanxingdui in Sichuan province displayed in the exhibition; and a scene from *Da Guo Nian De* (The Spring Festival), a popular micro-drama.

internet influencers to create a total of 40 micro-dramas earlier this year, with 15 amassing over 100 million views each.

Among these, one standout is *Da Guo Nian De* (The Spring Festival), a thought-provoking series delving into the challenges women face in maintaining their marriages. With each episode spanning four minutes, the series has garnered over 1.2 billion views online, with the most popular episode receiving 1.92 million "likes".

Shen Hongxiang, the director of the program, reveals that the key to crafting a successful micro-drama lies in developing the script from the audience's perspective, through understanding their challenges, difficulties and dilemmas to make the drama serve as

an emotional outlet. Interestingly, some cutting-edge technologies, which are still limited in use in traditional showbiz sectors like the movie and TV industries, have already made their way into the emerging micro-drama industry.

An internet celebrity who goes by the name Huihui Zhou, with 15 million fans on Douyin, says that her show *Qi Liang Ren Sheng* (The Weight of Life) has utilized virtual reality production — which enables scenes captured by the camera to instantly merge computer-generated scenes with actual imagery.

The 16-episode series tells a suspenseful story unraveling the case of a missing child. It begins with a tense scene in a moving cable car where the desperate

mother confronts the suspects. Recalling the production process, she says that the drama was filmed on a soundstage in Changsha, Hunan province. A life-size cable car prop was installed about a meter above the ground against a giant LED screen, which displayed the urban backdrop featured in the show, creating an immersive environment that helped the actresses and actors deliver more powerful performances.

Li from Dianzhong Tech echoes that the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence technologies will also enhance the productivity of the micro-drama industry, predicting that creativity and innovation will become the most crucial skills for content creators in the future. However, he highlights a major

challenge — the prevalence of similarities in storytelling and themes. Li says he hopes micro-drama creators can diversify beyond commonly seen themes like time-travel narratives to explore more unique stories.

Li also mentions that micro-dramas could serve as a new avenue to promote Chinese stories and cultures overseas, with North America currently being the largest foreign market for consuming such content. He adds that some micro-dramas were shot in the United States and Canada, with themes ranging from original fantasy tales featuring werewolves and vampires to realistic urban romances.

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Crossbow hits the bull's-eye in Pengshui

By TAN YINGZI and DENG RUI in Chongqing

A traditional sport, Miao crossbow, is becoming increasingly popular among young people in Chongqing's Pengshui Miao and Tujia autonomous county, as youth display a keen interest in Chinese culture and history in recent years.

Located in southeast Chongqing, Pengshui is home to 318,000 Miao people who comprise 45.4 percent of the county's population.

The crossbow holds significant historical and cultural importance among the Miao ethnic group in China. The Miao people have a long tradition of using crossbows for hunting, warfare, and cultural ceremonies. The crossbow is not only a practical tool for survival but also a symbol of bravery and skill within Miao society.

In the 1980s, it began to grow in popularity among many ethnic groups. In 1986, it was listed as a competitive event at the 3rd National Traditional Games of Ethnic Minorities.

The Miao crossbow is known for its unique design and craftsmanship. It is typically made of wood and bamboo, with intricate carvings and decorations that reflect the cultural heritage of the Miao people. The crossbow bolts are often decorated with feathers and other embellishments, adding to their aesthetic appeal.

In 2005, the production and shooting skills of the Miao crossbow were included in the intangible cultural heritage list of Pengshui county.

Pengshui boasts a long history of making and using the Miao crossbow with a professional team set up in 1989. In 1999, the Pengshui Crossbow Team represented Chongqing for the first time at the 6th National Traditional Games of Ethnic Minorities and got fourth place in the individual event. Now, it is the home to the only professional Miao crossbow shooting and manufacturing team in the southwestern municipality which has won eight golds, 14 silvers and 12 bronzes at the national events.

"All of our crossbows are made in the traditional way," says Zhang Hao, coach of the team.

The traditional Miao crossbow is made without any metal parts, but with wood, bamboo, animal bone, rope and other materials, he says.

In the county, local communities and schools will organize crossbow activities every month to promote the sport, especially among young students. In Miao culture, men were trained in the traditional art of using the crossbow from a young age.



A member of the local Miao crossbow team practices shooting at a training base in Pengshui Miao and Tujia autonomous county, Chongqing, on Sept 19. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

"More and more people are participating in crossbow shooting," says Wang Heng, a champion of the men's standing position in the national standard crossbow event at the 10th National Traditional Games of Ethnic Minorities in 2015.

"This intangible cultural heritage is our excellent ethnic culture, and we have a responsibility to protect and pass it on," he says.

Among the 10 members of the local crossbow team, most are Miao people. They all have their own jobs, but when they have free time, they gather together for training.

"We strive to improve their competitive level while making efforts to pass on this skill to future generations," the champion says.

The Miao ethnic group can be traced back to a group living in the eastern plains of China over 7,000 years ago. More than 11 million Miao people are now scattered across nine provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions in southern China.

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Anime fan witnesses subculture become mainstream

I was 11 years old in 1999 when the anime series *Dragon Ball Z* aired in the United States for the second time. Its blend of action, sci-fi and fantasy was unlike anything available to American children at the time.

The show's naive yet brave protagonist Son Goku became my hero. Goku flew on a cloud and battled demons and aliens using kung fu and a staff that could extend.

It wasn't long before I learned the series came from Japan; it was

part of a vast library of animation geared toward teens and adults. At the back of my local video rental store, I could find VHS copies of Japanese classics like *Akira*, *Mobile Suit Gundam* and *Perfect Blue*. I was drawn to the novelty of the visuals and cultural inspirations.

I bought *Dragon Ball Z* toys when I could and demanded my parents drive me to esoteric shops in the city so I could pay extra for a bootleg copy of the PlayStation game because it wasn't released for American distribution. I had become an anime nerd.

I sensed that I was part of a subculture because my friends who were brave enough to wear print T-shirts emblazoned with Goku as

a super *saiyan* were teased in class. We all received that treatment whenever we used terms like "Kamehameha", the most widely used finishing attack in the *Dragon Ball* series, Goku's signature technique. Our classmates accused us of speaking foreign gibberish.

Twenty-five years later, I reflected on those memories when I heard a panel of celebrities discuss Son Goku on late-night television. The audience didn't need a primer to understand who the character was. These days, anime is as mainstream as Mickey Mouse.

Despite Son Goku's fame in the United States, relatively few Americans might know that his creator, Akira Toriyama, drew inspiration

from the Chinese classic novel *Journey to the West*. The novel's protagonist is Sun Wukong, the Monkey King, who rides a cloud and battles spirits using kung fu and a staff that can extend.

He is the titular character of the smash hit video game *Black Myth: Wukong*. The game is gorgeous, punishing and, most importantly, fun. Players must battle through a gauntlet of bosses based on Chinese mythology. As is the popular trend in gaming, the plot isn't explained explicitly; players must read disconnected text to infer the greater story. The international gaming community is feverishly gobbling up any lore they can.

This has been my life for the past

few weeks. I've scoured the internet for morsels of backstory and symbolism. I'll admit that I have felt remorse at least once for killing a boss in-game after reading about his tragic backstory.

I am a child agent, eager to nerd out over novel content.

Such is the way culture is shared. Curious individuals seek what is new and share it with their friends and family. Eventually, a trendsetter will catch on and expose the gem to a broader audience. What is foreign becomes familiar and subcultures become mainstream. Culture is sticky; it cross-pollinates.

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COMMENT

Editorials

US on a hiding to nothing trying to use human rights lies to ostracize China

Spreading lies about the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region has long been a tactic employed by the United States to smear China's image and interfere in its internal affairs with the aim of destabilizing the country.

This effort has intensified over the past several years with the US and its allies pointing a finger at China, accusing it of committing what they claim are crimes against humanity, citing fabricated stories about "arbitrary and discriminatory detention" of Uyghur people. These accusations have not a shred of truth to them, and they are being increasingly rejected in the international arena, as many countries are voicing their firm opposition to Washington politicizing and weaponizing human rights.

That more than 100 countries voiced their support for China on Tuesday, refuting criticism of its human rights record by the US and a small group of other nations, during the ongoing 57th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, speaks volumes of the extent of failure of the US-led smear campaign against China.

Cuba, in a joint statement on behalf of around 80 cross-regional countries at the session, stressed that "respect for sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of states and noninterference in internal affairs of sovereign states represent basic norms governing international relations". "We oppose the politicization of human rights and double standards," it said. Other countries that voiced their support for China include Uganda, representing the Non-Aligned Movement; Venezuela, speaking for the Group of Friends in Defense of the UN Charter; and Gambia, representing the African Group.

The support that China has received is mainly due to the progress it has made in human rights protection. Xinjiang, for example, now enjoys social stability, economic growth, solidarity among all ethnic groups and harmony among various religious beliefs. The legitimate rights and interests of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang are fully protected, and what China has achieved in advancing human rights is there for all unbiased people to see.

Yet some China hawks in Washington have chosen to turn a blind eye to these realities, and have been consistently attacking and smearing China's governance of Xinjiang and other minority ethnic groups-inhabited areas under the pretext of human rights. Democrats and Republicans are reportedly stepping up pressure on the Joe Biden administration to strengthen its stand on what they claim is "China's oppression" of the Uyghur people.

This week, Ritchie Torres, a congressman from New York, sent a sharply worded letter to Avril Haines, director of national intelligence, chastising the administration for failing to deliver a report on China's treatment of the Uyghurs. And on Wednesday, the House of Representatives passed a Republican-led measure that attempts to force the Joe Biden administration to prohibit contacts with Chinese officials involved in the "oppression" of the ethnic group.

The US government passed the "Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act" in 2021, which imposed sanctions on China on the false pretext of human rights violations.

