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CHINA DAILY

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More policy support on the way

Trading value of Shanghai, Shenzhen bourses hits new record on Tuesday

By SHI JING in Shanghai
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As there have been more signs recently of a bull run in the A-share market, including soaring indexes and the stratospheric level of the trading volume, more economic stimulus policies as well as investors' patience are equally important to further consolidate the upward trend of Chinese equities, said experts.

Resuming after the National Day holiday, the benchmark Shanghai Composite Index gained 4.59 percent to close at 3489.78 points on Tuesday, while the Shenzhen Component Index surged 9.17 percent. The technology-focused ChiNext in Shenzhen spiked 17.25 percent. Semiconductor, software development and securities companies led Tuesday's rally.

The combined trading value at the Shanghai and Shenzhen bourses stood at 3.45 trillion yuan (\$490 billion) on Tuesday, surpassing the previous record of 2.6 trillion yuan on Sept 30, the last trading day before the holiday.

The A-share market's rally on Tuesday came as officials of the National Development and Reform Commission, China's top economic regulator, said on the same day that the country will launch a batch of incremental policies to promote the sustained economic recovery and development.

"China is confident of maintaining steady and healthy economic growth and achieve the full-year growth target," said Zheng Shanjie, head of the NDRC, at a news conference on Tuesday, adding that more efforts will be made to strengthen the countercyclical adjustments for macroeconomic policies.

The incremental policies released in late September attached greater importance to improving the quality of economic growth, supporting the real economy, facilitating the sound development of market entities, and coordinating high-quality development and high-level security, he said.

Since Sept 24, the country's top regulators have come up with supportive measures covering the financial sector, the property market, and support to the real economy, among others.

The measures will be better used to spur more development potential and better achieve this year's growth target, said Zheng.

Meanwhile, continued efforts will be made to boost the capital market, according to Zheng. More effective and comprehensive measures will be introduced to vigorously guide the inflow of



Above: Investors flock to open stock trading accounts on Tuesday in Huzhou, Zhejiang province.
YI FAN / FOR CHINA DAILY
Left: Investors check current stock prices at an exchange in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, on Tuesday.
LONG WEI / FOR CHINA DAILY

long-term capital. Blockages preventing the smoother entry of social security funds, as well as insurance and wealth management funds into the capital market should be removed.

Public companies will be supported in mergers and acquisitions as well as restructuring. The reform of mutual funds should be advanced steadily, and efforts will be made to promulgate measures to protect individual investors, said Zheng, noting that these policies will be released at a faster pace.

Liu Gang, managing director of China International Capital Corp, said the measures announced in September had exceeded market expectations and rekindled investors' passion, emphasizing the financial measures' support for the stock market.

These have served as a driver for the recent bullish performance of the A-share market. But the market's future performance will be deter-

mined by the pace and scale of successive policies, especially fiscal policies, Liu said.

Luo Zhiheng, chief economist at Yuekai Securities, said that fiscal and property market policies should better coordinate with the recently released monetary policies to stabilize investors' confidence and expectations. Increasing the scale of this year's budget deficit, accelerating the issuance of special bonds, granting subsidies to special groups of people and the issuance of additional treasury bonds can be possible options in terms of supportive fiscal measures, he said.

China may adopt moderate fiscal stimulus of about 1.5 to 2 trillion yuan in the short term, which is also a reasonable level, said Wang Tao, chief China economist at UBS Investment Bank.

Chen Guo, chief strategist at China Securities, said that the Chinese stock market's recent bullish performance is

supported by the revaluation of Chinese assets and recovered confidence. But a well-grounded overall bull run still needs time, especially the further improvement of economic fundamentals. Investors should have patience for the medium term, he said.

Noting that the A-share market will enter a period of sustainable growth in the medium term, during which fluctuations cannot be avoided, Zhang Qiyao, chief strategist at Industrial Securities, said there is still room for a rise in the short run. Investors should watch for how long the bullish trend will last rather than focus on short-term peaks, he said.

In a report released on Monday, analysts from Goldman Sachs raised 10 reasons to increase exposure to A-shares, including strong economic stimulus, upbeat investors' mood, undervalued Chinese equities, companies' improving earnings and a relaxed external environment.

It is time for Africa to rise in the new era

WORLD WATCH
By Worku Belachew

The so-called rules-based international order that started its maneuvers on the heels of the end of World War II has not brought about development that Africa needs. The highly hierarchical order has rather hijacked international multilateral organizations and has been using them to systematically perpetuate hegemonic relations among the wealthiest Western nations and the poorest African countries.

Africa needs a renewed world order where its people can live a dignified life. Such an order should allow the African people to properly utilize their resources to extricate themselves from abject poverty, and it should facilitate the continent's dearly useful youths to find the proper niche to invest their labor, skills and knowledge in for the good of their society. Countless African youths desperately cross the world's dangerous migratory routes, often exposing themselves to robbery, beatings and other inhumane treatments at the hands of brutal human traffickers. Organ traffickers, too, perform horrific theater on the helpless migrants. This is not to mention the scorching temperature and the death that await migrants in the Mediterranean Sea. The International Organization for Migration has called this year the deadliest year since 2016.

Wealthier countries at times close their borders and at other times call the countries where the migrants come from "shit holes". Economic and political migrants and asylum seekers are considered sub-humans in some destinations.

The existing West-dominated exploitative world order is tailored to fit the West and is made deliberately unfit for the Global South and East. The current system serves to make poor countries poorer. The World Social Report 2020 indicates that unequal societies are less effective at reducing poverty, grow more slowly, and make it more difficult for people to break out of the cycle of poverty. Such economic divide have not surfaced out of the blue. These are the result of lopsided development approaches.

The structural adjustment of the 1980s in Africa would lend us a better example in this regard. As schools and health services were liberalized, families were unable to afford healthcare and school fees. Such conditionality put restraints on the choice of development course for countries.

Developed countries impose their wills on developing ones. It is clear that the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the United Nations Security

Council operate as per of the wills of a few countries. Countries in Africa are at the mercy of the decisions of these few nations. Unless African nations are allowed equal participation on policy decisions that affect them and on international matters as well, the underdevelopment is sure to deepen.

A few countries that moved up through the ladder of wealth with their rigorous efforts are tagged with derogatory terms such as "dictatorship", "undemocratic", "despots" and what have you.

The existing world order is nothing short of institutionalization of exploitation.

It is embodied in the guise of "protection of human rights", "expansion of democracy" and "development" and other rosy words. Countries and governments that adhere to the dictates of the wealthiest nations are ranked top in human rights handling, democracy and development, and sometimes called "favorite dictators". Any country and grouping that stands out of their bracket, no matter how good its record, is "undemocratic", "brutal", "dictatorship" and the list goes on. Farsighted leaders are demonized and puppets glorified by the West-controlled media.

World famous scholars John Mearsheimer and Jeffery Sachs in a recent debate at the All-In Summit 2024 agreed that the United States has sought to create world countries in its own image, which Sachs called "delusional". His take is that it does not care whether a country is ruled by the military or is a democracy or whatsoever; the thing is just to project power.

Toward a new era

The Pan-African vision is on the horizon — "an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena".

This will not occur because we wish it to. It behooves us to work hard and smart. It requires us to make the needed sacrifices. It requires a 21st-century mindset that puts Africa's interests first. The old way of doing things cannot and will not usher Africa toward attaining its vision. Opinion leaders in every country of Africa should put the interest of Africa first — the guns must be silenced.

See *Progress*, page 3

Swift actions urged to meet growth targets

By XU WEI
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Premier Li Qiang emphasized on Tuesday the need for faster and more effective implementation of economic policies to achieve China's growth targets for the year, as authorities ramped up measures in recent weeks to further strengthen the world's second-largest economy.

Speaking at a symposium with business leaders and economists in Beijing, Li called for swift actions to put in place the newly rolled out policies designed to stabilize growth and enhance support for businesses.

The nation's financial regulators unveiled a host of monetary easing measures last week, including cutting the reserve requirement ratio, key policy interest rates and exist-

ing mortgage loan interest rates, in order to anchor market confidence and underpin economic recovery.

A host of policies were also announced by local governments last week to reduce down payment rates for both first-home and second-home purchases, as part of steps to buoy the real estate sector.

The stronger-than-expected stimulus measures have since boosted investor confidence and spurred the nation's largest stock rally in years.

After listening to the advice from economists and business leaders on Tuesday, the premier emphasized the need to finalize concrete plans for policy measures currently under review, while closely monitoring and assessing their implementation and impact.

See *Economy*, page 3

'HIDDEN COTTAGE' KEEPS HEART OF CULTURE BEATING IN TAIPEI

Humble apartment a gathering place for artists, academics keeping traditions alive

By XINHUA in Taipei



As dusk falls, a small sign lights up at the entrance of a narrow front yard in Taipei's old town, where passersby usually pause to make out the ink-brushed calligraphy reading "Yin Lu" — or "Hidden Cottage".

Xin Yi-yun's lecture there on Chinese philosophy starts promptly at 7 pm every Thursday. The small hall, which seats about 30 people, is usually full, with mostly older attendees and a few younger ones scattered among them.

Since 2011, this philosophy

course has come a long way, covering various schools from Taoism to Confucianism and the lesser-known School of Naturalists. Its location was moved to the humble apartment from the grand Taipei Zhongshan Hall, a heritage site where a ceremony to accept Japan's surrender after World War II was held in 1945.

See *Heritage*, page 2

Back on track



Residents celebrate the arrival of a train at Bir al-Abd station on Monday in Bir Al-Abd, Egypt. Passenger train services resumed in Sinai after being suspended for more than 50 years following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. ALI MOUSTAFA / GETTY IMAGES

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PAGE TWO



Calligrapher Chen Jun-guang (left) gives a lesson to students at Yin Lu (right) in Taipei last month. PHOTOS BY FU SHUANGQI / XINHUA

Heritage: Finding 'nation's core spirit'

From page 1

"A person's basic understanding and awareness of their own culture is incredibly important, especially in today's world, where East and West collide," said Xin, a disciple of renowned historian and philosopher Qian Mu, when speaking about why he has been teaching Chinese classics for so many years outside campus.

Many of the attendees came to the class to resolve the fundamental question: "Who am I?"

"I'm not just here to take a philosophy class or acquire knowledge. I'm seeking an answer to a deeper life question," said Liang Zheng-yi who is in his early forties. He was once a student of Xin at the Taipei University of the Arts and now regularly attends the classes at Yin Lu.

"I began reflecting on this in college. As a musician, the techniques and materials I learned were from the West. So how can the things I create represent me? If we're talking about using Western methods with a Chinese foundation, then what is that 'Chinese foundation'?" he said.

At 33, Li Yi-peng found solace from inter-

national conflicts through the class. Growing up with parents who had worked in the United States, he said he was influenced by the notion that "Chinese culture is outdated, and the West is better; you should listen to American pop music and watch American and European movies."

"I didn't want to be a person who felt disappointed in his own culture," he said. Learning from the wisdom of his ancestors helped him realize that "our cultural tradition is amazing. It addresses daily life issues practically, unites a nation's core spirit, and even answers the question of happiness."

Apart from Xin's philosophy course, calligrapher Chen Jun-guang also teaches at Yin Lu. Compared with Xin's course, the students in Chen's class range more widely in age, from a fifth-grader to a university student and a grandfather.

"Calligraphy class is like a door. Once you step through it, you encounter many other aspects of traditional culture," said Xie Yu-juan, an architect in Taipei.

In 2019, she and her classmates embarked on a "calligraphy journey" to the mainland, where they learned the tra-

ditional techniques of how to make paper, ink stones, ink, and brushes.

Chen, who lives in Pingtung in southern Taiwan, lamented that enthusiasm for learning calligraphy has greatly waned since his youth.

"In the past, the calligraphy club in a middle school would have more than 100 members; now, only a handful," he said.

Nonetheless, he believes that being a uniquely Chinese art form, calligraphy is deeply embedded in the cultural genes, waiting for the right conditions to sprout.

The owner of Yin Lu, Lin Gu-fang, once chaired the Taipei Lecture Hall, located on the third floor of the Taipei Zhongshan Hall.

Under his leadership, the busy cultural hub became a landmark for promoting traditional Chinese culture and fostering cultural exchanges across the Taiwan Strait.

Since Lin's departure in the autumn of 2020, Taipei Zhongshan Hall has remained an active cultural space, hosting performances and lectures on ballet, folk songs, and modern dance.

Compared to the spacious rooms of Taipei Zhongshan Hall, Yin Lu feels cramped. Its

limited space and location in a quiet residential community, have made it difficult to attract new participants.

Both Liang and Li felt that people like themselves, who are captivated by traditional culture, are fewer in Taiwan.

For many, the connection to tradition is either distant or vague, and the current authorities are trying to keep a distance from traditional Chinese culture because of their independence agenda.

"However, when critical life events like birth, aging, sickness, or death occur, people instinctively turn to tradition," Li said.

"History is vital to the Chinese people. For us, life is a long river; only by having a past can we live firmly in the present and pursue happiness in the future," said Xin.

"If you forcibly sever ties with the past, you will become a drifting, lonely soul." Stepping out of Yin Lu, one can still find similar people like Xin and Chen as well as attendees at their classes.

For example, Sun Rui-jin, the chief musician at the Taipei Confucius Temple for 37 years, has dedicated himself to training successive groups of middle school students to perform ancient music at the memorial ser-

VICES for Confucius. Tea master Tang Wen-jing has been committed to recreating the whole tea-making and drinking ritual following what was recorded in the book *The Classic of Tea* by Tang scholar Lu Yu in the eighth century.

"There are three meanings behind naming this space 'hidden cottage,'" said Lin. "First, it refers to the traditional saying that the great hermit hides in the city. Second, it reflects the ancient wisdom that when the 'Way' does not prevail in the world, one should retreat."

The third meaning comes from Lin's unique observation of Taiwan society. He believes there is a "visible Taiwan" and a "hidden Taiwan".

The visible side, which people see in the media, online, and in politics, is noisy and chaotic. In contrast, the hidden side is made up of those quietly holding on to their own cause.

"In the past, the visible and hidden sides of Taiwan coexisted in balance. Now, the hidden side is indeed gradually diminishing," Lin remarked. "Although Yin Lu is small, it represents a small glimmer of hope."

Playing music for Confucius' birth, children open door to tradition

By XINHUA in Taipei

Teenagers in red T-shirts holding various traditional musical instruments quietly and solemnly exited along a designated path in the courtyard of the Taipei Confucius Temple. With the final command, "Ritual completed," they finished a comprehensive rehearsal for the annual ceremony marking Confucius' birth.

The atmosphere immediately livened up as the teenagers dispersed into the shaded corridors. They chatted among themselves or pulled out their phones to play games.

Since the school semester started in September, these junior high school students have been rehearsing every Saturday morning at the temple. For nearly a year, they not only practiced their musical instruments regularly, but also completed a week of training during the winter break and five weeks during the summer vacation.

On Sept 28, they donned long red robes and tall black hats for their first performance at the annual ceremony marking Confucius' birth, which strictly followed the rituals practiced for centuries across China.

The ceremony included a principal presentation officer, a consecration officer, and collateral presentation officers. Last year, Taipei Mayor Chiang Wan-an served as the principal presentation officer and Kung Tsui-chang, a 79th-generation direct descendant of Confucius, served as the consecration officer.

The attendants at the service, called "deacons", were made up of respected local elders and students from the nearby Taipei Minglun High School. The musicians who performed the ceremonial music were mostly students from the Taipei Chongqing Junior High School, while the dancers who performed the ceremonial dance were selected from students at the Taipei Dalong Elementary School.

"My elder sister was a vocal member of the musicians. Inspired by her, I wanted to give it a try too," said Hsieh Ya-han, now in her second year of junior high school.

Before joining the performance, Hsieh had no previous experience with traditional musical instruments. Over the past year, she practiced the *xiao*, a vertical bamboo flute, every Wednesday after school. She worked diligently to achieve the tall task of learning



Left: Students play musical instruments during the ceremony on Sept 28 in Taipei.



Right: Children perform a traditional dance during the ceremony. PHOTOS BY CHEN XIAOYUAN / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

10 pieces of music to meet the standards of the ceremony.

The music performed at the ceremony is based on that played at the memorial service for Confucius during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), with the lyrics dating back to the Song Dynasty (960-1279).

A total of 21 traditional Chinese musical instruments were used in the performance. Hsieh's classmate, Shih Chin-yao, played the *bo fu*, a rare percussion instrument shaped like a small double-sided drum, which is hardly ever seen in today's traditional Chinese orchestras.

"I have learned violin and other musical instruments from a young age. When I found out I could learn how to play traditional instruments in the training program at the Confucius Temple, I signed up right away," Shih said.

Shih came across some challenges when learning to play the *bo fu*. "The rhythm is steady with little variation, so I need to keep both my body and hands stable," he said. At home, he often practices without the instrument, even making a cardboard version to simulate it.

The training during the summer vacation was especially tough. From July to early August, the performers rehearsed from Monday to Friday in the morning, practicing

not only their instruments but also standing in a military-like formation under the hot summer sun for 90 minutes a day. This physical training was essential to prepare them for the demands of the full ceremony performance.

Most musicians were selected from the first-year students. After performing at the ceremony in the beginning of their second year, most end their involvement in this unique extracurricular experience.

"Every autumn, I bid farewell to one group of students and welcome a new group. Over the years, I've trained at least 3,000 children," said Sun Rui-jin, who has been the chief musician at the Taipei Confucius Temple for 37 years.

Reflecting on the changes over time, Sun noted the shifts in how Confucius is viewed. "In the past, Confucius held a very significant place in people's life in Taiwan, and students deeply respected him as a wise sage. But today's children may not see him the same way," Sun said.

Hsieh and her classmates received a different education compared to their parents. Due to the current authorities' independence agenda, their geography and history lessons now focus on Taiwan rather than the whole of China. Additionally, the proportion of classical Chinese texts in Chinese lan-

guage classes has significantly diminished.

Despite these changes, the students still have their own understanding of Confucius. "He was a wise man," Hsieh said.

Shih said, "We read about him in our textbooks, and what we're learning as musicians at the ceremony is a form of cultural inheritance."

"As teachers, we need to adjust our methods," said Sun. "I try to present Confucius as someone more approachable and interesting, not just a stern old man, so that students can relate to him better."

For the teenagers, being musicians at the Confucius Temple has opened a door to connect with tradition. "One of the students who played drums had dyed blonde hair and looked very fashionable. Surprisingly, when she went to college, she majored in the *guqin* (a plucked Chinese musical instrument)," Sun said.

As he grows older, Sun has found a successor. His assistant, who has participated in the ceremony for 10 years, is poised to take over. "I hope that the ceremony's elegant music and Confucian traditions will continue in Taiwan."

Next year's ceremony will likely be performed by a new group of students, but previous musicians can also apply to participate. "I will definitely apply next year," Hsieh said.



An attendant participates in an annual ceremony marking Confucius' birth at Taipei Confucius Temple. JIN LIWANG / XINHUA

TOP NEWS

New port of call

The Chinese naval hospital ship *Peace Ark* is welcomed on Monday by crowds at the port of Douala in Cameroon. The hospital ship, which is on a seven-day goodwill visit — its first — to the west-central African country, will provide free medical services to local residents.

LIU ZHILEI / XINHUA



China backs peace in Africa area

Envoy supports sovereignty efforts by Congo republic amid violence in Great Lakes region

By MINLU ZHANG
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China's envoy to the United Nations on Tuesday reiterated support for the Democratic Republic of the Congo's efforts to protect its sovereignty, territorial integrity and security and emphasized China's readiness to continue promoting peace and stability in the region.

The situation in Africa's Great Lakes Region, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), continues to be "alarming" due to ongoing violence in the country's eastern areas, according to Xia Huang, the UN special envoy to the region, during a UN Security Council briefing.

For decades, the Great Lakes Region, including countries like Burundi, the DRC and Rwanda has been plagued by conflict and

political instability dating to the 1960s.

"It is the civilian population who will continue to bear the heavy toll of war daily: loss of life, sexual violence, health problems and malnutrition in displacement camps," said Xia.

The violence is being fueled by the M23 armed group, which continues to expand its control, and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), whose "terrorist links" and attacks on civilians in Ituri and North Kivu threaten the region, according to Xia.

The DRC now ranks second in the world for the highest number of displaced persons, following Sudan.

"China reaffirms its support for the efforts of the DRC to safeguard its sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security and is ready to continue our positive role to promote peace and stability in the region," Fu Cong, China's

permanent representative to the UN, said at the Security Council briefing.