If the US is so concerned about the human rights of Muslims, why does it continuously provoke or support wars in the Middle East, which have caused numerous innocent Muslim casualties? Why does it turn a blind eye to the historical injustices faced by the Arab people and not support Palestine in becoming a full member of the United Nations? These questions, as raised by Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Wednesday in New York, are revealing when it comes to the real purpose of Washington perpetually beating the human rights drum.

The support China has received on the issue shows the US is flogging a dead horse. Washington should stop politicizing a cause that calls for mutual respect, mutual assistance and cooperation of countries.

Autonomy not just sitting on the fence

Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar made some interesting remarks on Sino-Indian relations on Tuesday on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly during an event hosted by a think tank in New York.

He correctly pointed out that the two neighbors' relationship is "key to the future of Asia". But in saying that, the top Indian diplomat was not trying to present a rational analysis of how the two countries should responsibly manage their relations, but instead trying to justify New Delhi's sit-on-the-fence balancing act.

In response to China's rise, New Delhi has aligned more closely with Washington, joining the Quad, the United States-led security bloc that also includes Australia and Japan. At the same time, it is also a member of BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, groupings that include China and Russia.

Jaishankar also rightly said there was no need for India to pick a side. "We chew gum and walk at the same time," he quipped when asked about taking part in the different groupings with competing powers.

New Delhi regards the Quad, a de facto US geopolitical tool integrated into Washington's China-containment strategy, as a means of leverage for India to pursue its interests in the Asia-Pacific region by working with the US and "like-minded" countries.

On the other hand, India benefits from its economic engagement with China, including getting huge trade and investment opportunities. Maintaining a working relationship with China also provides the country with avenues for diplomatic dialogue with the Global South that it would not otherwise have.

Because of this, India is not willing to go all-in with the US' China-containment strategy. Jaishankar said, it was not "feasible to expect that big countries constrain their options and do not deal with other countries, not because of their interest but because somebody else has a problem with those countries".

But the Narendra Modi government is in denial if it thinks Washington won't demand its pound of flesh.

The US is aware that India is attempting to use it to counterbalance China's influence in the region and to gain access to advanced technology, but it expects to exploit New Delhi's agenda in service to its own by using India to strengthen the net of containment it is trying to draw around China.

In an apparent move to do Washington's bidding, two Quad countries, Japan and Australia, as well as New Zealand, carried out a naval display of force with a transit through the Taiwan Strait on Wednesday. The US is unlikely to let India just sit at the table of the US' strategy to contain China and let it steal the scraps. It will expect it to take part in the preparations and cooking of the meals. India will be made to pay more for its Quad membership.

True strategic autonomy is based on self-confidence. India's approach reveals its lack of it. The Modi government is only fooling itself if it thinks it is viewed as a trustworthy partner when its "strategic autonomy" is so clearly opportunistically calculated.

True autonomy means proactively undertaking one's global duties and working for the common good. That is what differentiates BRICS and the SCO from the Quad. India's autonomy slyly shirks its responsibility by linking hands with both China and the US, not with the intention of bringing them closer for the benefit of all, but only to gain what it can from both.

Genuinely striving to balance relations with the US and China in a constructive manner would allow India to deftly navigate the complex geopolitical landscape so it can pursue its economic and security interests to the best effect.

Instead, by engaging both powers in such an opportunistic way, the Modi government is merely undermining its position as a key player in the region as it is regarded as the "weak link" in the mechanisms by both Washington and Beijing.

Luo Jie



Opinion Line

Growing outward FDI shows West's containment strategy is not working

China's outbound direct investment was \$177.29 billion in 2023, up 8.7 percent year-on-year and accounting for 11.4 percent of the global total, an increase of 0.5 percentage points over the previous year. By the end of 2023, China's outward FDI stock had reached \$2.96 trillion, ranking third in the world for seven consecutive years, the latest figures show.

China's FDI outflows in Asia and Africa grew rapidly in 2023, with FDI in the countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative increasing by 31.5 percent year-on-year to reach \$40.71 billion, which accounts for 23 percent of total outward FDI in 2023. By the end of 2023, Chinese investors had set up 48,000 enterprises in 189 countries and regions around the world, 17,000 of which were in countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative.

China's outward FDI continues to be varied. While nearly 80 percent of the investment flowed to leasing and business services, wholesale and retail, manufacturing, and finance, the investment in con-

struction, and information transmission/software and information technology services showed growth rates of 97.2 percent and 34.9 percent, respectively.

China's outward FDI is not only boosting the economic development of host countries, but also making ever-greater contributions to the world economy. In 2023, China's imports and exports of goods driven by its overseas investment increased by 6.4 percent, which accounted for 4.6 percent of its total imports and exports of goods in the year. Overseas Chinese enterprises raked in \$3.5 trillion in sales revenue, and paid \$75.3 billion in taxes to the host countries or regions. By the end of the year, the total number of their employees reached nearly 4.3 million, 60 percent of whom were foreign employees.

China's continuing outward FDI growth shows Chinese enterprises that have become bigger and stronger have firmly adhered to a "go-global" approach, creating a large number of

jobs for local people, and promoting unimpeded trade, flow of funds and people-to-people exchanges between China and the rest of the world.

Despite rising global protectionism, Chinese enterprises have actively expanded their overseas presence through increased investment, helping the country offset the adverse impact of its "external circulation" being disturbed by some forces in the United States and other Western countries, and playing the role of "buffer" in the ever-increasing economic and trade frictions.

China's transformation from a big "capital importing country" to a major "capital exporting country" will have far-reaching impacts on the global economy and trade.

Although the US has intensified its China-containment strategy, China's steadily growing outward FDI shows that the momentum of Chinese enterprises' overseas investment and China's high-quality development have not been curbed.

- WU YUXUE, CHINA DAILY

Implement policy measures fast to ensure jobs

The central authorities issued a package of pro-job measures on Wednesday to assist young people. The unemployment rate in the 16-24 age group, not including students, was 18.8 percent last month.

The measures call for the establishment of an employment impact assessment mechanism.

The document also asks for actively responding to the impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence on employment.

It proposes to address structural employment contradictions, or the mismatch between labor forces and job vacancies. It focuses on promoting high-

quality development in higher education, expanding college enrollment in science, engineering, agriculture, and medical fields, and optimizing the introduction of college majors based on social needs and industry demand.

Furthermore, the document pays attention to the coordination of employment-related support measures. For example, it stresses the need to eliminate institutional and systemic barriers that hinder the mobility of labor and talent and remove unreasonable restrictions based on region, identity, gender and age that impede equal employment opportunities.

Especially it mentions that women's

legal rights in employment and career development must be guaranteed, alongside the establishment of a supportive system for maternity protection and inclusive childcare, to create a family-friendly employment environment.

By vowing to boost high-quality employment, the document not only maximizes the synergy of various employment-promoting policies but also helps to stabilize societal expectations regarding employment-related policies.

It is time for the various departments and local authorities to hasten implementation of the policies, to realize expected results sooner.

- BEIJING NEWS

What They Say

Israel seems intent on dragging world into the abyss

The six-day general debate of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly kicked off in New York on Tuesday. The theme this year is "Leaving no one behind: acting together for the advancement of peace, sustainable development and human dignity for present and future generations".

As the UN chief Antonio Guterres said, the world is in a vortex of change, facing unprecedented challenges that require global solutions. However, geopolitical divisions continue to deepen; the average global temperature continues to rise; wars are intensifying, with no end in sight; and nuclear weapons have cast an ominous shadow over the conflicts. The world is gradually moving toward a cataclysm that could engulf the whole of humanity. Countries must face up to

the three major factors that contribute to the volatility: the violations and abuses of international law and the UN Charter that are carried out with impunity; the injustice and resentment produced by inequality; and the unmanaged global risks that create uncertainty, threatening the future of humanity in unknowable ways.

Acting with impunity is politically untenable and morally intolerable. Today, more and more governments and others believe they are entitled to a get-out-of-jail-free card; that they can trample on international law, violate the UN Charter, turn a blind eye to international human rights conventions or the decisions of the International Court of Justice, thumb their noses at international humanitarian law, invade another country, devastate an entire society, or simply disregard the well-being of their own people.

This impunity is evident around the world, in the Middle East, in the heart of

Europe, in the Horn of Africa, and elsewhere. The flames of war in Ukraine are spreading with no sign of abating. Civilians are paying the price, with the death toll rising and lives and communities shattered. Now is the time for a just peace based on the UN Charter, international law and UN resolutions.

Guterres correctly pointed out that Gaza is an endless nightmare that threatens to drag the entire region into the abyss, and that Lebanon is on the brink.

The Israeli army has carried out air strikes on more than 2,000 Hezbollah targets and killed more than 600 Lebanese people over the past few days, making that the bloodiest period in Lebanon over the past 20 years. All signs show Israel is preparing to start a full-scale war against the neighbor.

The Lebanese people, the Israeli people, and the people of the world must not let Lebanon become another Gaza.

- LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

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COMMENT

Hu Yinglian

Ethnic unity and progress get a boost

Fostering solidarity among the 56 ethnic groups of the country to maintain social harmony and realize collective progress is a key aspect of China's socioeconomic policies and cultural integration efforts. The strategy is in line with Chinese modernization, which is aimed at fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation among the different ethnic groups as well.

Ethnic unity and progress, especially in multi-ethnic societies, play a crucial role in a country's development and its efforts to build a strong and harmonious society. Ethnic unity helps create a unified national identity among the people, instilling in them a strong sense of allegiance to the nation, and helping diverse groups to bond under a common national framework. In addition, ethnic unity-driven development can add to the legitimacy of the political system by making all ethnic groups feel represented and valued.

A socially inclusive country can more easily improve governance and reduce political dissent, while an ethnically unified, harmonious society can attract more investments and facilitate collaborative economic activities. However, ethnic unity does not mean the erasure of ethnic identities or cultural diversity but rather their integration into a broader national culture.

China has been home to many ethnic groups for millennia. Today's multi-ethnic Chinese society is the result of the historical conflicts and integration efforts. True, ethnic tensions and regional disparities increased when Western imperialist powers began putting increasing pressure on China after sensing that the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) was on the decline. But the sociopolitical development also prompted socially conscious forces to accelerate their integration efforts.

In the 20th century, China underwent significant political and social transformations, including the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Shortly after the founding of New China, the higher authorities allowed the ethnic minority groups in ethnic autonomous areas to manage the local affairs and preserve their cultural practices while maintaining overall national unity.

The launching of reform and opening-up in 1978 led to rapid modernization and increased interactions between different regions and ethnic groups, with the migration of people from rural areas to cities in search of better-paying jobs, along with the development of urban areas, contributing to greater cultural exchanges and social integration among different ethnic groups.

The Chinese government has been making efforts to balance economic

development and preservation of ethnic identities, in order to consolidate ethnic unity and address regional disparities. The government places emphasis on national pride and harmony, while promoting a sense of shared destiny among all ethnic groups.

Generally speaking, ethnic unity and progress promote social harmony and reduce potential sources of conflict, facilitating smoother social changes. To achieve this, the government has been adopting policies to reduce inequalities and foster mutual respect.

China needs a stable domestic environment to further widen its global influence, serve its increasing strategic interests, and project its power and engage in international relations. In the light of geopolitics, ethnic unity and progress help maintain internal stability.

To better foster ethnic unity and progress in the new era, the government has implemented targeted development programs, including infrastructure projects, poverty alleviation initiatives, and investment incentive practices in regions,

such as the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region and Xizang autonomous region, with relatively large ethnic minority populations.

The government has also taken measures to ensure that members of all ethnic minority groups have access to social services and healthcare, and can get gainful employment, while implementing laws to protect the rights of ethnic minorities and carrying out campaigns to promote unity and patriotism among ethnic minorities.

The pursuit of Chinese modernization has promoted a common national identity among the 56 different ethnic groups. By recognizing the unique features of each ethnic minority group while laying emphasis on a shared Chinese identity, the government has fostered a sense of belonging among them, leading to cultural integration.

To consolidate ethnic unity while building a modern state, the government has to first foster a unified sense of national identity; use narratives that highlight the contributions of different ethnic groups to China's history and

development, forging a sense of shared destiny; and promote civic education that emphasizes national unity as well as the value of diversity, so individuals can understand their respective roles in the broader national context.

And second, the government also needs to create and support initiatives that encourage interactions and collaborations among different ethnic groups, such as initiating joint community projects and holding cultural festivals, intensifying campaigns that highlight shared values and common goals, and celebrating ethnic diversity, while continuing to invest in infrastructure, education and healthcare in areas with relatively large ethnic minority populations to reduce disparities and stimulate local economies, and promote entrepreneurship among ethnic minority communities.

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The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.



JIN DING / CHINA DAILY

Fan Shenggen and Meng Ting

Agriculture sector reflects nation's development

China has contributed much more than any other country to global hunger reduction.

Thanks to rapid agricultural and economic reforms, China has made significant strides in hunger reduction over the past more than four decades. By solving the hunger problem in the country, Beijing met its Millennium Development Goals of halving the number of hungry people between 2000 and 2015 and contributed to a two-thirds decrease in the global number of hungry people.

On the food supply side, China stabilized food production years ago. Its grain output has been above 600 billion kilograms since 2012, with the grain production in 2023 touching a new high of 695 billion kg, with per capita of this grain reaching 490 kg, 22.5 percent higher than the international food security line (400 kg).

Besides, China is 95 percent self-sufficient in grains, with the rate for rice and wheat, the two primary staples, being 100 percent. The production of vegetables, fruits, meat and aquatic products, too, has increased significantly. Due to this diversification of food production, accompanied by income growth, people's dietary habits, too, have changed. People today focus more on quality, and consume more vegetables, fruits, eggs, and aquatic and dairy products.

How did China achieve this success?

The development of agriculture and increase in food production can be divided into four stages. The first stage was from 1949 to 1977. When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the country faced many challenges. Its total grain production was only 113 billion kg and per capita grain share 208.9 kg. During this period, China's focus was on increasing grain production.

The second stage was from 1978 to 2014. Reform and opening-up, particularly the introduction of the household production responsibility system, dramatically increased grain production and supply, with per capita grain surpassing the global food security line in 2012. After joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, China's food supply became more diversified despite just a moderate increase in imports.

The third stage was from 2015 to 2021. While ensuring stable food supply, the conservation of natural resources and the environment became a priority for the government. As a result, the government introduced the "double reduction" policy, aimed at reducing the use of fertilizers and pesticides, in 2015. This period saw significant improvement in the quality and safety of food products, and the adoption of more environment-friendly practices.

The ongoing fourth stage, which began in 2022, has seen the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2022 emphasizing the importance of establishing a diversified food supply system based on the "big food" concept. Over the years, people's food consumption and preferences have diversified, tending to veer toward balanced and nutritious diets. And the government has introduced various policies, used technological innovations and invested heavily in various sectors to meet people's ever diversifying demand for food.

Food security has always been a priority for China. The food security policy of 2013 is about "self-reliance, domestic focus, ensuring production capacity, moderate imports, and technological support", and the No 1 Central Document of 2023 highlights the need for "establishing a big food concept and accelerat-

ing the construction of a diversified food supply system".

As for technological innovations, they span many fields, including plant protection, disease prevention and control, precision cultivation, facility agriculture, agricultural machinery and equipment, and green development.

Reforms of agricultural taxes and subsidies, too, have played a vital role in ensuring food security. On Jan 1, 2006, China abolished the 2,600-year-old agricultural tax, alleviating the economic burden on farmers, and contributing to the modernization of agriculture and the development of the rural economy. In 2016, China integrated the subsidies for high-quality crop seeds, direct subsidies for grain farmers and comprehensive subsidies for agricultural inputs into a single support and protection system, leading to a more efficient and targeted support system for agriculture.

China's investment in agriculture covers several crucial aspects, including animal and plant breeding and cultivation, the seed industry, green development of agriculture and rural areas, innovations in agricultural technology, training of agricultural and rural talents, building rural infrastructure including the construction of digital villages and promotion of intelligent agriculture. According to the National High-Standard Farmland Construction Plan (2021-30), China will build large-scale, high-standard farmlands through fiscal investment and social capital participation in the coming decade.

Countries across the world face similar food security challenges, from climate change to resource degradation, extreme weather events and malnutrition. Population pressure on many countries magnifies the effects of these challenges on food security, especially because the options

for mitigating and adapting to climate change are limited. Therefore, China's experiences in this regard provide important lessons for other countries.

Proper sequencing and setting the right priorities are important. Since the Chinese people were wholly dependent on the agriculture sector in the early stage, China's reforms, starting with agriculture, ensured that most of the population benefited from them. The reform and development of the agriculture sector provided the prerequisite for the growth of the manufacturing and service sectors, which succeeded in significantly reducing poverty and hunger in the country.

Establishing a diversified food supply system based on the "big food" concept is China's way of helping transform the global food system. This approach calls for a shift from the heavy reliance on farmland to the comprehensive utilization of the potential of forests, grasslands, rivers, lakes, seas and the food industry.

Optimizing dietary patterns for ensuring nutritional health and protecting the environment is another important policy direction. Increasing the consumption of whole grains, fruits and soy products, and decreasing consumption of ultra-processed foods, refined grains and red meat can play a significant role in facilitating this transformation.

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The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.



Chen Weihua

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US shouldn't play with fire when it comes to China ties

In his final address to the UN General Assembly's 79th session on Tuesday, US President Joe Biden reiterated that Washington seeks to responsibly manage the competition with Beijing so that it does not veer toward conflict.

While such words sound less confrontational than his usual rhetoric targeting China, what he has been doing over the past three years and eight months has dramatically raised the possibility of conflict with China on both the economic and military fronts.

During his presidential campaign in 2020, Biden slammed his predecessor Donald Trump for imposing punitive tariffs on Chinese products, saying "Trump doesn't get the basics" and "any freshman econ student could tell you that the American people are paying his tariffs".

Biden had pledged to revoke the tariffs if elected US president, but he has betrayed his promise. Instead, he has doubled down on such protectionist tariffs against China, the latest being his announcement in May to impose 100 percent tariffs on Chinese-made electric vehicles (EVs) and hike tariffs on a range of Chinese products, from steel, aluminum and solar cells to semiconductors, EV batteries, ship-to-shore cranes and medical products.

The Biden administration has added far more Chinese entities to the notorious US Entity List for trade restrictions than Trump. It has misused the list, making it a part of its crackdown on Chinese high-tech companies.

Biden's speech was full of narcissistic overtones and a poor attempt at self-glorification, often in sharp contrast to the facts on the ground.

The United States has not only been telling US companies but also coercing companies in its ally countries in Europe and Asia to "decouple" or "de-risk" their economies from the Chinese economy in order to check China's rise.

While attending an event in The Hague on Wednesday, I was reminded of how the US has been intimidating Dutch company ASML, a leading global chip-making equipment manufacturer, to curb its exports of cutting-edge equipment to China.

On the same day, Dutch Minister of Economic Affairs Dirk Bejaarts told the news media in Washington that the ASML must be allowed to "do business as freely as possible", adding that "the Chinese are an important trade partner" and "we have our own economy to upkeep".

Biden's so-called stiff competition with China, in reality, has nothing to do with fair competition because it includes all sorts of despicable sabotage. The Biden administration believes that "if I cannot lift myself up, I will desperately pull you down". Biden has been waging an all-out economic war against China, one that could veer toward conflict if left unchecked.