"China wishes every success to the upcoming session of the summit of the Regional Oversight Mechanism of the Framework to be held in Uganda and expects the parties to seize this opportunity to build more consensus and become partners on the road to peace and development," he said.

China urges all armed groups in the region to "follow the spirit of the cease-fire agreement, silence the guns, stop the violence and maintain the momentum of de-escalation. All parties concerned should honor their commitments under the frameworks of the Luanda process and the Nairobi process and refrain from providing support to any armed group," the ambassador said.

He called for alleviating the humanitarian crisis and promoting common development in the region. As a result of the protracted conflict, the spread of the mpox epidemic and the prominent food

problem, the DRC and Sudan have seen a large concentration of displaced persons, Fu noted.

He urged the international community, especially developed nations, to fulfill their aid commitments and close the funding gap to help refugees return home.

The international community also should support regional countries in responsibly using natural resources and increasing technology transfer to boost independent development and reduce the root causes of conflict, he added.

"China has always been a strong supporter and companion of Africa on its road to modernization," said Fu, adding that at last month's Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, China proposed 10 partnership actions, including duty-free access for products from least-developed countries.

"We are ready to work with the international community to contribute more to the lasting peace, development and prosperity in the Great Lakes region," said Fu.

Former top legislator Wu dies of illness at 84

By CAO DESHENG
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Wu Bangguo, former chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the nation's top legislature, died of illness at the age of 84 in Beijing at 4:36 am on Tuesday, an official statement said.

The statement was released on Tuesday afternoon by the Communist Party of China Central Committee, the Standing Committee of the NPC, the State Council, which is China's Cabinet, and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

The statement said that Comrade Wu was an outstanding CPC member, a long-tested and loyal communist fighter, a great proletarian revolutionary, a statesman and an outstanding leader of the Party and the country.

Wu served as chairman of the Standing Committee of the NPC from 2003 to 2013. The statement commended his efforts in developing the theory and practice of the system of people's congresses, as well as his significant contributions to the development of socialist democracy and the improvement of the socialist legal system.

Calling Wu an important leader in the construction of socialist democracy and rule of law with Chinese characteristics, the statement said that he made legislation the top priority of the NPC and its Standing Committee, adhered to scientific and democratic approaches in legislation, and formulated and amended relevant laws to adapt to new circumstances.

Wu served as leader of the central group for constitutional amendment and organized the drafting of constitutional amendments that were passed during the second session of the 10th NPC, the statement said.



Wu Bangguo

He led the formulation and amendment of a series of laws, such as the Anti-Secession Law and the Property Law,

that have contributed significantly to the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics, the statement said, adding that Wu made important contributions to the establishment of the socialist legal system with Chinese characteristics.

In March 2013, Wu retired from the position of top legislator. After that, he remained committed to resolutely supporting the leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, paying close attention to the development of the Party and the country, and steadfastly supporting the Party's efforts in fighting anti-corruption, the statement said.

The statement hailed Wu's life as a glorious, revolutionary one that was dedicated to serving the people, and said it was a life of unremitting struggle for the ideals of communism and the cause of the Party and country. His passing is a great loss to the Party as well as the nation, it said.

The statement also called for learning from Wu's revolutionary spirit, noble character and exemplary work style, uniting more closely around the CPC Central Committee with Xi at its core, holding high the great banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and striving in unity to promote the building of a strong country and the advancement of national rejuvenation on all fronts through Chinese modernization.

Ministry reveals malicious intent of US program

By YANG ZEKUN
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The Ministry of State Security released on Tuesday details of a high-profile case involving Chinese researcher Tan Hongjin, who was charged with trade secret theft under a United States government program called the China Initiative, alleging malicious intent behind the US actions.

From the program's launch by the US Department of Justice in November 2018 until its termination in February 2022, Chinese American scientists and researchers working at 87 institutions in the US were targeted primarily because of their ancestry, the ministry said. Among the cases, 246 have been identified as problematic, resulting in the destruction of 103 careers, it noted.

The program aimed to fabricate espionage cases against Chinese scholars as part of a broader policy to contain China, prompting 94 US district attorney offices to file at least one or two cases against such individuals each year.

Chinese American experts were constantly targeted through sting operations and baseless interrogations, with Tan's case being a prime example of the unfair and discriminatory practice, the ministry said.

According to the details released on Tuesday, Tan, who holds a PhD in materials science from the California Institute of Technology, joined US petroleum giant Phillips 66 in June 2017 to work on energy storage technology. He resigned in December 2018 to return to China to care for his parents.

On the day of his resignation, Tan found a company USB drive at home, promptly returned it, and informed his supervisor. Despite no previous security concerns, the company reported him to the FBI the following day. A week later, FBI agents raided Tan's home and arrested him. Shortly afterward, the US Department of Justice accused him of stealing next-generation battery technology valued at over \$1 billion from Phillips 66, including hundreds of confidential files that were intended for his future employer in China.

Two Chinese colleagues who stood up for Tan, saying that no formal restrictions on USB usage existed at Phillips 66 and that sharing research results was encouraged, were also threatened with retaliation and forced to leave the company.

Following his arrest, Tan was isolated from the outside world, denied bail, and held in a detention center under poor conditions for 11 months, according to the ministry.

Prosecutors pressured him to accept a government-appointed lawyer and subjected all his electronic devices to investigation. His case faced multiple delays as prosecutors claimed they needed to review 4 terabytes of data related to the case.

The prosecution also attempted to persuade Tan to sign a plea deal by emphasizing the costs and pressures of continuing litigation. They reportedly conveyed a message to Tan through his cellmate, asserting that their prime target was not Tan and urging him to admit that the downloaded files benefited the Chinese government or companies, which could lead to a reduced sentence.

Under immense pressure, the researcher admitted to downloading a file without company authorization, but denied any connection with the Chinese government or companies. Despite this, US media selectively focused on his "admission of guilt" while ignoring the truth, leading the US Department of Justice to frame the case as another incident of "Chinese economic espionage".

Many of those who have been investigated faced serious criminal charges such as espionage for minor infractions, with law enforcement often settling for lesser charges such as tax evasion or wire fraud due to a lack of substantive evidence.

Officials from the US Department of Justice have admitted that the program exacerbated discrimination against Chinese individuals in the US. The FBI's counterintelligence officials have recognized its negative impact on the Asian American community, particularly Chinese American scientists and students, whose careers have been significantly disrupted.

From page 1

It needs partners that support the quick transfer of skillsets and knowledge. It requires friends that lend support in the effort to expand critical development infrastructure. Practical assistance that propel development are critically needed. The China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, for instance, is being translated into projects such as ports and road and rail connectivity. East Africa is now increasingly connected with the maritime trade routes of the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. Recently, Ethiopia used rail wagons for the export of livestock. The rail transport connection also helps create more understanding among the diverse cultures of the region. It is time to end the rosy words and pretentious friendship and begin a genuine partnership.

"Modernization is an inalienable right of all countries," Chinese President Xi Jinping rightly said in his keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the 2024 Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Beijing on Sept 5.

Our needs are explicitly expressed in Africa's development blueprint Agenda 2063. African people widely agree that Agenda 2063 is a relevant development discourse, which is stated in the introductory part of the second decade of the agenda's implementation. The ambition is to elevate all countries of Africa, including the islands, well above the poverty line.

Africa envisions becoming a continent of middle income countries by 2033. It needs to transfer knowledge and skills. It needs to be a good competitor in the tech world. And this demands that it channel its resources into investments that would accelerate its growth and development. First and foremost, superpowers that want to play their proxy games should stay away. Good partners should continue investing in areas that are mutually beneficial.

There are no babysitting countries that feed into the mouths of Africans. Countries and governments in Africa must clearly know their respective interests. They must work hard and smart to align their plans with their shared vision. If Africa is divided internally, it is given that any entity will try to fish in the troubled waters. Who is to blame then?

Current generations of Africans in areas including academia, media, power circles and other influential positions should seriously work to defend the interest of Africa. In 1619 and even before, our ancestors made a grave mistake. Powerful and influential ones traded the strong Africans for tobacco, cloth, sugar, rifle raiding villages and bringing colonialists deep into Africa. We need to take care in case our short-lived gains supersede the noble cause expressed in Agenda 2063.

The author is editor-in-chief of the *Ethiopian Herald*, a national newspaper in Ethiopia. The views do not necessarily reflect those of *China Daily*.

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Economy: Importance of new policies highlighted

From page 1

Adjustments must be made when necessary, and measures must be reinforced when needed, he said.

In addition, as preparations for next year's economic agenda are

underway, Li highlighted the importance of developing a set of new policies aimed at stabilizing and boosting the economy. These measures should be rolled out in response to changing economic conditions to ensure sustained and steady growth, he added.

The premier called for concrete steps to alleviate burdens on businesses, saying that firm actions must be taken to address issues such as arbitrary fines, excessive inspections and unwarranted closures.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, China's factory activity

gauge improved marginally in September, but was still below the 50-point mark that separates contraction from expansion. The purchasing managers' index for China's manufacturing sector came in at 49.8 in September, up from 49.1 in August, the NBS said.

Li also presided over a study session of the State Council on Tuesday, which was centered on enhancing the consistency of macro policies. He pointed out that enhancing the coordination of policies is critical to boosting the efficiency of macroeconomic regulation.

The premier highlighted the need for various departments to enable greater consistency in mac-

ro policies and make joint efforts to promote sustained and healthy socioeconomic development.

In the context of significant downward pressure facing the economy, Li urged various sectors to actively implement policies that stabilize growth and expectations, while being cautious about introducing measures that could contract or suppress economic activity.

CHINA

Pakistani girl treated for rare disorder

2-year-old has chance to survive after receiving transplantation in Shanghai

By ZHOU WENTING in Shanghai
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A 2-year-old Pakistani girl with a rare genetic disorder was infused with umbilical cord blood stem cells from her newborn sister at the Children's Hospital of Fudan University in Shanghai on Tuesday, giving the toddler a chance to survive.

If everything goes well and the girl does not have any complications — such as infection and transplant rejection related to the transplantation — over the next six weeks, the progression of her rare condition will cease.

The 26-month-old nicknamed Anna has a condition called metaphromatic leukodystrophy, a hereditary disorder that causes the brain and nervous system to lose function progressively.

When she was about 18 months old, her parents found that she lacked the ability to walk steadily and that things often slipped from her fists. She has an 8-year-old sister who started to show similar symptoms at around the same age and is currently in critical condition.

"It's a pity the damages that have already occurred to the girl's nervous system are irreversible. But the metabolic abnormalities caused by genetic defects are expected to be corrected by the transplantation, thereby stopping the progression of neuropathy and saving her life," said Qian Xiaowen, head of stem cell transplantation at the hospital's hematology department.

"Anna can now walk with the support of other people or a wall. We hope that she'll be able to live independently in the future with the help of rehabilitation procedures," he said.

The girl's mother, surnamed Sidique, said: "We look forward to the good results of the treatment. We hope that miracles can happen to Anna."

The girl was diagnosed with the rare disease at a local hospital in Saudi Arabia, where she was living with her family. Her parents consulted medical institutions in the

United Kingdom and the United States. Doctors in these countries suggested transplantation of umbilical cord blood stem cells, but the medical bills would have been fairly high.

A friend in China introduced the couple to the Shanghai hospital. They learned that 39 child patients who have the same disease have received transplantation there, and around 90 percent of them survived. They decided to take Anna to Shanghai for medical treatment and arrived in the city on July 29.

Before their arrival, the hospital had organized an online consultation with a multidisciplinary team for Anna on July 11. Similar consultations were held twice more in July and August, as Anna's mother was pregnant and was expected to deliver a baby in September.

Obstetrics experts and the Shanghai Umbilical Cord Blood Bank came together to formulate a plan to use the stem cells from the umbilical cord blood of the new baby to save Anna.

Genetic testing and transplantation match testing in August showed that Anna would be suitable for the operation. The mother gave birth to the baby at the Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital of Fudan University in Shanghai on Sept 11, and the newborn's umbilical cord blood was collected and prepared for transplantation.

The Children's Hospital of Fudan University said that since 2016, it has used stem cell transplantation to treat more than 500 children who have rare diseases with no cure.

"Also, as one of the 13 public hospitals in Shanghai that has participated in the city's pilot program to boost international medical tourism since last September, we've received more than 250 foreign patients from 61 countries and are continuously working to better provide medical services at an international standard, including issuing medical certificates to help patients and their families obtain visas and allowing patients to pay with commercial insurances," said Wang Yi, president of the hospital.



Avian monitoring

Staff members at the bird banding station of the forestry and grassland bureau of Weishan Yi and Hui autonomous county conduct a swab sampling to monitor bird diseases in Dali Bai autonomous prefecture, Yunnan province, on Tuesday. The station began this year's work on Sept 19, identifying the species and numbers of migratory birds, monitoring their routes, installing satellite tracking devices and conducting swab samplings to monitor them. This year's migratory bird banding work will continue until the end of this month.

ZHANG SHULU / FOR CHINA DAILY

Heavy-duty gas turbine undergoes first ignition test

By ZHENG ZHENG in Shanghai
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China's independently developed 300 megawatt F-class heavy-duty gas turbine successfully completed its first ignition test on Monday in Shanghai's Lingang area, underscoring the nation's advancements toward enhanced energy security and sustainable development.

The 300MW F-class unit, developed by China United Gas Turbine Technology Co, represents the largest and most technologically advanced heavy-duty gas turbine China has developed entirely through domestic efforts. Its technical indicators match those of mainstream international F-class turbine models currently in operation worldwide, according to the website of the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

The ignition validates the turbine's overall design integrity, manufacturing quality and functionality of the testing systems, paving the way for comprehensive operational verification trials.

"This breakthrough follows over eight years of intensive research and development," said Minister Jin Zhuanglong. "This successful ignition is another milestone following the rollout of the first prototype in

February, officially advancing the program into full machine testing and validation."

Mo Jingfei, director of the science and technology management department at China United Gas Turbine Technology, highlighted the unit's generating capacity.

"It is estimated that under a combined cycle configuration, a single set of this equipment could generate approximately 450,000 kilowatts per hour — equivalent to one-eighth of the average hourly electricity consumption in Beijing," he was quoted by Xinhua News Agency.

Compared with the generation efficiency of 35-46 percent for conventional thermal power, the generation efficiency of combined cycle power plants can reach 55 percent, and can be coupled with new energy to better meet user demands in peak adjustment, Mo added.

As a type of internal combustion and a core engine in the energy sector, gas turbines generate power by burning fuel like natural gas mixed with air to spin turbine blades. They can operate continuously for long periods in high-temperature, high-stress and highly corrosive environments. Based on operating temperatures, the heavy-duty units are classified into E, F, G/H and J

"This successful ignition is another milestone following the rollout of the first prototype in February, officially advancing the program into full machine testing and validation."

Jin Zhuanglong, minister of industry and information technology

classes, with F-class representing the mainstream global model operating at around 1,400 C.

Compared to traditional coal and oil-fired power plants, natural gas-fired turbines emit significantly lower levels of pollutants. Their carbon dioxide emissions are approximately half those of coal-fired power plants, making this cleaner, more sustainable technology essential for China and other nations striving to meet environmental goals. These turbines have

widespread applications in ground-based power generation and peak shaving for power grids.

However, developing huge, ultrahigh temperature gas turbines is widely regarded as an immense engineering challenge. As reported by local news portal The Paper, for about six decades, the global heavy-duty gas turbine market has been dominated by US, German and Japanese manufacturers, and China's gas turbine industry has been plagued by late-comer challenges such as design complexity and restricted access to proprietary foreign technologies.

The tide began to turn in 2012 when China's State Council launched the national strategic program focused on aero engines and gas turbines. In 2014, major enterprises, including the former China Power Investment Corporation, joined forces to establish a united company in Shanghai to spearhead development efforts through independent design efforts and strategic technology cooperation.

In 2017, the united company became China United Gas Turbine Technology Co, which was tasked with leading national R&D initiatives from fundamental research to prototype manufacturing and validation.

BRI event highlights need for academic exchanges

By TAN YINGZI in Chongqing
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Leaders from 15 top universities in China and other nations called for strengthening international cooperation in science and technology to build an open and shared global innovation ecosystem for sustainable development during a forum on Tuesday.

The Belt and Road University Presidents Forum and Conference on Universities and Sustainable Development, hosted by Chongqing University, brought together heads from nine universities in Belt and Road Initiative countries and six leading Chinese institutes to discuss enhancing academic exchanges in the face of global challenges.

"Scientific and technological cooperation is a key component of

the BRI," said Sun Jian, deputy director of international cooperation at the Ministry of Science and Technology, during the event's opening ceremony.

The forum follows a research collaboration network initiated last year by Chongqing University, which brought together 12 universities from BRI countries to improve communication and cooperation. The University Network for Research Collaboration, part of the Belt and Road Science and Technology Initiative, promotes the exchange of knowledge and resources among global universities and fosters stronger scientific research ties.

"Scientific and technological innovation is the primary driver for addressing common global challenges and achieving sustainable development, and universities are

at the forefront of that effort," Sun added, highlighting the BRI's potential for scientific collaboration given its rich cultural and diverse resources.

Bayisa Leta, president of Ethiopia's Ambo University, underscored the role of universities in fostering sustainability.

"By integrating sustainability into academic programs, research and campus operations, universities can contribute significantly to a more sustainable future," Leta said, noting that they can also serve as models in energy efficiency, water conservation, green transportation and waste management.

Belarusian State University, a member of the University Network for Research Collaboration, has strengthened ties with Chinese counterparts. BSU and Peking University hosted a rectors' forum in

Minsk in June, establishing a center for joint scientific research. Andrei Karol, president of BSU, said the university seeks more collaboration in culture and humanities as it continues conducting scientific exchanges with China.

Chongqing University and BSU signed a new agreement on Tuesday to boost cooperation in green energy, artificial intelligence and people-to-people exchanges.

Wang Shuxin, president of Chongqing University and an academician at the Chinese Academy of Engineering, noted that members of the University Network for Research Collaboration have made progress in research cooperation, talent exchange and technology transfer. Next year, the network will focus on key areas such as big data, clean water, intelligent agriculture, climate change and green energy.



Anna receives an infusion of umbilical cord blood stem cells from her newborn sister at the Children's Hospital of Fudan University in Shanghai on Tuesday. WANG JULIANG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Returning talent establish innovative international collaborations

NANJING — As China expands its exchange of international talent, many who have studied or worked overseas have returned to China to start their own businesses, aiming to bring a new wave of technological cooperation and innovation between China and other countries.

Leveraging the international experience and networks they have accumulated, they have established cooperative relationships with research institutions and enterprises at home and abroad to help accelerate technological innovation at the academic level, and to promote technology integration and product upgrades in terms of application.

In 2019, three young people specializing in ultraprecision optical manufacturing returned to Shanghai to start their own businesses after encouragement from their

mentor, Jiang Xiangqian, an academician at the Royal Academy of Engineering. They mortgaged their properties to establish Leading Optics Co, which mainly produces ultraprecision manufacturing equipment and optical components.

Leading Optics has since established a research center in Shanghai, employing nearly 100 research and development staff members focusing on materials, design, equipment and processes. Moreover, the company has constructed a 125,000-square-meter ultraprecision micro-nano optics R&D and mass production facility in Nantong, Jiangsu province.

As a member of many international collaborative research networks, this highly international company understands the mutual benefits of international collabora-

tion in scientific research.

Zhang Xinquan, chief technology officer of Leading Optics, pioneered the use of six-axis turning for complex micro-nano optical structures in academic research. Several years later, a leading company in ultraprecision equipment from the United States cooperated with Leading Optics to develop the world's first six-axis ultraprecision machine tool for commercial use, said Zhang Zhe, chief executive officer of Leading Optics.

The introduction of this machine has enabled Leading Optics to produce China's first large complex micro-nano structure optical molds. Through the molds, the company produces back panels of mobile phones with micro-structured diffractive optics that have improved cost efficiency and will be adopted

by Xiaomi and other smartphone manufacturers soon.

The product ultimately attracted the substantial investment, which was crucial during the company's initial funding phase.

"International cooperation is not unilateral, but all parties carry out technological innovation and jointly promote technological progress," Zhang said.

In April this year, the Light Conference on Advanced Optical Manufacturing was held at Leading Optics' factory in Nantong. The conference gathered more than 600 scientists, entrepreneurs, suppliers and guests from home and abroad to share research results in the industry.

Leading Optics plans to conduct more academic exchange activities on a regular basis.