On the security front, the Biden administration has been equally provocative. For example, it has been attempting to interfere in the Taiwan question in its bid to try Beijing's patience by threatening to cross Beijing's redline.

Its attempts include the August 2022 visit to Taiwan by then House Speaker Nancy Pelosi; the delegation sent this year by Biden to the inauguration of the island's administrative head Lai Ching-te; Biden's approval of several US arms sales to Taiwan; and the State Department changing the wording on Taiwan on its website, not to mention the White House walking back Biden's remarks that the US would come to Taiwan's defense militarily.

Washington has also been weaponizing the Quad, the so-called collaborative initiative of the US, India, Japan and Australia, and AUKUS, a security alliance of Australia, the United Kingdom and the US, to provoke and threaten China.

Like the US Congress, the Biden administration, too, has dramatically ramped up its smear and disinformation campaigns against China, so as to make China "look bad".

Biden's UNGA speech is being viewed by some as his legacy speech. But his legacy on China-US ties is "sabotage". Biden has done more harm to Sino-US relations than Trump.

Biden's speech was full of narcissistic overtones and a poor attempt at self-glorification, often in sharp contrast to the facts on the ground. This is especially true for his statements on Israel's brutal assault on the Gaza Strip. His biased foreign policy and his refusal to seriously urge Israel to stop the atrocities in Gaza have been a major reason behind Israel's sustained attack on the Palestinian people, according to even many US foreign policy experts.

These will be Biden's legacy.

GLOBAL VIEWS



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

BORUT PAHOR

Certitude of amity

Honest dialogue and trust building between China and the West are imperative

Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel was once criticized for her Russian policy, the essence of which was a sincere pursuit of good or at least well-regulated mutual relations, which would permanently protect peace and encourage comprehensive cooperation for mutual



benefits, especially economic benefits. This political approach was based on trust and the belief that differences

can be resolved peacefully through dialogue. Were this aspiration and this strategy wrong from the point of view of today's developments in Europe and the world? Should we, therefore, conclude that honest dialogue and confidence building are disproportionately risky also in the case of relations with China?

The ongoing deepening of the West's distrust of China and its intentions is the most serious problem impacting relations between the West and China. Consequently, the dialogue is protocol and avoids seeking more serious alternatives to a safer world order, from reducing current security threats and tensions to reforming the United Nations and in particular its Security Council to be able to intervene with a community's authority for the benefit of world peace. In fact, we are in a race against time when, due to the return of obsolete geopolitics and the accumulation and concentration of security problems (at the moment, 52 armed conflicts are taking place in the world), it is time to establish a real dialogue between the main global actors (including the European Union) before it is too late. The particular problem is that, of course, you never know in advance when it will be too late.

Recently, it has been characteristic of Washington that an extremely

critical attitude toward China is almost the only point of national consensus. It is interesting that there has been a programmatic merging of the Republican and Democratic dissent from two different directions.

The EU and NATO have followed the political consensus of the United States, the latter without reservations, the EU with modifications still allowed by the dependence of European security and the economy on the US on the one hand, but also on the Chinese market on the other. After the EU-China summit at the end of December 2023, EU Council President Charles Michel said that "the EU and China have a common interest in stable and constructive relations established on respect for the rule-based international order". Regarding the most neuralgic geopolitical point, the growing tensions across the Taiwan Strait and in the East China and South China seas, he added that "the EU opposes all unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion". Thus, the EU maintains a multifaceted relationship with China, according to which this country is "at the same time a partner, a competitor and a systemic rival".

In mid-July this year, the Communist Party of China Central Committee adopted a resolution on the



WANG XIAOYING / CHINA DAILY

Open dialogue and cautious trust are needed. If it is sincere, there is a chance to strengthen trust. This would be a boon for the entire world.

comprehensive deepening of reforms. The People's Republic of China is to celebrate its 80th anniversary in 2029. A set of measures for "modernization" is supposed to accelerate internal development and external influence. Chinese President Xi Jinping remains true to the fundamental premise of his concept of China's New Governance. It is the idea of developing a unique model of governance that differs from Western democratic systems.

When designing policies, it insists on taking into account Chinese specificities. President Xi adjusts to the standards for elementary confidence of the business world, both inside and outside, to some extent. He highlights the importance of the rule of law. He acknowledges the necessity of innovation and technological progress for a sustainable economy. China's huge and evolving market is also its biggest lever in foreign policy and, to the extent that this is still sustainable for Chinese interests, adapts it to the needs of globalization. China's economy is already the second-largest in the world, but China is also striving to be a developed country. In short, the West is concerned about the growing strength of the Chinese economy. It is difficult to deal with, but impossible to ignore.

But the concerns of the West

are increasingly concentrated on China's foreign and security policies.

The absence of a sincere dialogue and the deepening of distrust are the main obstacles to a sincere attempt by the West to reach understanding. The whole world is suffering as a result of the deterioration of relations between the West and China, although this is not immediately visible to the naked eye. The legal and political architecture of the modern international community has changed a lot since the end of World War II, it has become multipolar. However, the international institutions created after that war to prevent another global conflict have remained behind the times and are not fulfilling their roles sufficiently, in particular the United Nations and the Security Council.

Multilateralism is in crisis, which encourages influential countries to take arbitrary action. The main question of our time is whether the legal and political architecture of the world will successfully adapt to the profound changes taking place in a peaceful way. Never since World War II has this issue been as acute as now and never has it depended so much on relations between the West and China.

Trust and dialogue have their weaknesses and imperfections. Expectations can also produce disappointments. But what is the alternative? Distrust and the refusal of dialogue, so that there is no possibility of a solution at all? Open dialogue and cautious trust are needed. If it is sincere, there is a chance to strengthen trust. This would be a boon for the entire world.

The author is former prime minister and president of the Republic of Slovenia. 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.

LI XING, JAN OBERG AND LI QING

Fundamental security shift

Sustainable peace is not merely the absence of war but the presence of development, justice and harmony

The primary objective of US foreign policy during the Cold War was not to engage in an ideological struggle against communism, but to preserve the patterns of global relationships in the world system to produce and reproduce gross inequalities and generate advantage, benefit and privilege for the United States.



Li Xing

"We have 50 percent of the world's wealth but only 6.3 percent of its population... In this situation we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment," noted George Kennan, then director of policy planning at the Department of State, who was a leading architect of US post-war "containment" foreign policy.



Jan Oberg

"Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships that will allow us to maintain this position of disparity," he continued. "We should cease to talk about the raising of the living standards, human rights, and democratization. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are then hampered by idealistic slogans, the better."

This position of disparity has ensured wealth and power for the US and its Western allies.

Realizing this unequal distribution of wealth and power was close-

ly tied to the functioning of the international system and the success of the US' network of alliances. The US was willing to offer international "public goods" and to act as a "hegemonic stabilizer" in the form of security protection and military aid via NATO and bilateral security partnerships with countries such as the Republic of Korea, Japan and Australia.

For the US-led West, defending the postwar structure of global wealth and power disparity is equivalent to maintaining international peace and security. Preserving this structure needs to be governed by a set of rules, norms and institutions, which are collectively referred to as the "rule-based international order". Anyone who does not follow such a "rule-based order" or challenges the US hegemonic position is automatically seen as a "security threat" or "systemic rival".

With the end of the Cold War, Western media and politicians celebrated the victory of democracy over dictatorship and capitalism over communism. The global narrative suggested that the post-Cold War international order had ushered in an era of Immanuel Kant's "perpetual peace". The triumph of liberal democracy was viewed as the "end of history", serving as the ideological foundation for the rise of a unipolar world, where the US unilaterally defined the "rules-based order" and pressured every country to conform to it.

The post-Cold War security paradigm of the US and NATO focused on military strength, control and deterrence to prevent any force from challenging the US-led post-war order. This emphasis on security measures, without establishing mechanisms for peace building, created a cycle of fear, oppression and resistance, ultimately undermining both peace and security in

the long run.

Despite countries, particularly the US, having the highest military expenditures in history, local conflicts continue to rage, and larger wars threaten humanity's survival. It must be recognized that an increase in weaponized security does not create peace or keep the existing international order secure — if it did, the world would have been at peace long ago. Now more than ever, it is crucial to reshape our understanding of peace and security, and the relationship between the two.

When peace is prioritized, the focus shifts to addressing the root causes of conflict — such as injustice, inequality and lack of mutual understanding — through diplomacy, dialogue and cooperation. By tackling these underlying issues, sustainable security is more likely to follow, as the conditions that give rise to conflict or instability are resolved at their core. In this way, peace serves as the foundation upon which lasting security is built.

Today, the concept of peace and security has expanded beyond the traditional focus on military and defense to include non-conventional security domains such as cyber warfare, pandemics, climate change and financial digitization. Non-conventional security acknowledges that emerging threats can profoundly affect a nation's peace and stability, as well as its economy, public health and social fabric. Today, the world faces multiple challenges and conflicts across both conventional and non-conventional peace and security domains. The conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, along with the great power tensions resulting from the US attempt to suppress China to maintain its dominance, serve as clear evidence that the US-led security policies are contributing to global disorder.



SONG CHEN / CHINA DAILY

The correct approach is to prioritize peace first and then secure it, rather than relying on the belief that arms-based security can bring peace. NATO's security policies and practices reflect an outdated offensive deterrence mindset in a world that urgently needs defensive deterrence. Diplomacy has been cast aside, with conflicts — whether in Ukraine or Gaza — being addressed primarily through military force rather than peaceful negotiation. Regrettably, the US and NATO reject diplomacy. They use confrontation, sanctions, offensiveness and threats, and pump in weapons to the conflict zones and maintain — wrongly — that dialogue is not the road to peace. The world today spends 300-400 times more on militarism than on the United Nations. Furthermore, the threatened use of nuclear weapons as deterrence and terror, albeit for a political purpose, bears the implication of annihilating millions. China also has nuclear weapons, but it remains committed to a policy of "no first use" and to "never use nukes on countries that do not have nuclear weapons" since first proposing it in 1964.