"One person's creativity alone can never match a group of people's joint innovation. Only through international cooperation, not restriction, can we accelerate human progress," said Zhang.

Similarly, many companies are promoting product innovation through international technology exchange, and they are bringing back the benefits to support international cooperation.

Yao Ting, founder of FAIR Innovation (Suzhou) Robot Systems Co, studied robot controller technology in China and Switzerland. Through years of continuous research and development, FAIRINO has developed domestic robot controller technology and collaborative robot products that require smaller workspaces and are easier to use than existing models.

XINHUA

BUSINESS

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A potential homebuyer in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, looks at a property model during the just-concluded National Day holiday. ZHOU WEI / FOR CHINA DAILY

Home sales up in holiday period

By WANG YING in Shanghai
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Home sales and inquiries by potential buyers rose considerably in benchmark cities including Beijing and Shanghai during the just-concluded National Day holiday, thanks to a number of optimization measures rolled out by the central government and first-tier cities, industry experts said on Tuesday.

This is playing a positive role in digesting the housing policies and shoring up market sentiment, they added.

After announcing policies to free up restrictions on home purchases ahead of the weeklong holiday, China's top-tier cities saw a market recovery during the holiday period, despite it being a conventional low season for home transactions, the experts said.

Some 59,000 square meters of new home space were traded across Shanghai in the first six days of October, doubling from that of last year's 29,000 sq m, said Lu Wenxi, a market analyst with Centaline Shanghai.

In the pre-owned homes market, 2,133 units of existing residential properties changed hands during the weeklong holiday, more than

twice the 1,064 units registered during the same period last year, Lu said.

According to Lu, the market recovery followed a batch of favorable local policies effective on the first day of October, such as the lowering of a threshold for non-local buyers, reduction in down payments for both first-time and second home purchases, and expanding VAT exemptions during home trading.

"There is an evident warm-up in market confidence as we see some 20 percent rise in business inquiries and visits," said Ye Yongxiang, an agent with Sinyi Realty in Shanghai's Xuhui district.

Ye said it has been an extremely busy holiday season for himself as well as his colleagues, a sharp contrast from the same period during the past two years.

"Being in the business for nearly a decade, I can really feel the vibes of the market on the rise," Ye said.

Beijing saw new home transaction volumes surge 730 percent during the first six days of the month from the same period last year, and its existing home market also experienced a gradual growth since the latter half of the holiday, with trade volumes rising 58 percent compared to last

year, according to a report on the official website of Beijing Youth Daily.

Guangzhou, the capital of South China's Guangdong province, saw more than 3,000 units of new homes traded at real estate brokerage platform Beike as of 2 pm Monday, more than tripling from that of last year, the local Guangzhou Daily reported.

The rising market demand could be seen in a broader scale in the secondary home market of major cities.

As many as 384 units of pre-owned homes were sold daily in six key cities, soaring 117.6 percent year-on-year, according to Linping Real Estate Data Research Institute.

"The market confidence index has been on an upward trend three weeks in a row, according to the weekly data collected in 50 cities, indicating that the supportive measures introduced one after another have boosted market confidence," said Wang Xiaoqi, chief analyst at the institute.

"The encouraging messages delivered by both local and central governments will certainly help stabilize the property market and improve market confidence," Wang added.



Meeting power needs

Employees of State Grid Zhumadian Power Supply Co visit a vineyard in Zhumadian, Henan province, on Monday, to learn more about local electricity demand. The vineyard has 6.7 hectares of land dedicated to growing grapes. ZHANG YONGSHENG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Poll: Chinese cars popular in Germany

FRANKFURT — Nearly two-thirds of respondents in a survey have said that they would consider buying a Chinese car, local German media reported.

Up to 59 percent of the people surveyed by the German Automobile Club in Germany indicated that buying a Chinese car is an option for them, according to a report by the German public broadcast ARD program Tagesschau.

There is an even stronger willingness to buy Chinese cars among young people. Among people aged 30 to 39, 74 percent showed an interest in Chinese cars, and among those aged 18 to 29, the proportion stands at 72 percent.

Affordability plays a main role in those willing to consider buying a Chinese car, according to the survey.

Cars under Chinese brands showed a high level of safety in the

NCAP crash test, the official new car assessment program in Europe, said a report released from ADAC in April.

Based on the tests of 13 different models from China and Europe over the past three years, ADAC concluded in April that "Chinese automakers have improved considerably, and can now keep up with established brands."

XINHUA - CHINA DAILY

Briefly

Central bank conducts reverse repos

China's central bank conducted 41.7 billion yuan (\$5.9 billion) worth of seven-day reverse repos at an interest rate of 1.5 percent on Tuesday. The move aims to keep liquidity in the banking system reasonable and ample, the People's Bank of China said. A reverse repo

is a process in which the central bank purchases securities from commercial banks through bidding, with an agreement to sell them back in the future.

Hainan duty-free sales exceed \$111m

Offshore duty-free shops on South China's island province of Hainan

generated 785 million yuan (\$111 million) in sales during the recent National Day holiday, local Customs said on Tuesday. Hainan's offshore duty-free shops received some 110,200 customers with per capita spending of 7,124 yuan during this period, Haikou Customs confirmed.

XINHUA - CHINA DAILY

NDRC brings forward investment plans

Expansion of local special bond usage also under study, regulator says

By ZHOU LANXU
and OUYANG SHIJIA2.83
trillion yuan

sum of special bonds that local governments issued for project construction in the first three quarters of this year

China will bring forward part of the investment plans originally set for 2025 to this year while studying to expand the scope that local government special bonds can be used, as part of the country's stepped-up efforts to spur investment and achieve steady economic growth, officials said on Tuesday.

Zheng Shanjie, head of the National Development and Reform Commission, said the top economic regulator plans to allocate the investment plans for next year's central government budget of 100 billion yuan (\$14.2 billion) and another 100 billion yuan for key investment projects by the end of this year in advance.

Zheng said at a news conference on Tuesday that the NDRC is looking more closely at how to enlarge the support provided by local government special bonds. This includes broadening the area, scale and proportion of special bond funds used as project capital, with specific reform measures to be launched as soon as possible.

Special bonds will be used to vitalize idle land to stabilize the property market, Zheng said, adding that the country will continue to issue ultra-long special sovereign bonds next year and support local governments in carrying out debt swaps to defuse debt risks.

"In response to the downward pressure on the economy, we will strengthen the counter-cyclical adjustments of macro policies and continue to exert greater force in all areas," Zheng said.

The latest policy announcement to spur investment comes after China released a set of measures to ease monetary policy and shore up the housing market amid renewed economic downward pressures, with the growth of industrial output, retail sales and fixed-asset investment slowed in August.

Liu Sushe, deputy head of the NDRC, said the commission plans to issue investment plans and projects for the 200 billion yuan at the end of this month, which can translate into physical work volume within this year.

Meanwhile, Liu said the measures mullied to improve the management of local government special bonds are expected to give local governments more autonomy in the review process and help special bonds play a bigger role in investment.

Special bonds are invested in specific projects that can generate a stable income to pay off the debt.

In the first three quarters, local governments issued 2.83 trillion yuan of this year's special bond quota used for project construction worth 3.12 trillion yuan, official data showed.

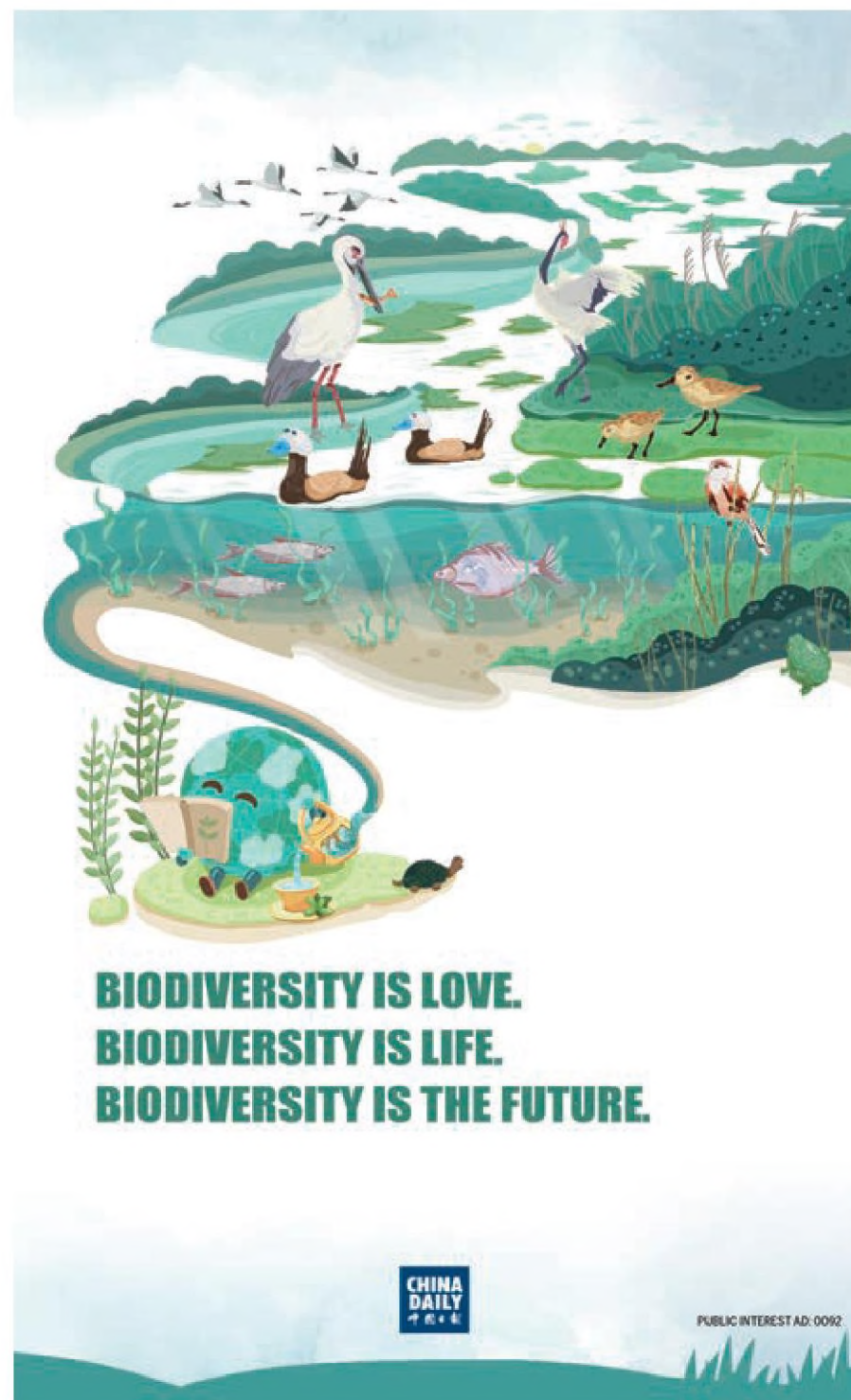
Liu said the commission will urge local governments to issue the remaining 290 billion yuan in special bonds allocated for this year by the end of October and ensure that the construction of related projects begins as soon as possible.

Wei Qijia, director of the industrial economy research office at the State Information Center's Department of Economic Forecasting, which is part of the NDRC, told China Daily that the policy focus in terms of special bonds lies in making full use of bond proceeds to maximize their effect in boosting the economy.

"Meanwhile, bringing forward the 200 billion yuan in investment has reflected policymakers' emphasis on making decisive actions and lifting policy efficiency," Wei said, adding that another policy focus to watch will be the measures to facilitate local government debt swaps, a task critical for maintaining high-quality development and securing financial stability.

Yin Mingyue contributed to this story.

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BUSINESS

Logistics sector posts uptick in Sept

Experts attribute pickup to rising domestic demand, rebounding economy

By WANG KEJU
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China's logistics sector expanded steadily in September, in a signal that domestic demand is picking up and the momentum of China's economic recovery is further strengthening, analysts said.

The logistics performance index came in at 52.4 percent last month, 0.9 percentage points higher than in August, data from the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing showed on Tuesday.

The index tracks business volumes, new orders, employment, inventory turnover, and equipment utility rates in the sector. A reading above 50 indicates expansion, while one below reflects contraction.

Sectors such as electronic components, pharmaceutical and chemical products, automotive manufacturing and parts, telecommunication equipment, and consumer durables like home appliances all experienced stable growth in their logistics needs, industry analysts said.

An orderly recovery in industrial logistics demand, coupled with faster growth in consumer-related logistics, indicates that the economic recovery is gaining traction on multiple fronts, said He Hui, the federation's chief economist.

The implementation of a series of policies aimed at expanding investment, promoting consumption, and enhancing people's livelihoods is expected to further support the stable operations of the logistics industry in the coming period, He added.

Specifically, the business volume



Cargo is offloaded from containers at a logistics facility in Rongcheng, Shandong province, in September. LI XINJUN / FOR CHINA DAILY

index for the rail transport industry rose to 54.4 percent in September, up 0.5 percentage points from the previous month. The road transport industry's business volume index also increased by 0.6 percentage points to 53 percent.

The aviation logistics sector also maintained its growth momentum, with the overall business volume index and new orders index reaching 57.8 percent and 59.5 percent, respectively, in September, up 0.8 and 1.1 percentage points from the previous month.

China's courier industry, in particular, saw a significant uptick in busi-

ness activity in September, with the sector's overall business volume index reaching 69.9 percent — well above the industry average.

The recovery in the logistics industry index represents more than just a single data point — it is a tangible indication that various aspects of the economy are gaining momentum, said Xu Hongcai, deputy director of the China Association of Policy Science's Economic Policy Committee.

The improved logistics performance is a result of the strengthening interplay between supply and demand, the growing optimism

among businesses about the country's economic outlook and the increasing vibrancy of production and consumption, Xu said.

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed that China's official purchasing managers index for the manufacturing sector — a main gauge of factory activity — came in at 49.8 in September, up from 49.1 in August.

Though still below the 50-point mark that separates contraction from expansion, the figure marked the highest notch in the past five months and ended a two-month decline.

Meanwhile, according to a report by Zhesang Securities, China's total retail sales of consumer goods are expected to grow by 2.9 percent year-on-year in September, accelerating from the previous month's 2.1 percent increase, signaling a strengthening of consumer demand in the world's second-largest economy.

As the effects of China's fiscal, monetary, real estate, and consumption-boosting policies continue to unfold, the recovery momentum of the Chinese economy is poised to strengthen further in the fourth quarter and achieve its full-year growth target, Xu said.

Wuchang Shipbuilding eyes bigger global biz

By LIU YUKUN in Beijing
and LIU KUN in Wuhan

French agricultural giant Louis Dreyfus Co's order of a deck cargo ship from a Chinese shipbuilder may soon be delivered as it recently commenced mooring trials in China, marking the 17th ship order of this kind.

The 17 orders of 13,000-metric-ton deck cargo ships also helped Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Group in Hubei province solidify its market share in Europe, aside from generating significant economic benefits.

The collaboration dates back to 2016. The French client had high demands regarding the ship's speed, fuel consumption, and other specifications, which posed a significant challenge for the Chinese design and construction teams.

"Our French client was very cautious, starting from a one-ship order. If the quality is good they may consider more," said Chen Yiyao, chief constructor of the latest ship order.

Wuchang Shipbuilding said constructing the first ship to perfection was crucial in securing potential orders and further expanding into the European market.

The company said that manufacturing the first ship was completely localized, achieving a 20 percent increase in maximum speed compared with its previous design and a 20 percent decrease in fuel consumption compared to its competitors.



Our French client was very cautious, starting from a one-ship order. If the quality is good they may consider more."

Chen Yiyao, a chief constructor at Wuchang Shipbuilding Industry Group

The first ship was delivered in Nantong, Jiangsu province, and was later used for transporting coal between various islands in Indonesia.

Following the first order's delivery, Louis Dreyfus placed an additional order for three ships of the same kind and another 13 in the following six years, bringing the total number to 17.

Chen said that with more orders coming in, the construction period has shortened, and the delivery speed has increased, leading to reduced costs in labor, equipment and land use.

Moreover, compared with previous orders, the latest one saw a decrease in fuel consumption and will be more cost-effective for use, Wuchang Shipbuilding said, adding that the improvement came about from scaled production.

Since its cooperation with Louis Dreyfus began, Wuchang Shipbuilding has won increased recognition among overseas clients and further expanded its market share in Europe, the company said.

Last year, in March and October, a Greek shipping company placed two separate orders for multiple 18,500-ton medium-sized chemical tankers with Wuchang Shipbuilding, followed by an additional two batches of orders later this year.

Currently, Wuchang Shipbuilding holds numerous overseas orders, including container ships and chemical tankers for clients in Greece, wind-assisted roll-on/roll-off cargo ships for clients in France, and offshore construction vessels for European clients.

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Bayer opens life sciences incubator in Shanghai

By ZHENG YIRAN
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Upbeat about China's innovative pharmaceutical market, German life sciences company Bayer has said it will keep investing in China and looks forward to more collaborations with local partners.

"China has become an increasingly important source of innovation in global life sciences. It is also home to the world's second-largest pharmaceutical market," said Juergen Eckhardt, head of business development, licensing and open innovation at Bayer's pharmaceuticals division.

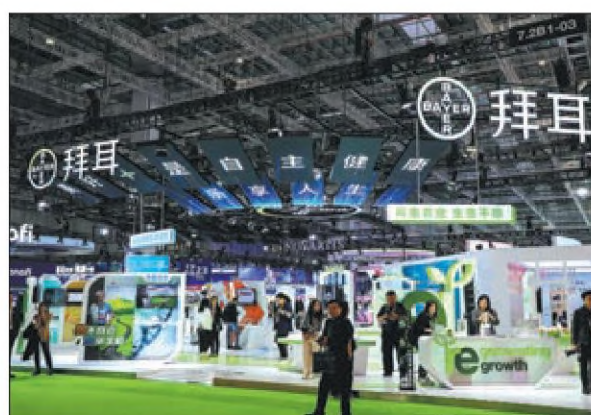
"The country's pharmaceutical research and industrial development have entered a new phase of innovation, gaining an increasingly important role in the global pharmaceutical value chain."

"China has a vibrant and vast market, and continues to provide new opportunities for the world through new developments. As China continues to develop, its biomedical industry is undergoing an important phase. Strategic opportunities are attracting more multinational pharmaceutical companies to expand their footprint in China, demonstrating the strong pull of the country's market," Eckhardt added.

On Sept 26, Bayer opened Bayer Co.Lab Shanghai as part in its global network of life science incubators with others situated in the United States, Japan and Germany.

According to the company, the Shanghai unit will provide exclusive space and tailored support services for Chinese startups, promote open innovation and collaboration in the biotech ecosystem and play an important part in Bayer's efforts to promote local research and development and innovation throughout the whole chain.

Specifically, in China, the lab will empower eight to 10 startups, focusing on state-of-the-art innova-



A view of Bayer's booth at an expo in Shanghai. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Juergen Eckhardt

tions, including cell and gene therapies, oncology and new technology platforms.

Speaking of China's pharmaceutical business environment, Eckhardt said that innovation in China has significantly improved with the increasing number of academic translations and its impact on the global bio-industry.

"Multinational corporations have been increasingly active in China's innovation ecosystem since 2019, including reaching cooperation with local startups and establishing innovation centers in China to harness local innovation capabilities."

"China is one of the leaders in cell and gene therapy, with the largest number of clinical trials going on. This is why we launched Bayer Co.Lab in China. We hope to transform more local solutions in China to the world," he said.

Wang Hongwei, a professor at the school of life sciences and vice-president of Tsinghua University, said that in terms of innovative drug development, wider and deeper collaborations are increasingly seen between Chinese startups and biopharmaceutical MNCs. The former group brings out new possible clinical-stage discoveries, while the latter focuses more on offering support in finance, techniques, as well as talent in the subsequent stages.

"This kind of collaboration has already been formed as an innovative ecosystem in China," he said.

This year, Bayer and RTW

Investments announced equity investments of \$35 million and \$127 million, respectively, in CORXEL, a Shanghai-based biopharmaceutical company. The three parties joined forces to advance the development of CORXEL's pipeline in the fields of cardiovascular diseases and ophthalmology.

On Jan 2, Swiss pharmaceutical company Roche reached an agreement with Suzhou, Jiangsu province-based biopharmaceutical company MediLink Therapeutics, focusing on the cooperative R&D of an innovative product targeting solid tumors.