A more effective approach to security would be to consider "common security" where security is

achieved through defensive means. This involves ensuring that the methods for one country's security and safety needs do not encroach upon or threaten other countries' efforts of securing themselves, i.e. security that is built with, not against, others. This concept emphasizes defensive defense, both military and civilian, meaning that while we maintain strength in a defensive posture, we do not possess the capability to strike people thousands of kilometers away. Such an approach minimizes the perception of threat.

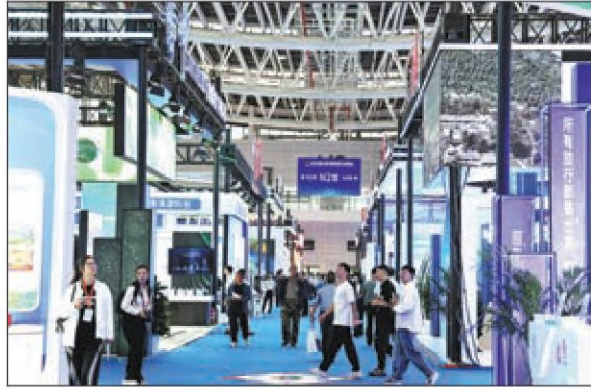
This implies a fundamental shift from the current security-to-peace paradigm: effective defense should be designed for self-protection but should not be used for offensive purposes. It can encompass both military and civilian aspects but does not fuel an arms race. This approach focuses on human and global security rather than solely on national military security, making significant investments in early conflict warning, conflict analysis, conflict resolution, mediation, strengthening UN peacekeeping, negotiations, reconciliation and forgiveness.

Chinese foreign policy, guided by the Five Principles of Peaceful

Coexistence, emphasizes national sovereignty, noninterference, and a collective and comprehensive approach to peace and security. It underscores that development and social stability are fundamental conditions for peace, which is the road to stable security.

In conclusion, peace is a proactive process that involves fostering trust, justice and mutual respect. When peace is achieved through dialogue, fairness and cooperation, security naturally follows, as people feel safe, valued and less inclined toward conflict.

Li Xing is a Yunshan leading scholar and a distinguished professor at Guangdong Institute for International Strategies, and professor of international relations at Aalborg University, Denmark. Jan Oberg is a former professor and co-founder and director of the independent Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research, Sweden. Li Qing is professor and executive president at the Guangdong Institute for International Strategies. The authors contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.



From left: Information panels of Shanxi's energy industry transformation on display during the 2024 China (Taiyuan) Energy Low Carbon Development Forum. Delegates listen to a speech during the Taiyuan forum. Enterprises in Shanxi exhibit their products and services at the 2024 China (Taiyuan) International Energy Industry Expo. Delegates listen to a speech during the Taiyuan forum. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Shanxi's transformation in the energy industry is conducive to fostering new quality productive forces, agreed delegates attending a high-profile international energy forum earlier this month.

The 2024 China (Taiyuan) Energy Low Carbon Development Forum was held on Sept 10-11 in Taiyuan, the capital city of the North China province of Shanxi.

Delegates from 30 countries and regions, as well as international organizations, attended the two-day event, sharing insights into new strategies and paths for energy industry transformation, and discussing cooperative opportunities.

Participants also offered innovative ideas and solutions for global green and low-carbon energy development, and witnessed the fruitful results of Shanxi energy industrial transformation.

The opening ceremony held on Sept 10 was attended by diplomats stationed in China and representatives from Shanxi's sister provinces and states. Also in attendance were international organization delegates, national and regional government officials, academicians, and experts and leaders from key energy enterprises and trade associations.

Liu Zhenmin, China's special envoy for climate change, delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony.

Liu said, as a Shanxi native, he is emotionally attached to the province and is keeping a close eye on its development.

He said he is glad to see that Shanxi has made positive progress in its comprehensive reform of the energy industry. "Shanxi is piloting in developing a new type of energy industry, contributing to China's dual-carbon goals, while ensuring energy supply to the nation."

China has proposed to reach peak carbon emissions before 2030 and carbon neutrality before 2060. This ambition is known as the dual-carbon goals.

Liu added that Shanxi should use its energy industry transformation to cultivate new quality productive forces. "The province should use this transformation to create new industries and seek new development opportunities, contributing to China's modernization," Liu said.

The International Renewable Energy Agency, an intergovernmental organization supporting countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future, has attended sessions of the Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum since 2019.

Francesco La Camera, director-general of IRENA, delivered a speech through video link at the ceremony. He highlighted the importance of cross-disciplinary and cross-industry cooperation to push an energy industry transformation toward the directions of greener and cleaner development.

He stressed that IRENA's cooperation with China is deepening and broadening, supporting an energy industry transformation.

Ouyang Minggao, academican at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, is a reputed expert in China's new energy vehicle power system research. At the Taiyuan forum, he praised Shanxi's practice in energy industry transformation and expressed his willingness to cooperate with local scientists and entrepreneurs to take part in Shanxi's energy revolution campaign.

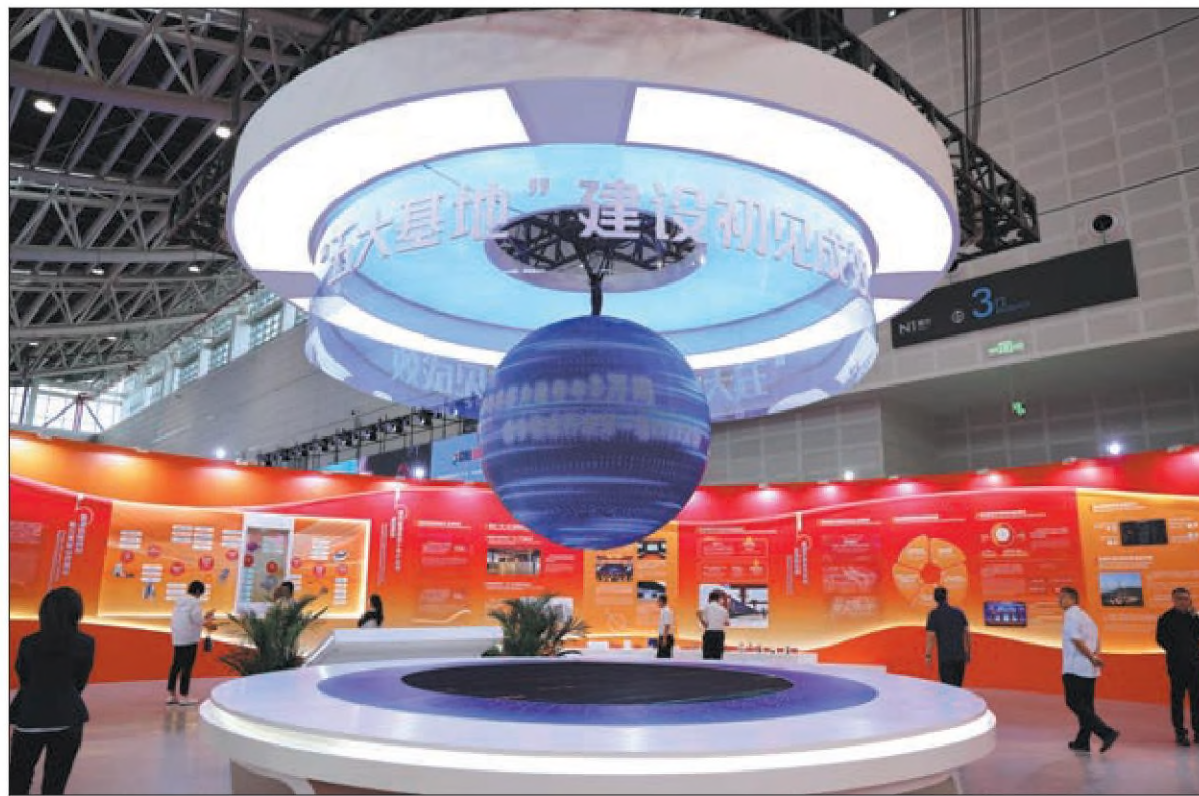
Mexico is the guest country of honor at this year's forum. Jesus Seade, Mexican ambassador to China, delivered a keynote speech, providing insights into energy-related issues between Mexico and China, as well as the international arena.

This year's forum featured three major international conferences: the Mexico Honored Guest Country Forum, the Europe-China Workshop on Clean Energy Transition and the 14th Global Top 500 New Energy Enterprises Forum.

During the Mexico Honored Guest Country Forum, national rep-

Power industry titans discuss future strategies

Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum attracts delegates worldwide



Clockwise from top: Visitors visit the Shanxi exhibition zone at the 2024 China (Taiyuan) International Energy Industry Expo. Taiyuan showcases its latest developments in energy industry transformation. Electric cars produced by Tesla are exhibited during the energy industry expo. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

“Shanxi is piloting in developing a new type of energy industry, contributing to China's dual-carbon goals, while ensuring energy supply to the nation. The province should use this transformation to create new industries and seek new development opportunities, contributing to China's modernization.”

Liu Zhenmin, China's special envoy for climate change

representatives discussed topics on accelerating cooperation in energy transformation with Shanxi's representatives.

Energy expo

The 2024 China (Taiyuan) International Energy Industry Expo opened on Sept 10 alongside the forum. Over the course of three days, more than 300 leading energy companies from around the world showcased their latest products, technologies and applications.

A noteworthy exhibition was held by Shanxi's energy industrial giant Jinneng Holding Group. Its exhibits covered such areas as smart mines, green mining operations and industrial diversification, the simultaneous extraction of coal and coal-bed methane, as well as its latest achievements in the fields of photovoltaics and intelligent energy storage.

Jinneng Holding, based in Jinzhong, is one of the pioneers in Shanxi's energy industry transformation, which features upgrading of the traditional coal-mining industry and fostering emerging sectors.

Leveraging the National Laboratory on Coal and Coal-Bed Methane Simultaneous Extraction, Jinneng has become one of the country's pioneers in the simultaneous extraction of coal and coal-bed methane.

Coal-bed methane used to be the No 1 threat to coal mine safety, but it's now turned into a safe source of energy in large volume thanks to new technological achievements made by Jinneng and the lab.

Jinneng began to make major breakthroughs in its demonstration project at the Yuecheng Coal Mine in Qinshui county in early 2021.

Jinneng's executives said that simultaneous extraction of coal and gas can effectively solve the problem of profuse coal-bed methane in mines, increasing safety and developing a new source of energy.

In addition to upgrading coal mines and developing the coal-bed methane industry, Jinneng Holding has diversified into other emerging sectors, with its latest development shown at the expo.

One exhibit of the company that garnered great attention from industry insiders was the TOPCon high-efficiency heterojunction solar cells developed by its subsidiary Jinneng Clean Energy Technology, or Jinegy.

According to company executives, the high-tech solar cell has a photoelectric conversion efficiency of more than 25.5 percent, one of the highest rates in the industry worldwide.

Another heavyweight local energy company that showcased its results in industrial diversification

was Changzhi-based Lu'an Chemical Group. On display were its complete industry chains that range from high-end chemical equipment manufacturing, coal liquefaction and smart coal mining to new chemicals like carbon-based materials, chemicals and lubricants.

Huayang Group, another coal-mining giant based in Yangquan, is a successful player in the province's energy industry transformation. Its exhibits at the expo included an array of products such as a sodium-ion battery, polycrystalline diamond film, degradable plastic bags, nanometer fiber filtering sheets and aerogel insulation materials.

The company's sodium-ion battery was a star exhibit at the expo because of its strong performance in energy storage.

The batteries are developed by Huayang's branch company Huana Xinneng. The products are regarded as a substitute of lithium-ion batteries which overcome their limits in large-scale energy storage.

Compared with lithium-ion batteries, sodium-ion batteries feature better safety performance, better adapt to temperature changes and have a longer life cycle, according to company executives.

Huana Xinneng began to develop sodium-ion batteries in 2021. It real-

ized volume production of cylindrical cells and battery packs in 2023 and began mass production of square cells in April this year. Square cells are the upgraded version from cylindrical cells, featuring a larger capacity in energy storage.

At the expo, Shanxi Coking Coal Group, another heavyweight player in Shanxi's energy industry, displayed its achievements in industrial transformation through exhibits, videos, photos and multimedia.

While showing its solutions related to coal mining, like smart coal-cutting systems, equipment for clean coking and other mining machines, the company exhibited a wide range of products of its emerging sectors, like wind power turbines and concrete-spraying machines.

Fruitful cooperation

The Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum has served as a platform to enhance cooperation between Shanxi's enterprises, institutions and their partners in China and across the world.

As a special event of the 2024 Taiyuan forum, the China (Shanxi) Green Industry Investment and Exchange Conference saw the participation of more than 300 attendees.

During the event, agreements on 23 key cooperation projects were signed on-site, with a total investment of 19.47 billion yuan (\$2.76 billion). These projects cover various green and low-carbon industries, including new energy, high-end equipment manufacturing, international logistics, coal chemistry and green agriculture.

On Sept 11, the Shanxi Provincial Geological Prospecting Bureau signed an agreement for strategic cooperation with the geological prospecting administrations of Brazil and Cuba, as well as the China University of Geosciences Wuhan.

The agreement aims to forge a partnership for domestic and international geoscience research, mineral resources prospecting and low-carbon energy development, as well as the training of professionals.

Sun Youhong, president of China University of Geosciences Beijing, said his school is willing to cooperate with enterprises and institutions in Shanxi in the development of geothermal energy.

Sun said geothermal energy is a kind of renewable resource, featuring large reserves, high utilization efficiency and low emissions. He said China University of Geosciences Beijing hopes to collaborate with Shanxi's partners in research, professional training and public services.

The Taiyuan forum has created various platforms for international and domestic collaborations, like promotional events for countries, promotions for industries, investment conferences and on-site consultations offered by experts.

China National Coal Group is one of the nation's leading coal-mining companies under the supervision of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission.

Wang Shudong, the company's board chairman, attended the Taiyuan forum. He said his company will continue to enhance its presence in Shanxi's green coal mining, natural gas, power transmission, coal-based chemicals and coal-related technological innovation.

China National Coal Group is operating a modern coal-based chemicals demonstration base in the Shanxi city of Shuozhou, and will expand its presence in other sectors in the future, according to Wang.

Yu Feng, president of Honeywell China, said his company hopes to collaborate with Shanxi, assisting its energy industrial transformation.

According to Yu, Honeywell has been growing with China for many years and has a strong presence in the country's green energy industry.

"We are expecting more cooperation moves, contributing to Shanxi's energy industry transformation," Yu said.

Zhang Yi contributed to this story.

WORLDUS

CHINA LINK

Editor's note: As the People's Republic of China celebrates the 75th anniversary of its founding this year, China Daily asked prominent international figures to reflect on their relationship with the country and to talk of the direction in which they see it going.

Former Harvard school professor hails China's transformation over last 40 years

By CHEN YINGQUN
chenyingqun@chinadaily.com.cn

John Quelch's brush with China started in 1981 when he took a few hours from an Asian trip to visit the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall in Guangzhou, Guangdong province. Quelch, then a Harvard Business School professor, tried to send a postcard to his family in the United States, only to discover that many Chinese didn't understand what a "postcard" was.

"China was economically poor, with few cars on the road, and Chinese people were very friendly and curious to talk to us," said Quelch, recalling his initial impression of the country.

He served as a professor at the Harvard Business School for more than three decades, ending his tenure in 2017. This January, he came to Kunshan, Jiangsu province, as executive vice-chancellor of Duke Kunshan University, or DKU, keen to serve as a "bridge" linking Chinese and US education.

When he first visited China, people in the United States were beginning to take an interest in the country, largely due to former US president Richard Nixon's historic visit to China in 1972, which significantly heightened China's visibility and piqued US people's curiosity about the country. The arrival of two pandas in the US that same year further stimulated tourism in China, he noted.

Meanwhile, China's reform and opening-up policy, initiated in the late 1970s, enhanced economic ties and the relationship between the Chinese and US people, offering individuals like him more chances to engage with China in the subsequent years, he said.

Against this backdrop, the ties between Harvard Business School and China also grew stronger, and he often traveled to China to participate in discussions on economic and business matters during the 1980s and 1990s.

From 2011 to 2013, Quelch took a leave of absence from Harvard, serving as the dean of China Europe International Business School, or CEIBS, in Shanghai, to help elevate the business school founded in 1994 to a global level.

Quelch said that business and management principles are quite international, though some cultural adaptation is necessary, and government regulations vary from one country to another.

"It's quite easy to bring the Harvard Business School case study approach to the CEIBS classroom. And Chinese participants, mostly senior executives, want to engage in discussions with each other and share their experiences. They prefer professors to be more like the conductor of an orchestra, not the sole person delivering information or knowledge in a one-way fashion," he said.

Drastic changes

Like many, Quelch has been surprised by China's drastic economic changes over the past four decades. Compared to his initial visit, when poverty was apparent, the transformation in wealth creation is astonishing.

"China has achieved the most substantial and rapid transformation in human history by lifting nearly 800 million people out of poverty over the past four decades," he remarked.

In the 1980s, China was in the early stages of its reform and opening-up policy, characterized by an underdeveloped regulatory framework. Today, however, China boasts a structured, regulated and disciplined economic environment. It now has significantly more capacity in science, technology and innovation. There has also been a significant rise in Westerners seeking collaboration with Chinese business professionals, he said.

"I've always believed in life-long learning. And that's pretty



Left: US and Chinese students practice tai chi in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, during a program hosted by Duke Kunshan University and the Foreign Affairs Office of Jiangsu Provincial People's Government in August. **Right:** A US student experiences traditional Chinese culture during the program. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Youth exchanges mooted for mutual understanding



John Quelch delivers a speech at Duke Kunshan University's 2024 commencement in Kunshan, Jiangsu province, on May 17. Quelch encouraged the graduating class to do important things, make a difference in the lives of others and make the world better. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



John Quelch

Executive Vice-Chancellor and Distinguished Professor of Social Science, Duke Kunshan University

Career:
1979-98: Professor, Harvard Business School
1998-2001: Dean and Professor, London Business School
2001-10: Professor & Senior Associate Dean, Harvard Business School
2011-13: Dean, Vice-President and Professor, China Europe International Business School
2013-17: Professor, Harvard Business School
2017-23: Dean, Vice-Provost and Professor, University of Miami
2024: Executive Vice-Chancellor, Duke Kunshan University

Books:
The Global Market (2004)
Greater Good: How Good Marketing Makes for Better Democracy (2008)
All Business Is Local (2012)
Consumers, Corporations and Public Health (2016)
Choice Matters: How Healthcare Consumers Make Decisions (2018)

Honors:
Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences
Commander of the Order of the British Empire, 2011
Silver Magnolia Award, Shanghai Municipal Government, 2012

easy to do in China because there's so much to learn," he said.

Quelch also highlighted the remarkable increase in English proficiency among the Chinese population and the increase in Chinese tourists traveling worldwide. This not only brings economic benefits to the countries they visit but also allows people worldwide to meet and understand Chinese citizens, who are law-abiding and respectful visitors.