In October, British pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca reached an agreement on clinical research with Jiangsu province-based biopharmaceutical company Ascentage Pharma. The clinical research focuses on lymphatic diseases.

"We look forward to more local partnerships in China, to quickly identify and drive early-stage innovations, so that more ideas can be put into practice in China," Eckhardt said.

In this year's Government Work Report, China highlighted for the first time the acceleration of innovative drug development, underscoring the significance of this industry.

In July, the State Council issued a plan to support innovative drug development, while Shanghai introduced measures to support full-chain innovation development in the biopharmaceutical industry, both of which provide robust backing for pharmaceutical innovation.

Holiday travel bookings soar up for National Day

By ZHU WENQIAN
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China's just-concluded National Day holiday period saw record-high bookings of travel products for outbound trips, and bookings made by residents of small Chinese cities, especially from western China, grew rapidly, domestic online travel agencies said.

During the weeklong break, bookings for travels abroad by consumers from fourth- and fifth-tier cities more than doubled year-on-year, and they have become new growth points for outbound trips, according to Trip.com Group, China's largest online travel agency.

Meanwhile, residents of first- and second-tier cities are traveling farther overseas and spending more. Some popular overseas destinations include Japan, Thailand, South Korea, the United States and Australia, Trip.com found.

Besides, Brazil, the Philippines, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates were the fastest-growing destinations for outbound travel during the break, the travel agency said.

"Consumers of major cities are traveling to farther destinations, and residents of smaller cities are starting to travel abroad, thus creating stronger spending power and greater growth potential for the global tourism market," said Mao Lin, a researcher with Trip.com.

"It is noteworthy that the international flight capacity from China to countries like Singapore and Malaysia has fully recovered, exceeding the level seen in the same period of 2019, or before the pandemic. The increasing supply has driven the prices of flight tickets back to a rational range," Mao said.

Separately, a large number of young travelers preferred visiting small cities and county-level areas. During the break, the bookings of travel products to these places jumped considerably over last year, multiple online travel agencies said.

Hotel bookings in county-level areas grew faster than in other

tourist areas. Among these, nearly 100 counties and county-level cities saw bookings for local travel products exceed 50 percent year-on-year, according to Tongcheng Travel, an online travel agency based in Suzhou, Jiangsu province.

In particular, Shanxi province was especially sought after by travelers, fueled by the popularity of *Black Myth: Wukong*, a newly developed game based on the Chinese classic *Journey to the West*, as many visuals in the game are inspired by scenic spots in Shanxi, said Tongcheng Travel.

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approximate number of counties and county-level cities nationwide reporting a 50 percent increase or more in local travel product bookings during the National Day holiday

During the break, bookings of bed-and-breakfast stays in county-level areas climbed by nearly 50 percent year-on-year, outperforming the overall market, according to homestay operator Tujia.

"More people are willing to explore China by visiting counties and small towns, shaping a rapidly growing tourism segment," said Hu Yang, senior vice-president of Tujia.

"With more transportation options and comprehensive support facilities, counties are expected to welcome a growing number of travelers, and thus contribute to the growth of the entire county-level homestay economy," Hu said.

In Southwest China's Lancang Lahu autonomous county, Yunnan province, a homestay owner named Zha'nu from the Lahu ethnic group, said his homestay was fully booked from Oct 2 to Sunday. In April, he transformed his old house into a homestay and combined some musical elements into the place.

"The Lahu ethnic group is good at singing and dancing, and we enjoy seeking happiness. I love the rural sceneries and the weather of my hometown, and I chose to open a homestay there," Zha'nu said.

BUSINESSFOCUS

New energy firms eye Middle East for growth

Region's wealthy consumers, large enterprises have strong purchasing power, ensuring stable revenues

By ZHENG XIN
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The Middle East has emerged as a key destination for China's new energy companies that are expanding overseas, providing vast development opportunities despite increased global trade challenges, said industry experts and company executives.

The Middle East offers significant advantages due to its abundant wind and solar resources, while wealthy consumers and large enterprises in the region also have strong purchasing power, ensuring stable revenues for Chinese firms seeking expansion abroad, said Li Jing, partner of deal strategy and mergers & acquisitions at KPMG in China.

Compared to long-term, capital-intensive infrastructure projects, renewable energy generation projects have shorter cycles and clearer profit models. Chinese companies expanding overseas can leverage their technological advantages and commercial experience to quickly seize related market opportunities, Li said.

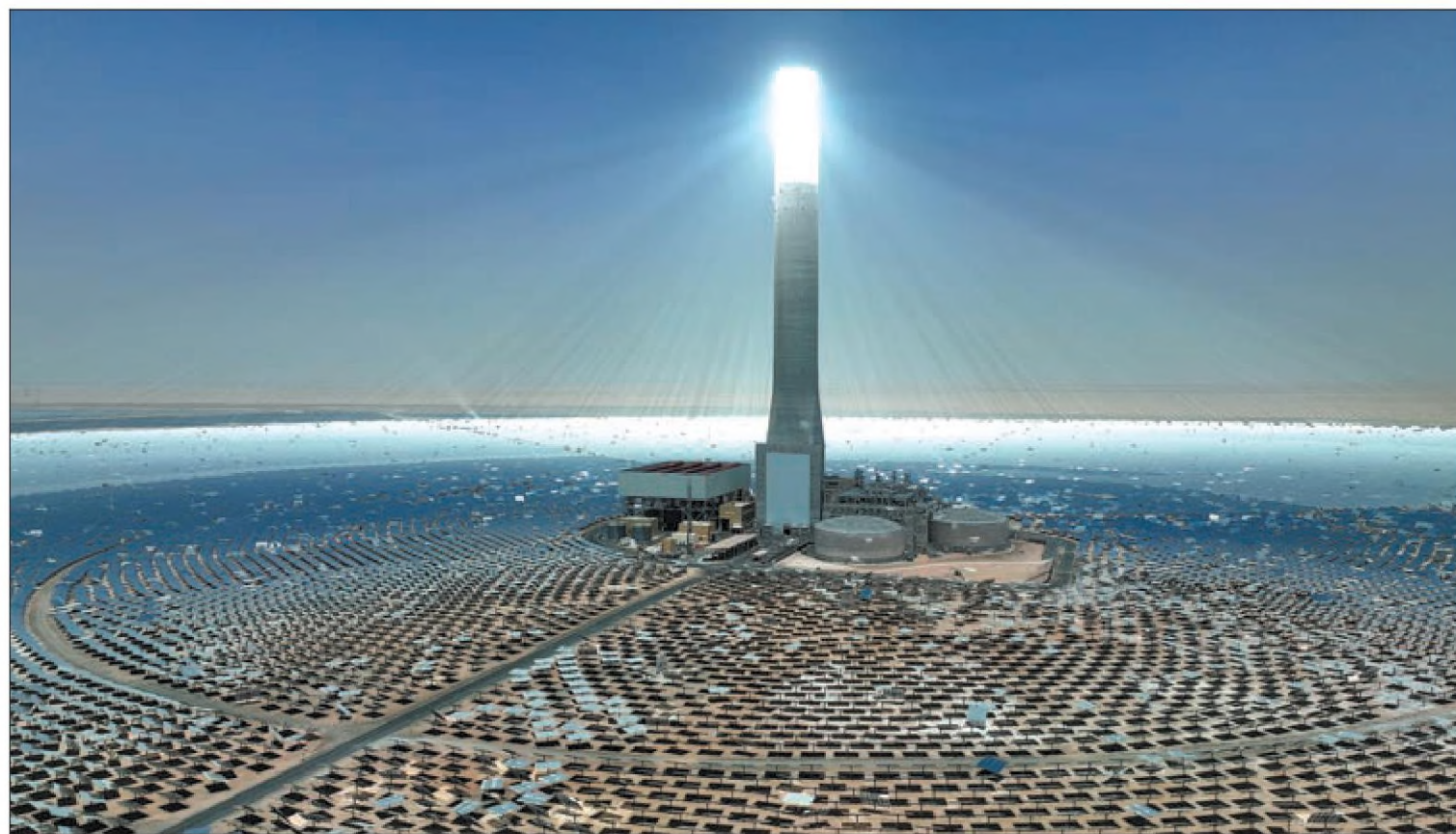
According to a report released recently by KPMG China on the international expansion of new energy companies, the Middle East region receives 22-26 percent of the total solar energy on Earth, with solar potential equivalent to the energy produced by 1 to 2 million barrels of oil annually per square kilometer, which is capable of satisfying at least 50 percent of global power demand.

Additionally, about three-quarters of the region's area has wind speeds exceeding the minimum threshold for utility-scale wind farms, with Morocco, Egypt, and Tunisia ranking among the top countries globally in wind energy potential, it said.

On a macro level, China and Arab states have been actively promoting bilateral investment cooperation in recent years. China has signed agreements with 22 Arab countries and the Arab League as part of the Belt and Road Initiative, establishing a comprehensive cooperation mechanism, according to the report.

Chinese Premier Li Qiang recently visited Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, with a delegation including executives of China's top renewable energy companies, such as Chinese wind turbine manufacturer Xinjiang Goldwind Science & Technology Co Ltd, solar product manufacturer Trina Solar and solar power firm GCL Group.

Facing rising tariffs from the United States and the European Union aimed at curbing Chinese dominance in the global solar supply chain, Chinese manufacturers have had to rethink their overseas strate-



Aerial view of an integrated power generation plant constructed by Shanghai Electric in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, in September. XINHUA



Chinese technicians inspect a power plant in Dubai in September. DUAN MINFU / XINHUA

gies, said Cai Zhongquan, managing partner of energy and natural resources for China and Asia-Pacific at KPMG.

The overseas market is becoming a critical part of the strategic layout for Chinese new energy companies, especially in solar, wind, storage, and hydrogen energy. The Middle East, seen as a potential safe haven, has become an attractive market for expansion, said Cai.

According to KPMG, China is increasingly focused on external cooperation in the renewable energy sector, with exports of electric vehicles, lithium-ion batteries, and solar cells up nearly 30 percent year-on-year last year.

Jinko Solar and TCL Zhonghuan, two of the world's largest producers

of solar modules and silicon wafers, announced joint ventures with Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund in July, with investments exceeding \$3 billion. GCL Technology and Trina Solar have also revealed plans for Middle East projects.

Qian Jing, vice-president of Jinko Solar, the world's largest solar panel producer by shipments, said the Middle East, which enjoys adequate credit, sufficient financing resources, stable conditions, policy support and an ambitious market, is likely to see the company's fourth overseas plant after those in Malaysia, Vietnam and the US.

With an investment of around \$1 billion, the facility will be Jinko Solar's most significant overseas investment to date and is expected

to have an annual production capacity of 10 gigawatts for high-efficiency solar cells and modules once operational, the company said. It will also be the largest manufacturing base for Chinese photovoltaic products abroad, it added.

Longi has been involved in several landmark projects in the Middle East while the company is also considering further investments in the region, as the Gulf area is becoming a global hot spot for renewable energy, according to a report by the company in August.

The Middle East's abundant natural resources, stable market, and strategic location present vast potential not only for photovoltaic power, but also for hydrogen, said James Jin, president of Longi Middle East, Africa and Central Asia.

"The clean energy demands of the Middle East, coupled with China's products and technologies, create a mutually beneficial opportunity and a win-win for both regions," he said.

"As more large-scale projects are realized, we will remain dedicated to deepening our collaboration with local partners, offering tailored solutions, and overcoming challenges to contribute to the achievement of net-zero emission goals across the region."

Nicholas Lua, an analyst at global consultancy Rystad Energy, said solar power manufacturing in Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries could further expand Chinese solar companies' presence on the global stage.

According to Rystad Energy, the

Middle East is undergoing an energy transition, shifting from its traditional dependence on oil and gas, which currently supplies over 90 percent of its energy needs.

As solar power in the Middle East accounted for just 2 percent of the region's energy mix in 2023 and is projected to make up more than half by mid-century, Chinese solar manufacturers — which take up over 80 percent of the global supply chain and which are currently under the weight of global trade barriers and shrinking profit margins at home — have massive potential in the region, it said.

"The Middle East offers an alternative market where trade barriers and tariffs are not as prevalent," said Nishant Kumar, an analyst at Rystad Energy.

As a central hub between Europe, Asia and Africa, the Middle East positions itself as a potential energy export center. Kumar believes its growing demand and less crowded market allow Chinese companies to secure more opportunities and diversify their market risks.

"The Middle East offers ample growth opportunities and allows Chinese companies to maintain their global competitiveness amid rising challenges in other regions," he said.

However, Cai also warned of the complexities in overseas markets, saying that the market environment abroad remains intricate, with challenges such as information opacity and significant differences in market demand. This makes swift and accurate decision-making difficult.

Chinese new energy companies will still face risks related to fluctuating raw material prices, equipment transport issues, varying technical standards, and supply chain disruptions during their international expansion, he added.

According to the report by KPMG, while countries in the Middle East and North Africa are accelerating their energy transition strategies with local installed energy capacity witnessing significant growth, the overall energy structure has not undergone a fundamental shift.

This is due to several uncertainties, including the region's volatile geopolitical landscape, long-standing economic dependence on traditional energy sources, the reliance of new energy technologies on European and American standards, and the limited diversity in renewable energy project development models, it said.

On the other hand, Chinese companies participating in new energy projects in the Middle East may also face challenges in improving economic returns, as they are currently mostly involved in large-scale Independent Power Producer projects, mainly serving as equipment suppliers and contractors, which expose them to significant profitability pressure, it said.

In the long run, as more countries and enterprises enter the Middle East and North Africa renewable energy markets, competition is expected to intensify, potentially further eroding the project profitability of Chinese companies, it said.

Sustained infrastructure expansion driving electricity demand in nation

By ZHENG XIN

China's rapid expansion of new infrastructure is driving significant increases in power demand, particularly in the 5G, artificial intelligence, and electric vehicles sectors, according to industry experts.

The increase in computing power, for example, is expected to become a significant driver of electricity production in the future, and efforts must be made to ensure a stable power supply, said Zhang Zhigang, executive chairman of State Grid Corp of China.

Electricity demand is expected to climb as China's economy continues to show medium to high-speed growth, especially in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, industrial internet, artificial intelligence, and computing, Zhang said during the 2024 New Power System Development (Chongli) Forum held by the China Electricity Council in September.

According to the council, electricity consumption for internet data services, including big data processing, cloud storage, cloud computing

and cloud processing based on internet technology, saw an average annual growth rate of 28 percent from 2018 to 2023, and further increased by 33 percent during the first six months of this year.

A key factor behind China's increased power consumption is the country's rapid economic expansion, which is driving the higher energy demand, it said.

According to Zhang, China's renewable energy capacity has seen significant growth, with a 35.5 percent year-on-year increase in wind and solar power capacity in 2023, reaching 226 million kilowatts within State Grid's operational area.

From January to August, an additional 130 million kW of renewable energy capacity was added, reflecting a 12.6 percent increase, he said.

"With renewable energy increasingly integrating into the grid at a large scale, it is necessary to ensure the safe and stable operation of the grid," he added.

The National Energy Administration has said previously that further efforts are in the pipeline to speed

up power grid construction and enhance the power transmission mechanism in the country, as China's power grid faces increasing stability challenges with the share of electricity generated from intermittent new energy sources rising.

To improve the grid's capacity to accommodate power from new energy sources, the administration has been stepping up efforts to accelerate the construction of grid projects. It is prioritizing the advancement of 33 key projects this year across the nation, including the Sichuan-Chongqing ultra-high voltage alternating current project, while speeding up the initiation of construction on 37 other key projects.

The government will step up efforts to enhance the grid's capacity for flexible power supply scheduling and improve interprovincial power-sharing capabilities, said Du Zhongming, head of the electricity bureau of the administration.

According to Zhang from State Grid, technological innovation is the key to building a new power system and the company has allocated

180 billion yuan (\$25.6 billion) in research and development, improving scientific research frameworks and disciplines to stimulate innovation during the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25).

Zhang also stressed the critical role of energy storage in the new power system.

State Grid is advancing large-scale energy storage applications, with 93.97 million kW of pumped storage capacity, including 7.27 million kW in Hebei province alone, he said.

The company saw its annual grid investment surpass 600 billion yuan for the first time this year, 71.1 billion more than that of the previous year. This is part of the company's efforts to accelerate the construction of a new type of power system.

The additional investment has been primarily allocated to the construction of ultra-high voltage power transmission projects, strengthening the connection between county-level grids and the main grid and upgrading grid digitalization and intelligence, said the Beijing-based State-owned enterprise.



State Grid employees inspect a transmission tower in Taizhou, Jiangsu province, in September. TANG DEHONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

Ultra-high voltage transmission lines refer to power transmission cables operating at greater than 800 kilovolts of direct current, or 1,000 kV of alternating current. Compared with traditional transmission lines, ultra-high voltage lines not only increase transmission capacity

and extend transmission distances, but also reduce transmission losses.

Increasing investment will further facilitate power supply and help the transmission of large wind and solar power bases in western regions while improving services for public welfare, it said.

WORLD

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.

Experiences in China make lasting impact

Educator fondly recalls her visits and changes the country has undergone

By YIFAN XU in Washington
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Fanta Aw's connection to China goes back to the 1950s.

Aw's father was part of the first delegation of African students, who at the time were in France, to go to China some 70 years ago.

"I remember him talking so fondly about his experience. They traveled all around the country, met with others, learned more about China," Aw said.

Aw, the CEO of the Association of International Educators, or AIEA, will visit China twice this fall.

She will give a keynote address at the 2024 International Association of University Presidents Conference, to be held in Beijing on Oct 13-15.

She will also visit China in late October and early November for the 2024 China Annual Conference and Expo for International Education.

Aw has been in China four times already, between 2010 and 2017. But her affinity for China goes back much further.

Aw, who said she is "the product of international education," was born in Mali, in West Africa. At age 7, she left Mali and moved to Liberia with her family, her "first international experience."

Aw lived there for about five years, attending the French international school. At 12, she went to Washington, DC, to study in another French school. Five years later, she moved to Kenya and went to a French school in Nairobi, from which she graduated before returning to the United States for college.

She said the experiences made her "very curious about wanting to understand more about the world, especially different cultures."

Aw had taken some courses in Chinese history and met students and faculty from China.

"Then I had my first wonderful opportunity to go to China when they had the Expo in Shanghai," Aw said.

In 2010, Aw visited China as part of a delegation of universities, at the invitation of the US embassy, to attend the Shanghai Expo.

"We're in Beijing, and we're in Shanghai, and I fondly remember how amazed I was at all of what I saw and experienced," she said.

Shortly afterward, she went to China for the second time to visit more universities in Shanghai, Chengdu, Guangzhou and Beijing, and also met with US embassy staff and representatives of chambers of commerce.

"The third time when I went, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities had one of the longest dual-degree programs in China, with many of their universities having partnerships with universities in China," said Aw. "I went because they were holding



Fanta Aw

their graduation, and I was asked to do a keynote."

Aw visited Xiamen, a coastal city in Fujian province, describing it as "beautiful" and "wonderful."

She also went to Xi'an, an ancient city known as the "Capital of Thirteen Dynasties," to see the Terracotta Warriors.

Aw described exquisite Chinese tea ceremonies that elevate the experience of tea drinking. She said she often ate Chinese food in the US and elsewhere, and said she now understands "how important the regional cuisines are."

"Every region has its own cuisine, which is different. Sichuan cuisine is different from Guangdong cuisine," she said. "The richness of the different cuisines and depending on where you are was important here," she said.

She also visited a Chinese doctor in the US for acupuncture therapy.

"The technique is that it's looking at how to address the core problem, not just the symptom," she said. "Western medicine can just look at the symptoms, but not the cause."

Youth and creativity

Aw said she found China to be "fashionable" and "young."

"We visited one of the major social media outlets in Beijing. It was literally social media with tech ... everybody was literally less than 30 years old."

Aw said the employees "were seated thinking about creativity."

"How do we get information out? How do we think about the generations and what they need?" Aw said.

"And we had the most fascinating conversation with them. What reminded me was also just the beauty of the youth in terms of energy, ideas and wanting to get things done."

"To see that energy of so many young people was a really important reminder of how, in societies, it is very important to understand one's history, and it is very important to create spaces for the young people and their creativity," she said.

Of the two upcoming trips to China, Aw said it would be great to meet old friends and reconnect with peers in international education in the post-COVID period.

"Since I haven't been back to China in a while, I'm really looking forward to going back and seeing how much has changed. Because I think every time I've gone, there's been so much change and really positive development," said Aw.

Of NAIFA, Aw said, "We want to work with universities and all those who are in all different areas of international education."

Calm before the storm



Workers place sheets of wood over windows and glass doors to protect them from Hurricane Milton in Cancun, Quintana Roo state, Mexico, on Monday. Milton was expected to enlarge even as its intensity ebbed on Tuesday as the Category 4 storm ground past Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula en route to Florida's Gulf Coast, where more than 1 million people were ordered to evacuate. ELIZABETH RUIZ / AFP

Ex-Taiwan leader's visit plan opposed

By ZHOU JIN
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China expressed firm opposition on Tuesday to any visit by "Taiwan independence" separatist forces to countries that have diplomatic relations with China under any pretext.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning made the remarks when asked about former Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen's upcoming visit to the Czech Republic this month.

Tsai, who stepped down in May, will visit Prague and deliver a speech at a Forum 2000 Conference which begins on Oct 13, three sources briefed on the matter told Reuters.

Tsai's European tour will also include stops in France and Belgium, according to media reports.

The spokeswoman urged Czech and other relevant countries to adhere to the one-China principle, and respect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

She urged the countries to refrain from providing convenience to "Taiwan independence" separatist forces and avoid damaging bilateral ties.

Mao also warned the Democratic Progressive Party authorities that seeking independence is a dead end.

"Any political manipulation or attempts to seek independence by soliciting external support will be futile," she said.

China has been demanding other nations not to have official con-

tact with the island, which is an inalienable part of China.

Chen Binhua, a spokesman for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council, blasted the DPP authorities for seeking external support by flattering foreign forces in order to pursue "independence" at a news briefing last week.

He warned the DPP authorities that no matter how many weapons they acquire from the United States, it will not shake the Chinese mainland's firm resolve to resolve the Taiwan question and achieve national reunification, nor will it hinder the mainland's strong capability to thwart "Taiwan independence" schemes and safeguard national sovereignty.

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Exhibition on painter Mary Cassatt shows her affinity for Asian art

By LIA ZHU in San Francisco
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While audiences may be familiar with Mary Cassatt's tender depictions of mothers and children, a new exhibition in San Francisco aims to unveil the "radical" approach of the American Impressionist and her embrace of Asian art as inspiration.

Mary Cassatt at Work, a major exhibition at the Legion of Honor museum, invites viewers to look at familiar images with fresh eyes and explore the cross-cultural influence on Cassatt's artistic creation.

The exhibition, which runs from Oct 5 to Jan 26, 2025, features more than 90 works by the artist, including oil paintings, pastel drawings, and woodblock prints on loan from various institutions across the United States.

The first North American retrospective of Cassatt's work in 25 years, the exhibition offers a unique opportunity to explore the artistry of Cassatt (1844-1926), a leading figure of the French Impressionist movement and the most celebrated woman artist of her era.

The moments depicted by Cassatt, such as women knitting and doing needlepoint, bathing children and nursing infants, may not seem "radical" today, because people are "so used to the ubiquity of instantaneous images," said



Visitors examine the paintings of American Impressionist Mary Cassatt at *Mary Cassatt at Work*, a major exhibition at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco, part of a series celebrating the museum's centennial anniversary. LIA ZHU / CHINA DAILY

Thomas P. Campbell, director and CEO of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, which comprises the Legion of Honor and the de Young.

"When she was working, such images were not instantaneous — even photographs required long exposures — so the moments of tenderness that she captured were groundbreaking in her time," Campbell said.

The exhibition aims to showcase the experimental and innovative techniques that earned Cassatt the distinction of being the only American artist included in the first Impressionist exhibition 150 years ago in 1874, he added.

The exhibition shows Cassatt's multifaceted exploration of modern life, particularly focusing on the roles and inner worlds of women and children during the late 19th century.

It begins with groundbreaking Impressionist works portraying women in the audience at the Paris Opera. Moving through Cassatt's career, the exhibition includes depictions of bourgeois women engaged in various tasks, acute portrayals of children, and revolutionary color etchings inspired by Japanese woodblock prints.

See *Cassatt*, page 9

XINHUA

Expert hails achievement in historic 75-yr journey

NEW YORK — "Standards of living, the rule of law, and science and technology" are "three core features" of China's historic development in its 75-year journey from one of the world's poorest countries to a global economic powerhouse, Robert Lawrence Kuhn, chairman of the US Kuhn Foundation, told Xinhua in an interview.

Kuhn was awarded the China Reform Friendship Medal in 2018, recognizing his contribution to the understanding of China in all its richness, achievements, complexities and challenges.

Central to China's rise has been the astonishing increase in its standard of living for 1.4 billion people, said Kuhn.

In 1978, China was among the poorest in the world. From that year to 2023, the country's disposable personal income had risen to nearly 40,000 yuan (\$5,669), a 228-fold increase in yuan terms.

China's economic growth has been extraordinary, maintaining an average annual growth rate of 8.9 percent between 1979 and 2023. "In the annals of human economics, no country has ever achieved such high-speed economic growth for such a long period," said Kuhn.

Kuhn said this growth, however, faces challenges. China's investment-led economy, particularly in infrastructure and property construction, is now experiencing a slowdown.

To address this, China is pivoting toward "high-quality development," emphasizing innovation and science and technology as the future drivers of growth, Kuhn said.

Rule of law

China's governance has evolved alongside its economic transformation, noted Kuhn, highlighting the country's commitment to the rule of law as a crucial element of its modernization.

The country's judicial reforms have aimed to curb corruption and enhance transparency in the legal system.

One significant reform has been the transfer of the administration of local courts from city and county officials to provincial authorities, which has reduced interference in the legal process.

Today, the country's courts are promoting innovation in their judicial models in handling civil and administrative cases. By the end of 2022, internet courts had accepted 429,000 cases, exploring and piloting "online trial of online cases," a one-stop, multi-dispute resolution and litigation service system.

China's future, according to Kuhn, lies in becoming a global leader in science and technology.

Innovation has been made the cornerstone of China's development strategy. In 2023, China's investment in research and development exceeded 3.3 trillion yuan, the second-largest in the world.

China's focus on "indigenous innovation" has already yielded results. The country now ranks second globally in highly cited scientific papers and has risen to 11th place in the Global Innovation Index, up from 34th in 2012.

XINHUA

New Zealand embraces Chinese tourists in Golden Week holiday

WELLINGTON — Dong Bing flew to Auckland from Beijing on the first day of China's National Day holiday with her husband and 5-year-old son. The long-awaited overseas vacation has been highly anticipated by the family during the "Golden Week," which offers a nice respite for them.

"New Zealand has a lot of unique natural scenery and many different places from China. We would like to have a special experience with our son," said Dong, who planned a 13-day family trip in both of New Zealand's North and South Islands.

The National Day holiday, dubbed Golden Week by the Chi-

nese, normally runs for seven days — Oct 1-7. Overseas tourism industries have increasingly benefited from China's holiday economy consumption boom.

Chinese tourists are now spending more on specialty food, attractions and experiences, such as glacier hiking, skydiving and other extreme activities, said Uncle Rong, head of Travel Together Ltd, a tour operator in New Zealand's South Island.

Gregg Wafelbakker, General Manager Asia for Tourism New Zealand, said arrivals to New Zealand for the Golden Week have been strong, possibly higher than in 2023, as Octo-

ber is spring in New Zealand, which is an excellent time to visit.

According to Tourism New Zealand, 60 percent of Chinese tourist arrivals are during off-peak seasons with spring the most popular.

Local tourism businesses value visitors during the Golden Week as it falls outside of New Zealand's summer peak, Wafelbakker said, adding that tourism businesses welcomed Chinese visitors by having Chinese-speaking guides and offering payment options Chinese travelers are familiar with.

The introduction of Alipay and WeChat Pay is one of the key meas-

ures to facilitate the stay of tech-savvy Chinese visitors.

New Zealand's traditional spectacular landscapes and unique culture offer diverse opportunities for travelers to experience, Wafelbakker said, adding that being in the southern hemisphere and therefore having opposite seasons to China gives a fresh feeling to Chinese travelers.

New Zealand's international tourism is continuing to recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a normalizing of tourism flows of international visitors returning in droves along with strong spending increases in hospitality services and

visitor experiences, said Tourism Minister Matt Doocoy.

Tourism has stepped up to become New Zealand's second-biggest export earner, as it has generated 3.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product, statistics showed.

Although the number of guests has not reached the pre-pandemic level, there is a higher proportion of younger, self-guided, independent travelers this year, and the airplanes to New Zealand from Shanghai and Guangzhou are full, said Nick Jiang, head of the Hi Travel tourist company.

Young Chinese tourists tend to come in small groups such as only

two to six people, Jiang said, adding that many of his clients chose hiking, skiing, or mountaineering during their New Zealand holidays.

In the first quarter of 2024, Chinese tourists contributed NZ\$490 million (\$300 million) to New Zealand's economy, a close second to Australian tourists. A total of 226,401 visitors from China arrived in New Zealand between May 2023 and May 2024, staying on average for 10 days, statistics showed.

There are 61 million people in China seriously considering a holiday in New Zealand, 62 percent of whom have New Zealand as their top choice, according to a survey from Tourism New Zealand.

XINHUA

WORLD



Glowing effect

The aurora borealis, also known as the northern lights, lights up the sky over a farmer's grain bins near Herronton, Alberta, Canada, on Monday. The aurora can be seen near the poles of both northern and southern hemispheres. In the north, it is called the aurora borealis and in the south, it is known as aurora australis.

TODD KOROL / REUTERS

Nobel Prize in physics awarded to AI pioneers

By EARLE GALE in London
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The 2024 Nobel Prize in physics has been awarded to artificial intelligence pioneers John Hopfield and Geoffrey Hinton.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, Sweden, which picked the winners that were announced on Tuesday, said they were selected because of their "foundational discoveries and inventions that enable machine learning with artificial neural networks".

The academy said the pair used tools from the world of physics to develop methods that established the foundation for powerful machine learning, which was crucial to the development of artificial intelligence.

Hopfield, they said, created an associative memory that was capable of storing and reconstructing images and patterns in data.

Hinton, the academy added, was honored for inventing a way to autonomously find properties in data.

Hinton, a British-Canadian professor at the University of Toronto in Canada, said after being unveiled as this year's winner: "I'm flabbergasted. I had no idea this would happen."

He also sounded a note of caution about AI, telling the academy as he accepted his award that he worries "that the overall consequences of this might be systems that are more intelligent than us

that might eventually take control". Hopfield is a professor at Princeton University in the United States.

A year ago, the Nobel Prize in physics was won by Pierre Agostini, from France, Franco-Swede Anne L'Huillier, and Hungarian-Austrian Ferenc Krausz, for their research into electrons inside atoms and molecules.

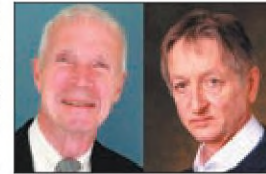
Tuesday's announcement of the winners of the 2024 Nobel Prize for physics followed Monday's unveiling of the winners of the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine.

Further announcements on Wednesday and Thursday will reveal the winners of the Nobel prizes in chemistry and literature, with the Nobel Peace Prize set to be announced Friday, and the Nobel Prize in economics slated for publication on Monday.

The Nobel prizes were established by Alfred Nobel, the Swedish inventor of dynamite, who left a fortune when he died in 1896 that he said must be used as prize money, to reward excellence in various fields.

This year's Nobel Prize winners, who are known as laureates, will be presented with medals and a cash award of 11 million Swedish kronor (\$1 million) at a ceremony on Dec 10, the anniversary of Nobel's death.

The prizes, which have been awarded since 1901, are only open to living experts and are aimed at what Nobel described as those who have "conferred the greatest benefit on humankind".



Nobel laureates John Hopfield (left) and Geoffrey Hinton.

Premier's visit to boost synergy

China looks to cooperate with regional nations to inject fresh impetus to trade

By MO JINGXI
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As Chinese Premier Li Qiang heads to Laos for a series of key meetings on East Asian cooperation, experts said the gathering of leaders in the region will help keep the correct direction of regional cooperation toward multilateralism and free trade amid surging anti-globalization and protectionism.

From Wednesday to Saturday, Li will attend the 27th China-ASEAN Summit, the 27th ASEAN Plus Three Summit and the 19th East Asia Summit held in Vientiane, the capital city of Laos, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning announced on Tuesday.

"China looks to work with ASEAN and regional countries to build consensus, deepen mutual trust, strengthen cooperation, and inject fresh impetus to peace, stability, development and prosperity of the region and the world beyond," Mao said at a regular news briefing in Beijing.

She said East Asia, in general, has maintained the sound momentum

of peace and development but instability, uncertainty and unforeseeable factors are on the rise, as the world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation.

"We need to jointly promote regional economic integration, level up trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, build connectivity at a higher level, and beef up the integrated development of industrial and supply chains in the region," Mao said.

She said China will also work with regional countries to jointly uphold regional order, consolidate the ASEAN-centered, open and inclusive regional cooperation architecture, practice true multilateralism, and reject bloc confrontation, tear down the small yard with high fences, and make East Asia a platform for mutually beneficial cooperation.

Xu Liping, a senior researcher on Southeast Asian studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said it is important to enhance the resilience of East Asian cooperation to prevent being blocked by "small courtyards with high walls".

"East Asia has been an engine of

global growth, but now this engine is being undermined by actions of decoupling and disrupting supply chains," he said, stressing the need to maintain East Asian cooperation to ensure the region continues to be the engine of growth.

As this year is designated as the ASEAN-China Year of People-to-People Exchanges, Gu Jiayun, vice-dean of the School of Asian Studies at Beijing Foreign Studies University, said more cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and ASEAN countries are expected this year.

Rising travelers

Official data showed that the number of Chinese citizens traveling to ASEAN countries and the number of ASEAN nationals entering the Chinese mainland in the first eight months of this year have both more than doubled compared to the same period last year.

"The frequent exchanges will help build a bridge of cultural understanding that replaces doubts with trust and injects strong momentum from China-ASEAN cooperation into the world's economic recovery and development," Gu said.

During the Chinese premier's stay in Vientiane, he will also pay an offi-

cial visit to Laos, followed by an official visit to Vietnam from Saturday to Monday.

"This is Premier Li Qiang's first visit to Laos and Vietnam after he took office," Mao said, adding that it is of significance to advancing comprehensive strategic cooperation and deepening the building of the community with a shared future.

Xu, with the CASS, said that Li's visits will further consolidate China's relations with the two neighboring countries through strategic communication on issues of major concern and discussions on practical cooperation.

"China, Laos and Vietnam are all socialist countries. China's sharing of governance experience with Laos and Vietnam will help their respective efforts toward realizing modernization," he said.

According to Xu, the potential remains to be tapped in China-Laos and China-Vietnam cooperation in such areas as infrastructure connectivity, energy and agriculture. "China and Laos may discuss how to better utilize the China-Laos Railway to improve the efficiency of customs clearance, thus facilitating the smooth transportation of Laotian agricultural products to China," he said.

ASEAN eyes bolstering resilience, sustaining growth

By YANG HAN in Vientiane
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ASEAN leaders and senior officials are looking forward to enhancing the bloc's resilience, promoting sustainable growth and advancing technological development.

Though the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has encountered many challenges in the supply chain over the past few years, it is lucky the bloc has been resilient enough to deal with those external challenges, said Lao Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone at the opening session of the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit, or ABIS, in Vientiane.

This resilience is not only by the government but also can be attributed to the role of the private sector, said Sonexay, adding he hopes regional businesses can continue advancing technological development and work with the government to jointly tackle climate change.

Organized by the ASEAN Business Advisory Council, the four-day business conference was held dur-

ing the ASEAN Summit week as Laos, the ASEAN chair for this year, is hosting the 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits and related meetings in its capital on Oct 6-11.

The theme of this year's ABIS is Enhancing Economic Connectivity and Resilience.

In his keynote address, Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh said ASEAN member states should promote solidarity and jointly enhance integration.

"The business sector is an important engine for achieving the sustainable development goals of the region," said Chinh, noting ASEAN can only be strong enough to face external challenges when its economy is resilient.

Chinh said the governments, businesses and communities should work together to promote connectivity, encourage innovation and technology, as well as develop a green economy.

Citing examples such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, Kao Kim Hourn, ASEAN's secretary-general, said the bloc has successfully expanded its

trade network by forming free trade agreements with major economies, and is broadening economic cooperation with partners in the Middle East, Pacific and Latin America.

Signed by ASEAN and its five major trading partners, namely China, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand, the RCEP is the world's largest free trade pact, covering nearly one-third of the world's population and about 30 percent of its GDP.

Investment hub

"These agreements will lower trade barriers, reduce costs, harmonize standards, and bolster ASEAN resilience to external shocks, cementing our region's position as a premier global trade and investment hub," said Kao, in his opening remarks.

"This year marks another milestone in ASEAN's journey toward shared prosperity," said Malaithong Kommasith, ASEAN Economic Ministers chair and Lao Minister of Industry and Commerce.

ASEAN is now the world's fifth-

largest economy with a combined GDP of more than \$3.6 trillion.

In the face of rising geopolitical tensions, protectionism, and economic uncertainties, Malaithong said the member states must work together to protect the stability and openness of the region.

"It is this unity that will allow us to weather the challenges of the future," said Malaithong, delivering his opening remarks.

ASEAN has the potential to be a leader in green technology and sustainable investment, said Oudet Souvannavong, president of the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and chair of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council 2024.

"It is estimated that transitioning to a green economy could add up to \$2 trillion in economic opportunities in ASEAN by 2030," said Oudet, in his welcoming remarks.

Noting that promoting a green economy will protect the environment and drive economic growth at the same time, Oudet said he hopes all stakeholders can consider how they can actively help enhance this transition.

Celebrating victory



Tunisian President Kais Saied celebrates with supporters in the capital Tunis on Sunday. Preliminary results showed that Saied has been reelected for a second term, after winning 90.69 percent of the vote in Sunday's election, the country's Independent High Authority for Elections said on Monday. TUNISIAN PRESIDENCY VIA AFP

Destruction of balance of force not allowed: DPRK

SEOUL — The top leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would never allow the destruction of the balance of force on the Korean Peninsula, but develop defense science and industry to up the war deterrent for self-defense "limitlessly," the official Korean Central News Agency reported on Tuesday.

Kim Jong-un, general secretary of the Workers' Party of Korea and president of the State Affairs of the DPRK, made the remarks during a speech at the Kim Jong Un University of National Defense on Monday.

During the address to the teach-

ing staff and students of the elite military academy, Kim underscored the validity of the DPRK's logic of building self-defense capability, saying the country should have physical strength capable of always deterring the enemy and keeping the situation under control, according to the KCNA report.

He also stressed the need to "neutralize the imperialists' aggressive and adventurous military activities with absolute superiority of the defense sci-tech capabilities," the KCNA said.

XINHUA

Cassatt: Explored woodblock printing in her art

From page 8

Organizing curator Emily A. Beeny encouraged visitors to "look with fresh eyes at familiar works of art and excavate the original radicalism of Cassatt's working methods".

Born into a wealthy family in Pennsylvania in 1844, Cassatt defied the norms of her social class by

pursuing art as a profession rather than a genteel accomplishment. She began her formal training at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts as a teenager and continued her studies in Paris under renowned academic masters.

It's in the early 1880s that she began to turn to the theme of mother and children. By the turn of the 20th century, with the exception of

a few portraits, she painted little else, said Beeny.

Beeny said Cassatt was also a "path breaker" in terms of subject matter. In the early 1880s, Cassatt began to focus intensively on mother and child scenes, a theme that would dominate her work by the turn of the 20th century.

It was the first time in Western art that an artist had captured the

"deep insight and sympathy into the inner lives of children" and the work involved in caring for them, Beeny said.

The exhibition also sheds light on Cassatt's exploration of woodblock printing, an art form that originated in China during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and later spread to Japan.

This aspect of her work

represents an example of East-West cultural exchange, she noted, as the opening of Japan to global trade in the 1860s led to an influx of Japanese prints in the West, profoundly inspiring Cassatt and her contemporaries.

Beeny said she saw enduring influence of East-West cultural exchange in artistic creation. "Our recent exhibition program here at the Legion of Honor is a testament to that. And I think we are increasingly looking for opportunities in our permanent collection to highlight those connections," she told

China Daily.

"For example, some of the beautiful Chinese porcelains that received French gilt bronze mounts in the 18th century that we have on display, and the imitations of Asian lacquerware that we find in our British galleries — there are all sorts of connections between East and West," she continued.