"This creates a very positive impression of China and is crucial in fostering international understanding," he said.

Quelch was born in the United Kingdom, grew up in Australia, and developed his career in the US and China while traveling extensively across many countries. At the age of six, his family relocated from the UK to Australia. That journey took two and a half days with nine stops for refueling, as jet engines were not yet in service then.

"I was very lucky," he recalled. "Without even realizing it, I traveled halfway around the world and visited nine countries when I was just six."

He said that young people should seek opportunities to travel internationally as early as possible. He highly appreciated President Xi Jinping's invitation last year for 50,000 US students to visit China in a five-year period.

"Youth always represents the future of every society, as innovation invariably stems from young minds," he said. "It is crucial for young people from China and the US to understand each other."

Over the past few years, tensions between China and the US have cast a shadow over the academic field and people-to-people exchanges. It is detrimental when national political tensions spill over into the lives of ordinary citizens, whose interactions primarily involve the exchange of ideas and knowledge, often in the pursuit of scientific discovery, he said.

While these tensions may occasionally address specific issues faced by individuals traveling between countries, they generally create unnecessary obstacles for those simply seeking to engage in cross-cultural and intellectual exchanges, he added.

Quelch believes that the key to overcoming geopolitical tensions lies not necessarily in grand gestures but in a constant flow of cultural exchanges across a wide range of fields. Every single person-to-person interaction counts.

Crisis of confidence

Quelch said that currently there is a mutual crisis of confidence between China and the US.

"China needs to be more assured of its ability to compete on the global stage with a more open economy. Conversely, the United States should trust its capacity to compete with China without resorting to unnecessary tariffs and defensive measures," he said.

"I believe that people and consumers worldwide will benefit from honest and fair competition between Chinese and American companies. Such competition will lower prices for goods and services and elevate the global standard of living."

Therefore, both countries should recognize that their responsibilities for global prosperity extend beyond merely protecting national interests, he added.

He said that maintaining international tourism and student exchanges, along with collaboration among educators and scholars across borders — free from political agendas — will significantly benefit the world. Consumers, in particular, will gain from this, as innovation will accelerate with such cross-fertilization and cultural interchange.

"Every time a Chinese tourist talks to an American on the streets of Manhattan, that's a small contribution toward harmony," he said.

With this belief in mind, Quelch launched an immersion program for US college students in August. Over 70 students from eight prestigious US universities traveled to Shanghai and Jiangsu province for a weeklong cultural exchange with their Chinese counterparts. The program, hosted by the DKU and the Foreign Affairs Office of Jiangsu Provincial People's Government, included tours of historic towns and museums, visits to tech companies, and seminars on the ethics of emerging technologies.

Having long admired and studied Chinese culture, Quelch's appreciation for its diverse teas and fascinating tea traditions led him to start collecting Chinese teapots in the 1990s. His collection includes ceramic teapots of various shapes, designs and styles, as well as metal teapots once used by people in the Chinese countryside.

As a history undergraduate major, he deeply appreciates President Xi's commitment to promoting Chinese culture and history. He lauds the efforts to improve accessibility by opening numerous additional museums, which allow more and more Chinese people to truly appreciate their rich cultural heritage.

He was particularly impressed by Jingdezhen, the porcelain capital of China located in Jiangxi province, which boasts a ceramics museum. Many individuals, including international artists, have set up workshops and long-term residences in Jingdezhen.

He said the museum functions not only as a storage place for artifacts but also as a driver for economic growth and a hub where innovation and design thrive.

"Traditional culture seamlessly merges with new technologies and designs here. Jingdezhen showcases a diverse array of works from students, young artists, renowned artists, and ceramic workers."

US should take action to foster cooperation, trustful relations

Relations between China and the United States have encountered several challenges in recent years. The US considers China its main global strategic competitor and has taken steps to contain it. This atmosphere has inevitably impacted people on both sides.

Based on my observations of the bilateral ties and conversations with people on both sides, I've encountered many stories about the effects.

Earlier this year, popular US video blogger Jerry Kowal, who creates content about culture and life in both China and the US, said he was baselessly accused of spreading "Chinese propaganda" in a report by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, or ASPI. Absurdly, he discovered that the ASPI was either directly or indirectly funded by the US State Department. He mentioned that unfounded accusations against him have been repeated again and again, causing misunderstandings about him and problems in his life and career.

The 2018 US "China Initiative," in the name of rooting out so-called Chinese spies from US universities and research institutes, targeted academic researchers of Chinese descent and caused huge damage to their careers. Although the program was halted in 2022, its chilling effect continues to loom over the academic community. A recent study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences revealed that the terminated China Initiative "gave scientists of Chinese descent in the US stronger incentives to leave and reduced their motivation to apply for federal grants."



Chen Yingqun
Reporter's log

In recent years, some Chinese students who were accepted into US universities have also found their hard work squandered due to the US government's stricter visa policies targeting Chinese students.

Cultural, scientific and educational exchanges between countries play a vital role in improving mutual understanding among their populations. These exchanges allow individuals from both nations to gain a deeper appreciation of each other's cultures, histories and values.

This process helps to dispel misunderstandings and prejudices, fostering a more amicable and trustful relationship. Such efforts are crucial for promoting peace and cooperation between China and the United States.

Politicizing normal economic, educational and cultural exchanges is also unwise and will not achieve the desired positive results.

Many public statistics show the tariffs imposed by the US on China have also harmed the interests of people in the US.

China has been one of the most important sources of US-based scientists for more than two decades. The US attack on Chinese American scientists is clearly damaging to its own scientific development.

John Quelch, executive vice-chancellor of Duke Kunshan University, shared an example during an interview that illustrates how a US action had the opposite effect of what was intended.

He noted that before US politicians began targeting TikTok, very few people in the US were aware that it was a Chinese-origin company.

When the criticism emerged and people discovered TikTok's Chinese roots, most young people reacted positively, saying, "Oh, that's fantastic! China must be exciting if it can create something as engaging and entertaining as TikTok."

He remarked, "In fact, the opposition to TikTok seems to have had the opposite effect of what was intended. Instead of casting China in a negative light, it has actually underscored that China is the source of some very positive innovations."

China and the United States are the world's two largest economies and their relationship has global implications. Despite differences in their political systems, cultures and positions on various issues, it is essential for China and the US to maintain communication and coordination to prevent conflict and confrontation. Just as President Xi Jinping stated, mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation should be the three principles in developing China-US relations in the new era.

Last year, Xi extended an invitation to 50,000 US students to visit China in five years and a variety of exchange activities between Chinese and US youth have been actively taking place.

Additionally, China has simplified its visa policies to welcome international tourists, including those from the US.

With China already making efforts to promote cultural and people-to-people exchanges with the US, if the US government can also take concrete steps to reciprocate, it would help stabilize and enhance bilateral relations, contributing to the creation of a more harmonious and better world.

WORLDUS



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi meets with representatives from the National Committee on US-China Relations, the US-China Business Council, the US Chamber of Commerce, the Aspen Institute, the Asia Society and the Council on Foreign Relations on the sidelines of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York on Wednesday. LI RUI / XINHUA

Mutual success seen as key to Sino-US ties

By ZHOU JIN
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Foreign Minister Wang Yi reemphasized on Wednesday that China and the United States should be partners instead of rivals, and they should help each other succeed rather than engage in vicious competition.

That is the most important lesson after nearly half a century of ups and downs in the China-US relationship, Wang said when meeting with representatives from the National Committee on US-China Relations, the US-China Business Council, the US Chamber of Commerce, the Aspen Institute, the Asia Society and the Council on Foreign Relations, on the sidelines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The engagement came as Beijing and Washington have ramped up interactions in recent months to keep the ties steady as both sides mark the 45th anniversary of diplomatic relations this year.

Wang met with US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan last month in Beijing, and they agreed to further roll out dialogues and collaboration

“The US representatives ... are from institutions that are less involved in domestic partisan conflicts and can express their views on China in a relatively calm and objective manner ...”

Lyu Xiang, research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

in areas including the two nations' militaries, climate change and AI.

On Wednesday, State Councilor and Minister of Public Security Wang Xiaohong had “candid, professional and pragmatic” exchanges via video link with US Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas.

Wang said that while China maintains a stable and consistent US policy, Washington has often used conflicting voices and shown different attitudes toward Beijing. This stems from the fact that some people in the US cannot view and accept China's development in an objective manner, he said.

Wang urged Washington to recognize that Beijing has the right to develop, and that China's development is an opportunity, not a challenge, for the US as well as the world.

China-US relations are in a process of development and evolution that requires continuous dialogue and communication to eliminate misunderstandings and misjudgments, he added.

US representatives at the meeting highlighted the need to enhance face-to-face communication, expressing expectations that both sides will introduce more specific measures to further facilitate people-to-people exchanges.

They also stressed close economic ties between the two countries and rejected “decoupling”, saying that US enterprises remain optimistic about China's future and are willing to

seize opportunities to deepen their engagement and explore the Chinese market.

US-China Business Council President Craig Allen said that the council was pleased to meet with Wang to discuss economic and trade issues, and encourages the US and Chinese governments to reduce trade barriers and expand bilateral trade and investment, according to the council's website.

Lyu Xiang, a research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said that Wang's intensive interactions with people from various circles in the US have expressed China's consistent stance on developing a constructive relationship with the US.

These institutions have maintained close ties at both official and nonofficial levels with China over the years and have a deep understanding of China's development, he said.

“The US representatives whom Wang met with are from institutions that are less involved in domestic partisan conflicts and can express their views on China in a relatively calm and objective manner, at least without maliciously pushing China-US relations toward conflict,” he said.