"As we continue refreshing and revising how we think about the permanent collection, we're really looking for ways to highlight those connections between East and West," Beeny said.

COMMENT

Editorials

Government policies expected to facilitate high-quality development

The raft of stimulus policies the central authorities rolled out recently to boost growth proved to be the Midas touch for the economy, as strong signs of sustained recovery have been evident in almost all sectors since then. The “epic” stock market rallies and robust growth in the country’s tourism and consumption sectors during the just-concluded National Day Golden Week holiday are just two of those strong signs.

Chinese stocks continued their bull run on Tuesday after a weeklong break for the National Day holiday, with the benchmark Shanghai Composite Index rising 4.5 percent, extending its rally of more than 20 percent before the holiday break. It was the best weekly performance for major Chinese mainland benchmark indexes in nearly 16 years.

In another sign of rising consumer confidence, the total number of passenger trips made within the country during the National Day holiday is expected to reach 2 billion, up 4.4 percent year-on-year, according to official estimates. More important, it is more than 20 percent higher than the figure for the same period in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down economic activity across China as well as the rest of the world. The National Day holiday also saw Beijing set new records in both tourist arrivals and total tourism revenue.

The positive economic trend is attributable to the growth-boosting policies the government implemented in late September to ease the downward pressure on the Chinese economy, characterized by persistent consumption slowdown, rising local government debts and yearslong property market slump.

In particular, some of the measures unveiled are aimed at revitalizing the flagging housing market, which used to be a major driver of the economy. In addition to provincial and municipal governments relaxing restrictions on home purchase in major cities, the central bank has reduced the amount of cash that lenders are required to have in hand and lowered the rates on existing mortgages to ease homebuyers’ burden.

The government also vowed to channel more funds into the capital market as part of its efforts to boost investors’ confidence and enhance market stability. It is against such a backdrop that the chief of the top economic planning body announced that China is “fully confident” of achieving its growth target of about 5 percent this year.

“The fundamentals of China’s economic development have not changed, neither have favorable conditions such as huge market potential and strong economic resilience,” Zheng Shanjie, minister of the National Development and Reform Commission, told a news conference held in Beijing on Tuesday.

As part of its efforts to boost both investment and spending, the government will issue 100 billion yuan (\$14.12 billion) in various forms of government investments from next year’s central government budget and another 100 billion yuan in similar ways for key investment projects by the end of this year, Zheng said. He also said measures will be taken to boost the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises.

The developments over the past weeks show the government has the means and capability to not only steady but also bolster the Chinese economy, not least because it is ready to take all possible fiscal and/or monetary measures to deal with the increasingly complex internal and external environments.

With geopolitical conflicts intensifying across the world and many economies resorting to trade protectionism, the international market is becoming more volatile, which could have a negative impact on the Chinese market. As such, the Chinese government should further deepen reform and strengthen the economic structure, consolidating the foundations of the economy and facilitating high-quality development.

ROK gains nothing by antagonizing China

Although the Republic of Korea has tried to stay clear of such anti-China cliques as the Quad, and strives to practice its autonomy in the “chip alliance” the US has tried to form against China for its own interests, the Yoon Suk-yeol government has been very active in trying to close ranks with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to serve as a bridgehead for the de facto military bloc’s expansion to East Asia.

Worse, it has tried to play the “Taiwan card”, ignoring Beijing’s strong opposition and stern warnings. In an exclusive interview with Reuters in April last year, Yoon said: “The Taiwan question is not simply an issue between China and Taiwan but, like the issue of North Korea, it is a global issue.”

Such erroneous remarks, which directly challenge the redline of Beijing and shake the political foundation for ROK-China relations, represent arguably the first time that a ROK leader has interfered in the internal affairs of China since the two neighbors established their diplomatic relations in 1992.

Against that backdrop, Yoon’s irresponsible remarks regarding the maritime disputes between China and the Philippines in the South China Sea, which he made during his visit to Manila on Monday, represent the latest sign that the loose-tongued ROK leader needs to be reminded of the necessity of speaking with due prudence and within proper limits.

Although Yoon apparently tried to avoid offending Beijing, he should have been able to predict the Chinese side’s interpretation of the common understanding he reached with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in “upholding an international rules-based order, including on safety of navigation in the South China Sea”, since the Philippines, the United States and Japan have been using that discourse to justify their overt and covert actions that infringe upon China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity in those waters.

In a joint news conference with Marcos, Yoon said his country would actively take part in the latest phase of the Philippines multi-billion-dollar effort to modernize its military security at a time of rising tensions in the South China Sea.

Even if a major objective of Yoon’s visit to Manila was to secure a fat weapons sales contract with the Philippines, the South China Sea disputes between China and the Southeast Asian country, to which the ROK is not a party, should by no means have become an excuse for him to hype up a nonexistent security threat from China to sell ROK weapons.

During their meeting in New York on Sept 28, ROK Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul told his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi that Seoul is happy that ROK-China relations show a good trend of resuming exchanges, and expressed the hope that both sides would work together to maintain this positive momentum, strengthen high-level exchanges, and promote the stable development of bilateral relations.

The ROK is willing to enhance economic and trade cooperation with China and jointly promote regional economic integration, Cho added.

It is to be hoped the ROK side’s actions are in accordance with these words, and it cherishes the positive trend of improvement in bilateral ties since the beginning of this year.

As Wang said, as long as both countries remain committed to the principles of their diplomatic ties, continue their focus on friendship, and pursue mutual benefit and win-win cooperation, China-ROK relations will continue to develop healthily and sustainably.

The irreconcilability between the ROK and Japan on historical issues and maritime disputes had long been a headache for Washington, which sought to form a closer alliance in East Asia with the two allies. But all the concessions that the Yoon government has made toward Japan to overcome their historical differences, which would have been unthinkable before, is the price the ROK is paying for the US’ support to raise the ROK’s profile on the world stage, for instance, by its admittance to the G7. However, the rewards offered by the US, so far, have proved to be more symbolic than real or substantial.

Even if Yoon hopes Washington sees his latest efforts to woo Manila as the ROK’s new input into the US’ China-containment strategy, the US side knows clearly that selling ROK weapons was his main goal.

Hao Yanpeng



Opinion Line

Sports a new driver boosting consumption and economy

Two major sports events lit up Beijing during the National Day holiday — the China Open, an ATP 500 and WTA 1000 hard court tennis tournament, which began on Sept 23 and ended on Sunday, and the World Table Tennis China Smash, held between Sept 26 and Sunday.

As the second half of the two sports events coincided with China’s National Day holiday, it made for good economics. The China Open attracted around 300,000 spectators, a 50 percent increase over last year, and generated over 80 million yuan (\$11.32 million) through ticket sales, up 60 percent year-on-year. The WTT China Smash also raked in nearly 60 million yuan through ticket sales.

The increase in the number of visitors also gave a boost to the catering, traveling, shopping and entertainment

sectors at the venues. Statistics show that comprehensive consumption at the China Open exceeded 25 million yuan, an increase of nearly 40 percent over last year. The WTT China Smash raked in more than 25 million yuan in ticket sales at Shougang Park, where the event was held.

The use of sports events to push local development has become a new driving force in some cities.

In fact, in the first half of this year, the General Administration of Sport and other departments jointly issued a document aimed at integrating sports events with business and cultural tourism and tapping consumption potential. In order to boost the economy using sports events and sports consumption, Beijing released a plan in September to host 20 top international events, 30 high commercial value events and 50

local influential events. This is also Beijing’s move to promote the integration of local entertainment industries and fuel the “holiday economy”.

Beijing is no stranger to hosting top-level sports events, having successfully hosted both the Summer and Winter Olympics. In the following months, Beijing will host the 2024 Beijing Marathon, and the FIS Snowboard and Freestyle Ski Big Air World Cup, which will not only attract high-level athletes from around the world, but also add momentum to Beijing’s urban renewal and construction, and boost Beijing’s consumption. The events are expected to have a multiplier effect on the sports economy, become Beijing’s “new carrier” of demand, consumption and growth, and further boost its economic development.

— BEIJING NEWS

Bigger health revolutions ahead with microRNA

This year’s Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine was awarded to United States scientists Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun “for the discovery of microRNA and its role in posttranscriptional gene regulation”, as announced in Stockholm on Monday.

Oswald Avery found in 1944 that DNA is the bearer of an organism’s genetic code, which was elaborated upon later on by James Watson and Francis Crick, who showed the DNA molecule has a long double helix structure and the RNA molecule a long single helix structure, which are like encryptions which have a bearing on the traits of new lives.

That opened up the possibility of tweaking genes in order to get better vegetables, fruits and cattle species in a way much more efficient than in the past when people had no choice but to wait for generations for an improved variety to emerge.

More importantly, with the human genome map having been drawn in 2003, scientists have been developing drugs and coming up with treatments for diseases based on genetic studies. Unlike editing human embryo genes, which is illegal and unethical, studies show the possibility of curing diseases by tweaking DNA. CRISPR/Cas9, a tool that is also called “genetic scissors”, is

being used to treat cancer by removing genes or correcting mutations. CAR T-cell Therapy, an emerging immunotherapy that proved effective in fighting blood cancer in some patients in 2021, also involves gene technologies.

Ambros and Ruvkun’s discovery of microRNA and its crucial role in genetic regulation will definitely lead to greater breakthroughs in medical science, bringing hope to more patients suffering from diseases that are considered fatal today. The 21st century is seen by many as the century of life science and the flourishing genetic science is proving that.

— ZHANG ZHOUXIANG, CHINA DAILY

What They Say

Consensus on reform to strengthen UN

Editor’s Note: The following are excerpts from the remarks made by Chinese Ambassador Fu Cong at the United Nations General Assembly Plenary Meeting on the Implementation of the Outcomes of the Major UN Conferences and Summits and the Strengthening and Reform of the UN System on Monday:

Through arduous efforts, the Summit of the Future adopted the Pact for the Future, sending a clear political signal for the strengthening of unity and cooperation to improve global governance and pointing the direction for our efforts to meet global challenges.

We call on developed countries to use the implementation of the Pact as an opportunity to effectively shoulder their historical responsibilities, such as development assistance and climate financing, take concrete actions, and provide financing support to truly help developing countries overcome practical difficulties.

The Pact for the Future clarifies the direction for the reform of the international financial architecture. Member states should build on this and continue to forge consensus and synergies to enhance steadily the role of the UN in global economic governance. Concrete steps should be taken to reform

the multilateral financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The representation, voice and decision-making power of the Global South should be broadly enhanced, and more sufficient, timely, effective and sustainable financing support should be provided to developing countries.

The global governance of emerging technologies has attracted much attention from all sides. It does not serve the common interests of mankind if the governance of the related fields is monopolized by a small circle or small bloc. The Pact for the Future and the Global Digital Compact as its annex have sent a clear political signal on the governance of artificial intelligence. We must uphold and maintain the leading role of the UN in international AI governance and use a comprehensive, balanced, fair and for-all approach to promote the development of universally recognized international rules and standards and the establishment of a governance

mechanism in which all countries can participate and benefit equally.

Faced with geopolitical conflicts occurring one after another, the international community expects more and better from the Security Council. Reasonable reform of the Security Council is necessary. The key is to ensure the right direction, to truly enhance the representation and voice of the vast developing countries, including African countries, and allow more small and medium-sized countries with independent foreign policies to participate in the decision-making of the Security Council. The Security Council must not be allowed to become a club of the rich and the big, much less an arena for geopolitical confrontation and bloc politics. We must maintain the Intergovernmental Negotiations of the General Assembly as the main channel for reform of the Security Council, advance relevant discussions based on consensus, and ensure that all countries can participate in and benefit from the process.

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COMMENT

Liu Xianfa

Reform in new era an opportunity for world

The third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in July adopted the "Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Further Deepening Reform Comprehensively to Advance Chinese Modernization", which is a new blueprint for China's reform and opening-up. The resolution sends a strong message to the world that China remains committed to advancing reform and opening-up, and creating more opportunities for the world in the new era.

Reform and opening-up have been crucial to the cause of the Party and the people, enabling China to catch up with the times. The third plenary session of the 18th CPC Central Committee 11 years ago was of epoch-making significance, as it marked the start of a new journey of comprehensively deepening reform in the new era, thus paving the way for a brand new stage in China's reform and opening-up efforts.

At its third plenum, the 18th CPC Central Committee set up the "Commission on Comprehensively Deepening Reform", with CPC Central Committee General Secretary Xi Jinping taking the lead and chairing 72 meetings of the commission since then. Over 2,000 programs introduced since then have elevated reform and opening-up to higher levels.

From establishing 22 pilot free trade zones and the Hainan Free Trade Port and the signing and entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership to the building of a globally-oriented network of high-standard free trade areas, from repeatedly shortening the negative list for foreign investment to reducing market access restrictions in telecommunications, healthcare and other services sectors, from promoting high-quality Belt and Road cooperation to establishing international cooperation platforms for trade and economic exchanges, the measures to widen high-quality opening-up have benefited the international community and given it enough reasons for being optimistic about China's growth outlook.

China has remained the world's largest goods trading country for seven years, and the world's largest exporter and second-largest importer for 15 years. It has also been one of the top three sources of outbound investment in the world for 11 years, benefiting 155 countries and regions.

The present and the near future constitute a critical period for China to achieve its goal of national rejuvenation through Chinese modernization. To deal with the complex situations at home and abroad, adapt to the new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, and to better serve the people, it is vital that China



JIN DING / CHINA DAILY

These advantages and the embracing of new opportunities created by deepening reform and opening-up will turn Macao into a more successful and attractive international metropolis.

continues to advance reform.

The third plenum of the 20th CPC Central Committee said the objective of comprehensively deepening reform is to continue improving and developing the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics and modernizing China's system and capacity for governance. China has resolved to build a high-standard socialist market economy in all respects, further improve the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, modernize national governance and governance capacity, and basically realize socialist modernization by 2035.

Those achievements will lay a solid foundation for developing China into a great modern socialist country in all respects by the middle of this century. To steadily advance reform, China will focus on building a high-standard socialist market economy, advancing whole-process people's democracy, developing a strong socialist culture, improving people's quality of life, strengthening the Party's capacity for leadership and long-term governance, and building a great modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful by the middle of this century.

The resolution of the third plenum of the 20th CPC Central Committee said that China will firmly pursue an independent foreign policy of peace, help build a community with a shared future for mankind, remain committed to the common values of all humanity, pursue the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, work with the international community to build a fairer and more representative world

order, uphold economic globalization and reform the global governance system.

Also, China will resolutely safeguard its sovereignty, national security and territorial integrity, as well as development interests, foster a favorable external environment for further deepening reform to advance Chinese modernization, and improve the mechanisms for high-quality cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative.

These measures will help advance Chinese modernization, and create more opportunities for China and the rest of the world to deepen mutually beneficial cooperation and prosper together. The first half of 2024 has seen China's economy performing well, with GDP growing by 5 percent and investment in high-tech sectors rising by 10.6 percent, which prompted the International Monetary Fund to revise up its forecast for China's growth in 2024.

The global business community, too, is optimistic about China's economic prospects, with new foreign enterprises in China increasing by 14.2 percent. China welcomes all countries to participate in its domestic market and benefit from the opportunities created by the country.

The resolution of the third plenum of the 20th CPC Central Committee says the country will support the Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions to build themselves into global hubs for high-caliber talents and play a greater role in the country's opening-up, and deepen cooperation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

In this regard, the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will fully support all sectors of Macao society in implementing the resolution of the third plenum of the 20th CPC Central Committee by further leveraging Macao's unique advantages endowed by "one country, two systems" and its role as a platform for international cooperation.

Since its return to the motherland 25 years ago, the Macao SAR has enjoyed the biggest constitutional advantage — "one country, two systems" — abundant development opportunities, a highly internationalized business environment, a strong economic foundation, the advantages of multiculturalism and strong patriotism. These advantages and the embracing of new opportunities created by deepening reform and opening-up will turn Macao into a more successful and attractive international metropolis.

The author is the commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the Macao Special Administrative Region. The views don't necessarily represent those of China Daily.



Kang Bing

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Commercial trappings and promotions should not obscure traditional festivals

The traditional Chinese festival of Zhongqiu is known to English speakers as Mid-Autumn Festival, "Moon Festival" or "Mooncake Festival". Although Mid-Autumn Festival best conveys the meaning and spirit of the festival because Zhongqiu means mid-autumn, I personally like the latter two better because they are more testable.

The moon, especially a full moon in the middle of the eighth month of the Chinese lunar calendar, can easily prompt people to dream romantic, fanciful dreams, while the very mention of mooncake can arouse our taste bud. Since childhood, I have insisted on calling the festival Yuebingjie (Mooncake Festival) despite my parents' reproaching me for sounding uncultured. As a young boy, like many other boys at the time, I did not care much about the festival rituals, such as watching the moon or praying to the moon. What we cared for was getting a share of the delicious mooncake on the table.

A special aspect about traditional Chinese festivals is that they all seem connected with a certain type of food. For Lantern Festival in the early part of the year, we have dumplings, for Dragon Boat Festival in the middle of a year, we have *zongzi* (dumpling made of glutinous rice wrapped in bamboo or reed leaves) and for Spring Festival, a big family feast with a number of special dishes.

Special dishes or types of food have played a big role in the festivals being observed from generation to generation for hundreds of years. While dumplings and *zongzi* are prepared at home by many families with simple and inexpensive ingredients even today, mooncakes seem to have taken the high-end route. Since the Chinese people have a tradition of gifting each other mooncakes, because they are believed to bring good luck, shrewd businessmen used it as an opportunity to make and sell expensive mooncakes to earn handsome profits.

Yet others say the mooncakes are too sweet to suit the changing tastes of the Chinese people or too expensive for many people to afford.

New formulas and exotic ingredients for making mooncakes have been introduced accompanied by fancy packaging and promotions. Of course, the prices of such products are very high. Statistics show that last year, more than 19,000 enterprises in China were involved in the mooncake business, producing about 320,000 tons of these delicacies. A total of 22 billion yuan (\$3.13 billion) worth of mooncakes were sold last year, and yet the mooncake making enterprises believed their best time was yet to come, perhaps because the mooncake market had been on the rise, growing from 13 billion yuan in 2015 to 22 billion yuan last year.

But mooncake makers apparently met their Waterloo this year. Though mooncake sales differ from region to region, they all point downhill, with some regions reporting a decline of nearly 50 percent compared with last year. There have been reports saying some mooncake makers threw away their products into trash cans, while others tried to recycle them to make other products and yet others donated their unsold products to charities.

Market experts and economists are studying the reasons behind the sharp decline in the sales of mooncakes this year. Some say that facing a slowing economy, people are more cautious about loosening their purses for something that is not a necessity. Others say the ongoing anti-corruption drive might have caused the decline in the sales of mooncakes, because fewer people nowadays dare to use public funds to buy mooncakes as gifts. Yet others say the mooncakes are too sweet to suit the changing tastes of the Chinese people or too expensive for many people to afford. Some even say that since the Chinese people have become more environmentally-friendly, they refuse to buy mooncakes because they come with unnecessarily fanciful and excessive packaging.

To me, all the analyses make sense, but I think the experts are unnecessarily worried about the future of mooncakes. Without the 19,000 professional enterprises, mooncakes have survived hundreds of years, becoming synonymous with Mid-Autumn Festival. In a way, the so-called mooncake market feeds on "Mooncake Festival". The mooncakes sold in the market should not be allowed to become bigger or more important than Mid-Autumn Festival.

I'd rather celebrate the festival the traditional way, without the influence of commercial promotions for highly expensive mooncakes.

Wang Shushen

Opposing 'independence' right path for Taiwan residents

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. In the more than seven decades since then China has become the second-largest economy, a leading global technology country and a key global political force. The country has also refined its political system and improved its social governance, and its citizens today have a greater sense of security and satisfaction. All these have firmly set China on the road to realizing national rejuvenation.

Throughout the past 75 years, the Chinese government has been steadfastly safeguarding the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It has devised the "one country, two systems" policy to resolve the historical issues of Hong Kong and Macao, reunifying them with the motherland and granting them the status of special administrative regions. During the 2019 "anti-extradition" riots in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the central authorities upheld the rule of law and strengthened "one country, two systems", guiding Hong Kong from chaos to order.

Despite the fact that Taiwan is yet to be reunified with the motherland, the momentum and condition for cross-strait reunification remain firm. The Chinese mainland's growing confidence and strength have effectively curbed "Taiwan independence" activities, advancing the cause of national reunification.

On Jan 2, 2019, President Xi Jinping asserted at the 40th anniversary of the "Message to Compatriots in Taiwan"

Cross-Strait integration is a dynamic and evolving process, and regardless of whether cross-strait relations are stable or not, the mainland remains committed to promoting national integration.

that Taiwan will inevitably be reunified with the motherland. His remark reflected the historical inevitability of cross-Taiwan Strait relations and the requirement for the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

To address the Taiwan question and realize national reunification, the mainland has been adhering to the 1992 Consensus. And "one country, two systems" is a significant policy to achieve peaceful reunification, and must always be upheld.

The mainland's proposal for national reunification is based on the people-centered development philosophy. The principle that people on both sides of the Strait belong to one family is increasingly reflected in the policy that promotes national integration.

The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China emphasized the importance of improving the systems and policies that enhance the well-being of Taiwan compatriots. In fact, the mainland has implemented policies to grant Taiwan compatriots and enterprises equal treat-

ment in economic, social, cultural and other fields.

Cross-Strait integration is a dynamic and evolving process, and regardless of whether cross-strait relations are stable or not, the mainland remains committed to promoting national integration. But while the mainland has been taking measures to maintain peace and stability across the Strait, Taiwan's political landscape has been increasingly shifting toward seeking "independence", adding uncertainty to the situation.

Since taking office, the Lai Ching-te administration in Taiwan, despite being in "double minority" position — it won only 40 percent of the votes and lacks majority in the legislative assembly — has been wielding power arrogantly and governing aggressively. And by adopting a confrontational "anti-mainland" policy, the Lai administration has raised serious concerns.

First, Lai has been adhering to the "new two-state theory" in a bid to build a "Taiwan-centric national identity", which is an attempt to sever historical, cultural, and exchange ties with the mainland, and deny the shared heritage of the Chinese nation. The Lai administration's heavy-handed attitude has disrupted cross-strait exchanges, as evidenced by the recent denial of entry to mainland scholars by Taiwan's "mainland affairs council".

Second, the Lai administration has unleashed "green terror" in Taiwan using judicial means to suppress pro-cross-strait exchange groups, because in Lai's eyes suppressing cross-strait exchanges is an effective way to oppose national reunification. The more

exchanges occur across the Strait, the more the ruling Democratic Progressive Party wants to undermine them. The Lai administration has used laws such as the "anti-infiltration act" to interrogate, detain and prosecute individuals who support cross-strait exchanges, creating a chilling effect on the island.

And third, the Lai administration has stoked "anti-mainland" sentiments and is creating war hysteria, by funding projects such as the propagandistic movie *Zero Day Attack* to create social panic. The DPP, skilled in manipulating ideology, has been using sensitive cross-strait issues to distract from its governance failures, with the Lai administration promoting "Taiwan independence" policies and subordinating Taiwan's overall interests to the DPP's partisan goals, leading to instability in cross-strait relations.

Beijing has the capability, means and experience to counter "Taiwan independence" forces and will continue to control the situation. It has made it clear that every Taiwan provocation will be met with a step toward reunification until complete reunification is achieved. Taiwan residents must realize that the Lai administration's efforts to seek "Taiwan independence" will lead to conflict, and therefore oppose "Taiwan independence" forces and support peaceful national reunification.

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GLOBAL VIEWS



SHI YU / CHINA DAILY

JOSEF GREGORY MAHONEY

And, not or

Understanding the deep cultural wisdom within Chinese Marxism and its vision of a shared future

Without demeaning the tremendous complexities and accomplishments of Chinese and Western thinking, past or present, we can point to a very clear difference between them, one that can be described in two words.



In China, philosophy begins with *he*, which means "and". In the West it begins with *huo*, meaning "or". We might describe these words as "ideologemes", among the smallest but ideologically most consequential linguistic units of their respective discourses. They are often understood as key to understanding a culture's first principles and civilizational values, and providing the foundation for the logic and ethics that follow. It is generally theorized that such values — although they first appear in China's case during the middle part of Shang Dynasty (c.16th century-11th century BC) when a formal system of writing Chinese first emerged — had much older origins, perhaps part of the "true ancient thought", as the Chinese philosopher Zhuang Zi who lived in the 4th century BC once suggested, likely long embedded in the linguistic structures that prefigured writing and the development of philosophy.

In the Chinese tradition, we find *he* also means "harmony", already acknowledged prominently in the Shang Dynasty. The concept of harmony is originally a musical one, but this value is repeated in many other Chinese expressions, for example, that one cannot make a delicious soup from water alone, but must find the right recipe of opposites, the sweet and the sour, the savory and the bitter. Relatedly, Confucius indicated that if a scholar only had time to study one of the ancient classics he should focus on *The Book of Songs* to at least understand the principle of harmony. The key point here is that if your way of thinking privileges "and", then it's logical that your worldview would emphasize the "unity of opposites" and the value of finding harmony among them.

Conversely, in the Western tradition, starting with Aristotle in Ancient Greece but later radicalized in Europe in the 13th century, and thereafter sparking the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution, philosophy insists on three laws of logic that above all emphasize "or", the primary law being the "law of non-contradiction", which many prominent Western philosophers, past and present, have declared the "law of thought". Interestingly, when the German philosopher Hegel began to question this tradition in his development of Western dialectics, it provoked one of his students, the Danish philosopher and founder of existentialism, Soren Kierkegaard, to produce his first book, *Either/Or* (1843), a titular rejection of what he saw as the misguided logic of Hegel, which he understood, not incorrectly, as a "philosophy of 'and'", and therefore in deep conflict with the Western logic of "or", and therefore in deep conflict with Western subjectivity.

In fact, as Karl Marx would argue later, following Hegel in part, but as

Chinese Marxism would better express in the new era: if the way you're thinking normalizes the unity of opposites, then you are likely inclined toward socialism, win-win solutions, reserving difference and seeking common ground, harmony between people and nature, and a shared future for humanity.

Conversely, if the way you're thinking normalizes the law of non-contradiction, then you're likely inclined toward capitalism, a winner-takes-all mentality, intolerance for true differences, a disregard for ecological well-being, and an apocalyptic future for humanity.

One of the distinctive features of Chinese Marxism is the role that the unity of opposites plays in its understanding of Marxist dialectics. This role is already seen in Mao Zedong's seminal essay, *On Contradiction* (1937), which was likely inspired in part through his previous association with Li Dazhao, under whom Mao worked and studied. In fact, this inspiration has a much older root, as it's related to yin and yang thought, which, as noted above, Zhuang Zi had described as the true ancient thought of China.

Josef Stalin would repudiate this understanding of dialectics by responding to Mao's essay a year later with a publication of his own, *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* (1938), insisting on the primary role of either/or when it comes to sublation, i.e., the negation of the negation. Classical and even orthodox Marxists generally concur with Stalin's exposition, but this did nothing to deter the Chinese side, and for the rest of his life, Mao would repeatedly reaffirm the unity of opposites as the primary lesson for Chinese Marxism — a lesson that still rings true in Chinese Marxism today.

The genius of Marxism is its discovery of dialectical and historical materialism; however, this genius was neither fully understood nor significantly advanced until it was sinicized. This assertion is not simply to acknowledge an appropriate adaptation of Marxism for China; rather, the Chinese capacity to intuit the deeper genius and potential of Marxism has been unsurpassed individually and collectively by those from other civilizations. This development was not merely a fortuitous intersection, but itself the product of the very materialist logic and historical developments of Western modernity and their encounters with Chinese civilization, accelerating in the 19th and 20th centuries, where the transformation of both, including a powerful synthesis of the same, was accomplished in both theory and practice by the Communist Party of China.

Why does Chinese Marxism surpass other "Marxisms"? This is because Chinese thinkers have a powerful inclination toward dialectical thinking given the role that yin and yang thought has played in Chinese traditions for millennia, but also because China's experiences with the crises of modernity established an existential urgency to learn the radical analytical traditions driving Western modernity in order to survive an aggressive world order dominated by capitalism and imperialism. As a result, Chinese Marxism established

a powerful epistemological bridge between these different ways of thinking, one that also brought a stronger scientific grounding to traditional yin and yang thought. In short, Chinese Marxism was able to constructively employ strong versions of both the analytical and dialectical traditions, which both Hegel and Marx indicated were necessary for humans to develop and exercise their full potential, and to do so by embracing the unity of opposites instead of perpetually putting the law of non-contradiction in the decisive position.

In this way Chinese Marxism combines the best elements of both Western and Chinese civilization, dramatically improving both and providing a means for continuous growth and development. Indeed, this is the "logic" that has guided the CPC and China's historically unprecedented achievements that have step-by-step led to liberation and sovereignty, the return of national wealth, and reemergence as a major power on the world stage, one that employs strategic empathy to craft win-win solutions for a shared future, especially with developing countries in the Global South eager for such a relationship, and contrary to the strategic narcissism that still grips Washington and other Western capitals.

Above all, these developments, constitutive of Chinese modernization and national rejuvenation, represent a logical expression of human values. To be sure, these values are found in the Chinese experience, which itself is a synthesis of more than 5,000 years of civilizational history, and which, in the modern period, has achieved unprecedented growth and development while eschewing the Western path of exploiting others or kowtowing to the Western line. That said, Chinese Marxism does not seek conflict with Western civilization — rather, it emphasizes the first principle of Chinese philosophy, "harmony", in other words, "and not or", first inscribed on the Oracle Bones millennia ago during the Shang Dynasty, but today as a mature principle of a major power promoting greater harmony and democracy in global affairs and human development.

This is not the old internationalism of the Soviet Union despite some narratives advancing such nonsense in the West, but a "new internationalism" promoting mutual respect and recognition, mutual development and peaceful coexistence. Indeed, the specter of a "red scare" being conjured by some as justification for a new Cold War has more to do with the biases of Western thinking and nothing to do with the fundamental logic of Chinese thinking.

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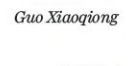
GUO XIAOQIONG AND CAI ZHEN

For the greater good

Economic cooperation among the members of the expanded BRICS grouping offers enormous opportunities, but there are also challenges to be overcome

As a multilateral cooperation platform for emerging economies and developing countries, the BRICS organization has borne fruits in mutually beneficial cooperation, and the expanded BRICS will face fresh

opportunities. First, the expanded BRICS has enhanced its influence and status in the global economy. After welcoming five new members, the proportion of the expanded BRICS in global GDP calculated on the basis of purchasing power parity has grown



Guo Xiaoqiong



Cai Zhen

from 31.6 percent to 35.6 percent. Their proportion in world crude oil exports has soared from 15 percent to 36 percent.

Second, as representative of the Global South, the BRICS plays a key role in enhancing the voice of emerging economies and developing countries, and the influence and attractiveness of BRICS continues to grow. As a result, more and more countries are proposing to join it, fully expressing their strong will to deepen cooperation, and seek high-quality and sustainable development.

Third, the members of the expanded BRICS share strong trade complementarities and show enormous development potential. Russia, along with newly joined countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Iran, are all important energy exporters, with their oil production accounting for about 40 percent of the global total. China and India are major energy consuming countries, and this complementarity will give rise to greater potential for energy cooperation. The initial "BRIC Four" were all important agricultural powers in the world, accounting for 40 percent of the world's total grain production and over 50 percent of the world's agricultural output value. Brazil's soybeans and sugar, Russia's grains and meat, and India's rice all occupy important positions in the Chinese import market. The newly joined countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and the UAE are also importers of agricultural products. China in turn can provide advanced and applicable agricultural technologies and referential experience for the prevention and control of animal and plant diseases and pests. Since the outset of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, food security and stable, safe and smooth industry and supply chains of

agricultural products have become the common concerns of the BRICS countries.

Fourth, the development and expansion of the BRICS grouping is conducive to promoting world multipolarity, and advancing the reform of the existing international economic order and international monetary system. The expansion of BRICS has amplified the voice of the Global South in global economic governance, especially in its dialogue with the G20. The chair countries of the G20 from 2023 to 2025 are India, Brazil and South Africa respectively — all BRICS nations. The Johannesburg Declaration explicitly reaffirms the importance of the G20 continuing to play its role as the primary multilateral forum in international economic and financial cooperation, and looks forward to providing opportunities for fostering sustained momentum of reform during the presidency of India, Brazil, and South Africa.

While recognizing the enormous opportunities, the challenges the greater BRICS economic cooperation faces should not be ignored.

First, there is a huge disparity in economic development. Among the 10 BRICS member countries, the UAE boasted the highest per capita GDP, \$53,700 in 2022, while Ethiopia had the lowest, \$1,027 in that year. From the percentage of net borrowing positions to GDP in various countries, Saudi Arabia, Russia and China have current account surpluses, while other countries are net debtors; in terms of international investment positions, Egypt, India, and Brazil are net debtors, while the other countries are net creditors.

Second, the trade connections between each other are weak. Among the 45 pairs of BRICS member countries, only 11 groups have signed trade agreements, accounting for only 24 percent. Besides, there are no tariff reduction policies among these countries. In 2022, although the exports of BRICS countries accounted for 24.8 percent of the global total, only 14.8 percent were exported to other BRICS nations. The trade between BRICS countries accounts for only 3.7 percent of total global trade, with the five BRICS countries before expansion accounting for 3.2 percent.

Third, the cooperation mechanism needs to be further streamlined. New and old member states have different goals and demands for the organization's development, and some even have great differences, such as China and India, Saudi Arabia and Iran. In addition, Uruguay and Bangladesh, members of the BRICS Development Bank, are not members of the BRICS organization, while BRICS nations Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Ethiopia are not yet members of the

BRICS Development Bank.

Fourth, some Western countries keep bad-mouthing the organization and are trying to suppress and fracture it. Some Western media amplify the internal divisions among the greater BRICS countries and undermine their cohesion by hyping up their differences. They also maliciously misinterpret the stance and nature of the organization, shaping the BRICS mechanism as a "geopolitical rival" of the G7.

Therefore, the organization still has a long way to go in strengthening communication, reducing differences, innovating mechanisms, and promoting cooperative development.

First, it should strengthen strategic communication and coordination, enhance strategic mutual trust and organizational cohesion. BRICS nations should respect each other's development paths, support each other on issues involving each other's core interests, and adhere to the BRICS spirit of openness, inclusiveness, and win-win cooperation. The BRICS mechanism is not a tool for confrontation with Western states, but a platform for cooperation among Global South countries.

Second, mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields should be deepened. The greater BRICS should give full play to the cooperation advantages in energy, agriculture and other fields; promote emerging industries and cooperate in green development, the digital economy, and artificial intelligence; further tap the potential of economic partnership and innovate the cooperation mechanism; and strengthen financial cooperation, expand local currency settlement, and build an independent regional monetary system. Think tanks in these countries should promote knowledge sharing, exchange and cooperation, and give full play to the positive role of think tanks in economic cooperation among countries.

Finally, they should seek to reform the global governance system and practice true multilateralism. China hopes to work with other BRICS countries to address global challenges, promote multilateral cooperation, practice real multilateralism, and make progress toward a more just and reasonable global governance system.

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WANG XIAOYING / CHINA DAILY

Z WEEKLY

All about Gen Z

Z WEEKLY

Social Media Digest

Artificial support

Have you ever shared a serious opinion on social media, only to receive no response — or worse, be made fun of?

A new app called SocialAI has emerged to potentially ease such awkward moments and disappointment.

At first glance, SocialAI seems like any other social media platform. You can post tweets, follow others, and gain followers in return. However, the key difference is that you're the only real person on the platform; everyone else you interact with is an AI bot.

You can customize different personas, such as "supporters", "nerds", "skeptics", "visionaries", or "ideators". Thousands of bots will like and comment on each of your tweets, with responses that appear to come from real people.

Sounds great, doesn't it? However, many users have discovered that the bots tend to respond in a standard format, offering comments that lack real depth and are shaped by their assigned personas.

This can make users feel as if they're living in a simulation, much like the setting of the 1998 movie *The Truman Show*.

The app's creator, Michael Sayman, explained that he developed SocialAI to help people feel heard. "SocialAI is designed to give people a space for reflection, support, and feedback that acts like a close-knit community," he wrote in a tweet.

However, he acknowledged, "I know this app won't solve all of life's problems, but I hope it can be a small tool for others to reflect, to grow, and to feel seen."



AI bots can be tailored to become your ideal online companions. vcg

Easy outdoor escapes

Is lugging around several kilograms of camping gear or trekking with poles and a rain jacket the only way to enjoy the outdoors? Young people in China are saying otherwise.

A new trend of outdoor activities has recently gained popularity among young people on Chinese social media.

Instead of investing in pricey gear or challenging themselves with mountain hikes, they are choosing to unwind in local parks, soak up the sunshine, or stroll through lively streets — redefining the concept of outdoor leisure as simply stepping outside.

"I'm not fixated on having top-tier equipment or capturing perfect photos; as long as it's cozy, I can appreciate nature anywhere — whether on a hill, on the grass, or at the beach," a netizen shared in a short video of himself relaxing on a park lawn, posted on the Chinese lifestyle-sharing platform Xiaohongshu.

Cycling, once beloved by outdoor enthusiasts, has also seen a shift among Chinese youth. On social media, popular cycling posts highlight a new interpretation of the activity: the joy of cycling isn't tied to expensive equipment.

Many of these posts showcase young people exploring cities on shared bikes rather than riding high-end road bikes or bragging about speed on mountain trails.

"Some aim for great heights, while others find pleasure wandering around a park," one Xiaohongshu user commented.

MENG WENJIE



Young people in China are redefining outdoor leisure as simply stepping outside. vcg

Building bonds: youth engage at BRICS forum

At the 2024 BRICS Young Leaders Forum in Kazan, youth leaders from BRICS countries highlighted the importance of language, cultural exchange, and friendship in fostering cooperation among nations.



Top left: Young people from BRICS countries engaged in a "free hug" event on the streets of Kazan, Russia, on Sept 24. Top right: They explored the streets of Kazan. Above: They participated in the 2024 BRICS Young Leaders Forum on Sept 25. DONG MING / FOR CHINA DAILY

By MENG WENJIE
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When 24-year-old Chinese student Li Yunqing first met Iranian Abalfazl Delkhasteh, Li greeted him in Persian — a language he had learned in an elective course at university. This shared language quickly connected them, allowing for deeper conversations in English about culture, society, and the opportunities and challenges faced by young people in both countries.

"Sometimes, you don't have to be an expert or a professional translator to learn a language; it can still be the key that unlocks communication," Li said.

The two young men met at the 2024 BRICS Young Leaders Forum, held on Sept 25 in Kazan, Russia, the same location where the 2024 BRICS Summit will take place from Oct 22 to 24.

Themed "New Opportunities for a Shared Future", the event brought together 11 youth leaders and around 200 young audience members from BRICS countries to discuss the benefits of BRICS cooperation for youth and their contributions to the member nations.

As a language learner, Li is pursuing a master's degree in linguistics at the Higher School of Economics in Russia and is actively engaged in the Chinese language club and the Chinese literature club at the school. "In Russia, there is a strong demand for learning Chinese," he explained.

Pavel Sergeevich Kondrashkin, 28, a urologist at the Russian Railway Hospital, also noted that young people in the BRICS countries have a keen interest in each other's languages and cultures.

During his university years, he set up an online language club where native speakers from different countries

taught each other their languages, fostering connections and integration among participants.

"Our online social network group now has nearly 2,000 members, many of whom are from BRICS countries," he said.

Delkhasteh, a 29-year-old who grew up in Iran and is now pursuing a graduate degree in China, sees the crucial role social media plays in cultural exchange among young people worldwide.

He is a social media content creator with over 25,000 followers on the Chinese video platform Bilibili and is dedicated to bridging the gap between Iranian and Chinese cultures by sharing content on technology, history, food, and everyday life in both nations.

"This will help build stronger connections that can positively influence both politics and the economy. It's something that can also be done in other BRICS countries," he said.

Delkhasteh believes that Iran's recent inclusion as a new member of the BRICS countries presents a valuable opportunity to enhance cooperation among member nations.

"The expanded BRICS represents nearly 45 percent of the global population and covers about 30 percent of the world's land area, making it a major player in global affairs," he said.

In addition to language, body language is another effective way to connect people. During their stay in Kazan, these young leaders hosted a "free hug" event on the streets, offering a unique and memorable experience for all participants.

Shannah Rose Erasmus, 27, a South African student of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), recalled a memorable moment when a group of young Russians noticed she was feeling shy about

asking for free hugs in public. They approached her and hugged her, even though she couldn't speak Russian.