US geopolitical manipulation condemned

Campaign aiming to discredit Chinese vaccines treats lives as ‘mere pawns’

By PRIME SARMIENTO in Manila
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The secret US military propaganda operation that aimed to discredit China's vaccines in the Philippines normalized the “disposability of Global South lives” at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and has exposed how the US treats developing countries as “mere pawns” in a geopolitical power play, analysts say.

The US military orchestrated a social media campaign to sow distrust against vaccines and other medical items, including face masks and test kits, from China, according to a June report by Reuters. The clandestine campaign, which was staged at the height of the pandemic, mainly targeted the Philippines, the Middle East and Central Asia.

At least 300 accounts on X, formerly Twitter, were created in 2020 and promoted the #Chinaangvirus hashtag, which means “China is the virus” in the Filipino language. Reuters said that after it asked X about the accounts, the platform removed the profiles, determining they were part of a coordinated bot campaign based on activity patterns and internal data.

Last month, China Daily scanned X to look for posts with the hashtag #Chinaangvirus and still found about 10 posts, which were created in 2020.

Philippine Senator Imee Marcos, who chairs the Senate's Committee on Foreign Relations, conducted an inquiry on June 25 to investigate the anti-Chinese vaccine propaganda, noting this “gravely threatens” national security issues and public health.

At the Philippine House of Representatives, Party-list Representatives Arlene Brosas, France Castro and Raoul Manuel filed a resolution seeking an investigation into the US military's secret campaign. Manuel told local media that this disinformation campaign shows the US military views Filipinos as “mere pawns” in their agenda to counter China, which they consider a “competitor as a global superpower”.

Nuurrianti Jalli, an assistant professor at the School of Media and Strategic Communications at Oklahoma State University, said she had seen photos of social media posts included in the Reuters report, with all having a “consistent narrative”.

“The posts consistently push for anti-Chinese and anti-vaccine narratives using similar language ... almost the same theme and were created almost at the same time. That's the giveaway,” she told China Daily.

Nuurrianti, who has researched mis/disinformation and propaganda in Southeast Asia, said the Pentagon-led disinformation campaign was done at the expense of the public.

“Why would you go and create this campaign (against) Filipinos who have not done anything wrong at all?” she said, adding that the Philippines and the rest of Southeast Asia are “just pawns ... because our region is a strategic region for them (the United States)”.

“Looking at this as a Southeast Asian, I feel like it's an insult as well,” she said.

In a commentary published on the website Tech Policy Press, Jonathan Corpus Ong, inaugural director of the Global Technology for Social Justice Lab at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, wrote that people in the Global South have always been used as “political pawns in peak moments of geopolitical conflict”.

“The campaigns stoked ethnic and racial divisions within the targeted countries and provoke social

animosity,” he told China Daily. Ong, who has extensively researched dis/misinformation in the Philippines, said: “Hateful speech and expression flow and travel in our online spaces. Just as then-US president Donald Trump amplified racist ‘China Virus’ rhetoric in his speeches, Sinophobic behaviors including anti-Asian hate crimes and online hate increased globally.”

The Reuters report did not get much traction in the Philippines because “there are huge power inequalities at play here”, he said.

“Politicians and journalists in targeted countries would be wary of upsetting and calling out a military superpower they had previously engaged with as an ally. Crucially, many journalists, researchers and civil society organizations have been historically positioned as being ‘obliged to be grateful’ to the US government for their foreign aid.”

“The Reuters report indicated the campaigns lasted 18 months ... We are only scratching the surface here by focusing on one topic of the campaign when clearly this is an international campaign that is meant to advance US geopolitical interests at the cost of human lives during a global tragedy,” he said.

“We are only scratching the surface here by focusing on one topic of the campaign when clearly this is an international campaign that is meant to advance US geopolitical interests at the cost of human lives during a global tragedy.”

Jonathan Corpus Ong, inaugural director of the Global Technology for Social Justice Lab at the University of Massachusetts Amherst

The Philippines started its COVID-19 immunization program on March 1, 2021, after it received Sinovac vaccines donated by the Chinese government.

The US Defense Department did not deny the Reuters report. In an interview with Russia's TASS news agency, Pentagon spokeswoman Lisa Lawrence said the department conducts a wide range of operations, including operations in the information environment, to counter adversary malign influence.

Several state and non-state actors use social media platforms and other media “to spread disinformation and conduct malign influence campaigns” against the US, she said.

In line with the US National Defense Strategy, Lawrence said the Pentagon “continues to build integrated deterrence against critical challenges to US national security”.

Philippine Undersecretary of Health Department Maria Rosario Singh-Vergeire told the June 25 Philippine Senate hearing that the department was aware of social media posts that smeared Chinese vaccines and even conducted town hall meetings to better inform Filipinos about vaccination. She said they were not aware that these posts were part of an organized campaign, noting “we thought it was just random”.

Health officials were worried about these posts “because we were trying to have all our population vaccinated, so we really needed to intensify our efforts”, Singh-Vergeire said. The department requested social media platforms to take down these posts and “some of the posts were actually taken down”, she said.

NYC mayor indicted on bribery, wire fraud charges

By AI HEPING
and HENG WEILI in New York

Federal prosecutors on Thursday unsealed a 57-page indictment against New York City Mayor Eric Adams, charging that the leader of America's largest city engaged in widespread corruption, including conspiring with the Turkish government to receive illegal foreign campaign contributions.

The indictment accuses Adams, 64, of seeking and accepting improper benefits since at least 2014 when he was Brooklyn borough president. He faces one count of wire fraud, one count of conspiracy, two counts of solicitation of a contribution from a foreign national and one count of bribery, according to the indictment.

Adams said he won't resign and will fight the charges.

US District Court Judge Dale Ho of the Southern District of New York ordered Adams to appear at noon Friday for an arraignment before a federal magistrate, but a lawyer for the mayor asked the judge to move the hearing to next week, The New York Times reported.

Federal prosecutors charge that Adams took more than \$100,000 in “improper valuable benefits”, such as flight upgrades and luxury hotel stays not divulged publicly as required and used his office to help Turkey.

A police officer who declined to give his name and is serving with hundreds of other officers providing security for the ongoing United Nations General Assembly in New York, said he and fellow officers weren't surprised by the indictment of Adams. “But we were shocked at the resignation of our police commissioner,” he told China Daily.

Commissioner Edward Caban resigned last week amid a federal investigation into the



New York City Mayor Eric Adams

department's nightclub enforcement, sources familiar with the matter told NBC News. The city's first Latino police commissioner took over the department in July 2023.

Another police officer in the security detail three blocks from the UN said to China Daily: “How could he [Adams] afford all those luxury suits and ties he wore every day? He got a helping hand from someone,” she said.

The indictment was unsealed Thursday morning after federal agents appeared at Gracie Mansion, the mayor's official residence on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, and seized his phone.

Surrounded by supporters and hecklers nearby who interrupted and called him a “disgrace”, Adams told the media minutes before the indictment was unsealed that he didn't commit the crimes listed in the document.

“If it's campaign violations, I know I don't violate the campaign. If it's foreign donors, I know I don't take money from foreign donors,” Adams said. “I ask New Yorkers to wait to hear our defense.”

The retired police captain was elected New York's 110th mayor in 2021, running on an anti-crime platform.

The indictment alleges that “all told, Adams' 2021 campaign reaped over \$10 million in Matching Funds based on the false certifications that the campaign complied with the law,

when in fact ... the defendant, knowingly and repeatedly relied on illegal contributions”.

Adams' inner circle also is facing federal investigations, and some, including the police commissioner, have recently resigned.

Damian Williams, the US attorney for the Southern District of New York, whose office is prosecuting Adams, said that Thursday's indictment — the first criminal charges filed against an incumbent mayor of New York — probably wouldn't be the last.

On Wednesday night after news broke that Adams had been indicted, numerous elected officials called for him to resign, including several Democrats running against him in next year's primary.

Governor Kathy Hochul has the power to remove the mayor. She told reporters that the news was “shocking in its scale”, but said she will be “deliberative” before taking any action.

“I will say this: I will take my time to review this indictment, see what's embedded in it,” she said. “I am not going to send any indication, at this time, of what I'm going to do because it would be absolutely irresponsible of me.”

If Adams steps down or Hochul removes him, the city's Public Advocate Jumaane Williams would become the acting mayor. He would then schedule a nonpartisan special election for a new mayor, which could happen within 90 days.

Authorities said they started their investigation when Adams was Brooklyn borough president and continued it after he became mayor. The investigation focused on whether Adams had conspired with the Turkish government to receive illegal foreign campaign contributions in exchange for acting on its behalf.

Damian Williams said that Adams

had been “showered” with gifts, which he alleged that the mayor was aware were illegal.

“This was a multiyear scheme to buy favor with a single New York City politician on the rise: Eric Adams,” the US attorney said at a news conference. “Year after year, he kept the public in the dark”.

The benefits included luxury travel — free and discounted Turkish Airlines tickets and free meals and hotel rooms — from wealthy foreigners and from at least one Turkish government official, prosecutors said.

Adams tried to hide the gifts or make them appear as if he had paid for them, according to the indictment.

By September 2021, federal prosecutors said, an unnamed Turkish official told Adams that it was “his turn” to repay the official, by pressuring the city Fire Department to accelerate the opening of a new Turkish consular building in Manhattan in time for a visit by Turkey's president, even though the 36-story skyscraper would have failed a fire inspection.

A Fire Department official overseeing the safety assessment said he was told he would lose his job if he didn't follow the order, according to the indictment.

“His foreign-national benefactors sought to cash in on their corrupt relationships with him, particularly when, in 2021, it became clear that Adams would become New York City's mayor,” prosecutors said in the indictment. “Adams agreed, providing favorable treatment in exchange for the illicit benefits he received.”

“In exchange for free travel and other travel-related bribes in 2021 and 2022 arranged by the Turkish official, Adams did as instructed,” the indictment charges.

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