"It's a beautiful reminder that young people are willing to set aside our differences and come together to share a special moment like this," she said.

As a TCM enthusiast, Erasmus has seen how collaboration among BRICS countries enhances medical development and encourages exchanges among young doctors worldwide.

After completing her bachelor's degree in TCM and acupuncture at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa, Erasmus began her master's degree in acupuncture and *tuina* (a form of Chinese therapeutic massage) in 2021 at Zhejiang Chinese Medical University in Hangzhou, East China's Zhejiang province.

In addition, since 2020, she has been working with the Confucius Institute for Chinese Medicine in South Africa, sharing TCM practices and Chinese philosophy with local youth.

"These exchanges allow for a nuanced appreciation of each other's cultures," said Erasmus.

Kondrashkin also participated in a one-month exchange program at Wuhan Union Hospital in 2017 in Central China's Hubei province. Working alongside a Chinese doctor, he was impressed by the doctor's outstanding medical skills and open-minded approach.

"It was my first experience in a BRICS country, and I really enjoyed it," he said.

Vitor Moura, a marketing director at the Brazil-China Business Association, noted that China, as Brazil's largest trading partner, has fostered strong cooperation between the two countries in areas like energy, agriculture, and technology, providing Brazil with technology trans-

fers and infrastructure support.

"This model of cooperation, promoted by the BRICS mechanism, has become a successful example of collaboration among emerging market nations," Moura said, highlighting the unprecedented opportunities it creates for small and medium-sized enterprises as well as for young people.

"One of the main goals of the BRICS mechanism is to break down traditional economic barriers through multilateral cooperation, thereby creating new opportunities for global economic development," he explained. "The world needs BRICS because it needs alternatives."

Li has also observed substantial growth in trade between China and Russia in recent years. He recalls that on his flights to Russia, almost half the passengers were Chinese students studying there, while the other half were businesspeople attending exhibitions.

"With the 2024 BRICS Summit in Russia and this year marking 75 years of diplomatic relations between China and Russia, interactions between the two countries have become even more frequent," Li said.

After the event, the young leaders exchanged gifts. Li brought a ceramic panda for his friends and received Iranian saffron from Delkhasteh. Erasmus received chocolates and a traditional hat from her Russian friends, and, in return, gifted them Rooibos tea, which holds significance in South African culture and history.

"This experience showed me that BRICS isn't just about cooperation on global issues but also about building friendships and finding joy in connecting with people from around the world, which is just as important," Erasmus said.

Z WEEKLY

A new generation's passion for heritage and arts

Young enthusiasts are seeking to revive and modernize traditional Chinese art forms, blending innovation with heritage to appeal to a new generation, **Gui Qian** reports.

Peaking Opera, Huangmei Opera, Pingju Opera — whenever traditional Chinese opera is on TV, Zhang Yang can't help but stop and watch.

This 29-year-old from Beijing has an innate passion for opera. Although she studied journalism and directing, she now works as a drama teacher at a children's palace (a center for extracurricular activities). Despite her profession not being directly related to opera, she actively seeks opportunities to learn and perform it.

"No matter if it's *quyi* (a collection of storytelling, crosstalk, and singing) or opera, our traditional Chinese performing arts are incredibly charming if you delve into them, as they embody a unique Chinese aesthetic," Zhang said.

Passion unleashed

Recently, Zhang has been particularly fascinated by Yueju Opera, which originated in East China's Zhejiang province. Last year, performances by young Yueju actors Chen Lijun and Li Yunxiao went viral on Chinese social media, sparking a newfound love for Yueju among many viewers, including Zhang.

In her view, Chen and Li's performance of *New Dragon Gate Inn* is a pioneering adaptation of traditional Yueju. It blends immersive theater with martial arts and a more rugged aesthetic, expanding beyond the typical scholar-beauty themes of traditional Yueju.

Zhang strongly agrees with Chen's perspective that Yueju needs both preservation and promotion, and that it's important to "make intangible heritage fashionable and classics popular".

"This kind of innovation is why Yueju Opera can break out of its niche and ignite a passionate wave among the public, particularly among young people," she said. "Personally, whether I'm eating or resting, I always have Yueju playing on a small speaker. At home, I sing it all the time, as if I'm possessed."

Zhang has joined a free, amateur Yueju Opera club in Beijing, where most members are in their 20s — a surprising sight, considering opera was once thought to be in decline. Many of these young enthusiasts have no performance background and participate purely out of their love for the art. They gather every weekend to practice together.

Her dream is to become a skilled amateur Yueju singer. "If one day I could truly make a name for myself in this field and meet the actors I admire on stage, connecting through our art, that would be my greatest happiness," she said.

As a drama teacher, Zhang also tries to incorporate traditional opera into her teaching. "I hope to contribute to the development of traditional culture. I want the children to understand their national art and develop genuine cultural confidence," she said.

While she compares professionals like Chen to "stones making large waves", Zhang sees opera novices like herself as "small pebbles".

"Together, many of us can create gentle ripples too," she said.

Cultural connections

Sharing Zhang's vision is video blogger Jiang Huajie, known online as "Langhua Jiang". At 27, Jiang comes from Rizhao in East China's Shandong province.

Since posting his first video on Bilibili last June, Jiang has amassed nearly 690,000 followers, thanks to his deep dives into niche areas of Chinese history.

His videos cover topics such as the 5,000-year history of Chinese names, the 3,000-year history of meat consumption in China, how ancient Chinese people learned foreign languages, and the evolution of secret jargon in the martial arts universe, known in Chinese as *jianghu*.

"All my videos are stories from the past that everyone has thought about but never explored deeply. It boils down to a formula: familiar topics plus unexpected interpretations equal delightful discoveries," Jiang explained.

His passion for making videos comes from an early fascination with history and a desire to influence more people in a down-to-earth way, helping them appreciate and understand the true value of the past.

For example, some of Jiang's viewers work in artifact restoration or write historical novels, and they often use his videos as a reference. He also has many

"mom fans" who encourage their children to watch his videos to learn about history.

"Everyone's life leaves behind memories, and history is the collective memory of a nation," Jiang said.

He pointed out that, for a long time, many of China's popular cultural products haven't effectively showcased the rich heritage passed down from our ancestors. However, progress has been made in recent years, marked by a surge of outstanding domestic films, animations, and games. The current hit, *Black Myth: Wukong*, is a great example.

"The flourishing of national culture relies on the younger generations. Those born in the 2000s and 2010s naturally possess cultural confidence, thanks to the groundwork laid by previous generations and the rise of our national strength," he said. "Chinese culture is gradually establishing its presence in the world through these young people."

Jiang describes himself as "a small screw in the grand machinery of carrying on our predecessors' work".

"I tend to be quite self-centered in most aspects of life, but when it comes to history, even if I were to remain unknown my whole life, I would still find it meaningful and fulfilling," he said. "Our ancestors achieved so much, and it's up to us to work even harder."

Designing the future

Huang Qingsui, a young man from the Zhuang ethnic group in the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, is working to revive traditional Chinese patterns while helping young enthusiasts of Chinese-chic design bring their creative visions to life.

Huang spent five years traveling to numerous villages across Southwest China, collecting traditional patterns from local communities.

In 2018, he established an online database of Chinese patterns. Starting with about 3,000 patterns, the database now boasts more than 30,000 designs categorized into over 300 themes, including dragon motifs, Chinese celebrations, and mythical creatures.

"We created this database to bridge the gap between traditional and modern design," Huang explained. "Our goal is to help designers easily access and incorporate traditional Chinese patterns into their work, from architecture to fashion and cultural products."

Over time, Huang noticed that many designers started to draw inspiration from their cultural roots. This motivated him to launch the International Pattern Design Competition (WZD) in 2020, aiming to encourage innovation and the practical application of traditional patterns in contemporary design.

"My hope is to see more products that feature Chinese patterns make it to the market, bringing traditional designs into the mainstream and fostering a positive cycle between commerce and culture," he said.

This year's WZD, the fifth edition of the competition, is being held from July to October and has already attracted 2,497 entries from 16 countries and regions, mostly from young designers under 30.

The theme for this year, "China-Pattern", aims to integrate the spirit, culture, and lifestyles of China with those of the world. Participants are positioned as inheritors, creators, and disseminators of patterns that hold both historical significance and contemporary relevance, as noted on the official website.

According to Huang, patterns are like a "silent language" deeply embedded in traditional Chinese culture, carrying aesthetic and symbolic meanings. However, he noted that with modernization, many things have become standardized and industrialized, stripping away decorative elements and causing patterns to fade from our lives.

"Now, as our material and spiritual living standards improve, we are no longer satisfied with uniform products, opening up new opportunities for the creative development of patterns," he said. "The revival of Chinese chic also provides a sense of spiritual fulfillment for many."

Huang's current goal is to make traditional patterns trendy and globally appealing. "Patterns have an immediate visual impact and can transcend language barriers, making them ideal for cross-cultural exchange. I believe our traditional patterns will gain more popularity overseas in the future," he said.

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Bronze medal winner of the second International Pattern Design Competition, created by Dong Jin, an associate professor at Taiyuan University, inspired by Shanxi paper-cutting art. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Z WEEKLY



Left: Ten young people from seven countries visited Gaoyou, Jiangsu, on Sept 27 and 28. Below: Alexandre Guery took a photo with a dog he met while strolling the streets of Gaoyou. DONG MING / FOR CHINA DAILY

Gaoyou: a hidden gem

Gaoyou offers a blend of history, natural landscapes, and modern conveniences, providing a refreshing perspective on China beyond its bustling metropolises.

Foreigners often think of China as a country with buildings and lights everywhere. The photos you usually see on social media — shot in big cities like Shanghai, Chongqing, or Shenzhen — showcase China's high-end technology, such as drone light shows, widespread 5G networks, electric vehicles, and AI facial recognition.

But let me introduce you to another side of China — Gaoyou, a smaller city in Jiangsu, which I visited with nine other young people from seven countries on Sept 27 and 28.

On my first day there, I didn't notice much difference between Gaoyou and a big city. It has all the conveniences of modern life. I even told my classmate, "You can probably find anything here. Let's go grab something to eat." We explored the city and discovered that many shops were still open, even though it was already 10 pm. The locals welcomed us warmly and tried to speak some English words to us.

What really caught my attention was when we wandered

down quieter streets. The atmosphere became cozier, and we saw beautiful homes tucked away from the noise of the main roads.

"When I first arrived, I thought it looked very modern and I was quite surprised because I hadn't heard of this city before. I thought it would be a very small village in the middle of nowhere but it turned out to be new and modern and that impressed me," said Zuza Bialas, a 23-year-old journalism student from Poland studying at Tsinghua University.

But Gaoyou is not just about streets and shops — it's also home to magnificent lakes and forests. In fact, out of its 1,963 square kilometers, 788 square kilometers are water, making up about 40 percent of the total area.

"We were very impressed by the lake; it was so vast that at first we thought it was the sea," Bialas mentioned.

Suhard Liya, a 17-year-old pre-university engineering student from France studying at Tongji University, shared with me that the media in France often spread the idea that China is polluted, with concrete and modernity

everywhere, and that they don't care about nature.

"But I didn't have this idea because I talked to Chinese natives in France who showed me the real, positive side of China," she said. "When I arrived, my perceptions were confirmed. As I explored Shanghai and Gaoyou — a big city and a smaller one — I found them both really clean."

Gaoyou is a city full of wonders. Its importance stems from its location along the ancient Grand Canal, the world's longest man-made waterway, stretching over 1,700 kilometers.

This vital trade and communication route connected different regions of China, helping the city flourish as a hub for the exchange of goods and cultures over the centuries.

A highlight of our trip was Southgate Street, Gaoyou's "ancient street", where you can enjoy local delicacies and admire the stunning traditional architecture.

Walking along the street feels like traveling back in time. The buildings, with their curved roofs and intricate woodwork, reflect



the architectural style of the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911), keeping the charm of traditional Chinese design alive.

Gaoyou's history dates back to the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC). Actually, the city's name comes from the construction of the *gaotai* (high platform) and the post-ing pavilion during the reign of Emperor Yingzheng, who united China for the first time.

Although the city is more than 2,000 years old, I could see how

carefully its historical monuments and parks have been preserved.

One of them is the Qin Guan Memorial Hall, dedicated to the Song Dynasty poet Qin Guan (1049-1100). During my visit, I learned one of his most famous and romantic verses: "If the two hearts are united forever, why do the two persons need to stay together — day after day, night after night?"

"Everything is maintained and preserved well," Liya said. "It's heartwarming to see."

We also got to try a few traditional Chinese food-making techniques on the ancient street, like making the famous "salty duck egg" by covering the eggs in salty dirt and rolling them in ashes.

Shop owners along Southgate Street were eager to share the best of their city with us, often inviting us to try local food and drinks. Some were so generous that they refused payment or even offered extra portions. Their genuine pride in Gaoyou was both touching and inspiring.

"I highly recommend coming here to everyone, if they want

something that would combine historical sites, beautiful nature, and add a bit of modern twist," Bialas said.

Gavin Cooley, a 23-year-old American studying culture industry management at Peking University, said he would love to bring his family to Gaoyou if they ever visit China.

"It's got a different vibe than a lot of other cities in China," he said. "Compared to the big cities, you still get all of the super modern architecture, but you also get mother nature — like this beautiful lake. The people are so friendly, and the food is so amazing and fresh. So I'd definitely bring them here."

Written by Alexandre Guery, a 28-year-old French journalism student at Tsinghua University. Previously an IT engineer, he worked in Paris for several years before moving to China. He enjoys exploring new places and cultures, meeting interesting people, and trying delicious food across the country. His diverse experiences enrich his perspective as a journalist.

Jiangxi trip deepens China-Malaysia connections

By LIXINRAN
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In celebration of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Malaysia, 25 10th-grade students from Kian Kok Middle School in Sabah, Malaysia, participated in a five-day cultural immersion program in East China's Jiangxi province from Sept 15 to 19.

Together with five juniors from Jiangxi Agricultural University (JXAU), the Malaysian students took part in various excursions, including visits to Jingdezhen, known as the "porcelain capital" of China, as well as Nanchang's iconic Tengwang Pavilion and the 2,000-year-old tomb of Haihunhou. They also engaged in a traditional Chinese lion dance and attended a class on Chinese culture at JXAU.

For most Malaysian students, this was their first visit to China. Zhang Hui Xiang, a student from Kian Kok

Middle School, said that he had only seen videos and posts about China on social media platforms like TikTok and Xiaohongshu before this trip.

Chinese students had similar experiences. Ren Yuange from JXAU recalled that her initial impressions of Malaysia were shaped by her high school geography textbook.

However, shared cultures and customs quickly fostered familiarity and friendship among the students. With nearly 23 percent of Malaysians having Chinese ancestry, many students at Kian Kok Middle School have family ties to Fujian and Guangdong provinces, which allows them to communicate effortlessly in Chinese and find common ground.

For example, during a mooncake-making activity, the students discovered that they all celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival in similar ways — by enjoying mooncakes, admiring



Zeng Yu Sheng, a Malaysian student from Kian Kok Middle School, presents the mooncake he made during a Mid-Autumn Festival activity in Nanchang, Jiangxi, on Sept 16. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

the full moon, and gathering with family.

"There are unique aspects of our cultures, but there are also many surprising similarities," said Yang Hui Min, a Malaysian student.

Yin Jiaxing from JXAU also acknowledged the importance of mutual language and traditions in building friendships with Malaysian students. "A sense of shared cultural identity is a great starting

point for further communication and exchanges," he said.

For many Malaysian students, one of the most memorable experiences was visiting Taoxichuan Ceramic Art Avenue, a landmark in Jingdezhen. They admired blue and white porcelain artifacts and even had the chance to create their own pieces. "I was in awe the whole time," Zhang said. "The artifacts were so beautiful that I couldn't find words to describe them."

The experience was also unique for the Chinese students, many of whom had little knowledge of how ceramics are made. Sheng Yang, a student at JXAU, saw the visit as an opportunity to appreciate her own culture from a different perspective and to connect more with Malaysian students.

"Neither of us knew how to make porcelain, so we started discussing and experimenting together," Sheng recalled. "Although our final prod-

ucts weren't that impressive, we really enjoyed the process."

The trip made a lasting impression on the students, and they are already planning future visits. "As soon as I returned home, I asked my dad to take me on a monthlong trip to China for my next vacation," Zhang said.

Yang noted that the mutual visa exemption policy between China and Malaysia has made it easier for people from both countries to visit each other.

Ren added that this program was more than just an exchange between individuals or between Jiangxi and Sabah — it held significant importance at a national level.

"I believe this event has injected new vitality into China-Malaysia interaction," she said. "I'm confident we'll see even greater collaboration in the future. Together, hand in hand, the two countries will build a bright tomorrow."

CULTURAL HERITAGE



Left and right: Researchers work on the Huangchaodun Site in Quzhou, Zhejiang province, where remnants of a rice field and settlements were unearthed. **Center:** An aerial view of the site dating back 9,300 to 8,000 years, which may shed light on the ancient Chinese people's rice domestication. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Around 10,000 years ago, as people in present-day West Asia began to domesticate wheat and barley, a similar development took place in China where people began to cultivate rice. This marked the emergence of rice agriculture, which has had a profound influence on people's lives in various parts of the world ever since.

For years, Shangshan Culture, a Neolithic culture from 11,000 to 8,500 years ago in the Jinqiu Basin in the middle and western part of East China's Zhejiang province, has been widely recognized as a source of rice agriculture with many related relics found in its sites. A new discovery may add insights into the Shangshan people's rice domestication, announced by the National Cultural Heritage Administration in Beijing on Sept 13.

The Huangchaodun Site, dating back 9,300 to 8,000 years in Quzhou, Zhejiang, recently unveiled remnants of settlements surrounded by a moat. More importantly, an area to the east of the settlements, covering 15,000 square meters, is possibly the earliest rice field ever discovered with a dense distribution of rice phytoliths, or remains of rice, according to Zhang Sen, a researcher with the Zhejiang Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology.

Zhou Dongya, a member of the archaeological team, told Zhejiang Daily that only fields that have been cultivated with rice will leave behind a large amount of phytoliths. Archaeologists have found that the field has an extremely high density of rice phytoliths, which are distributed in independent blocks, suggesting this was a land where early settlers had cultivated rice.

"We found carbonized rice and rice husks at the site. And scholars have studied them with the conclusion that they belong to domesticated rice. Since rice has been domesticated, where is the rice field? Now, we may have found it," says Zhang.

Moreover, the potential rice field is not solitary, but is a complete system. According to Zhang, covering an area of 70,000 square meters, the site has the rice field and two platforms surrounded and separated by a moat. The layout is like a pear, with one smaller platform in the north, a larger one in the south and the field to the east of these platforms.

Discovery sheds light on early rice cultivation

Evidence unearthed indicates elaborate system to produce crops, **Wang Ru** reports.



Pottery vessels unearthed from the Huangchaodun Site dating back 9,300 to 8,000 years in Quzhou, Zhejiang province.



Zhang says the settlements should be on the platforms, which are yet to be excavated.

To the west of the site, scholars have found an ancient waterway and pond. There seems to be a suspected ancient ditch linking the pond with the moat, maybe an artificial drainage ditch, he adds.

They also discovered an area to the west of the site where a large amount of wild rice seemed to have grown.

"This means the local environment was favorable for the natural

growing of rice and the area had conditions for people to domesticate rice. Maybe that was why people were attracted to settle in this place," says Zhang.

"From discoveries at the site, we generally believe during this period, the framework of rice agriculture society had gradually become clear and may have even surpassed the formation stage," he adds.

Archaeologists infer the site belongs to the middle and late period of Shangshan Culture and Kua-huqiao Culture, a Neolithic culture

found in the northern part of Zhejiang dating from 8,000 to 7,000 years ago. They hope to find the relationship between the two ancient cultures in future studies.

Other finds include pottery vessels from both the Shangshan and Kua-huqiao periods, including jars, plates and bowls.

Huangchaodun is especially important among the 24 Shangshan sites discovered since the structure of others are mostly destroyed or under modern houses that are not easy to excavate. As a result, it's rare

to unveil the complete layout of a Shangshan cultural site, says Zhang.

Lin Liugen, an archaeology professor at Zhejiang University, says scholars have excavated a series of rice fields from sites in Zhejiang and formed a systematic way to study them.

And the Huangchaodun Site remains special as it yields the earliest rice field among them.

"Based on our search for rice fields in the middle and late Neolithic period, we have developed a research method for locating them. This method includes preliminary field surveys, systematic exploration and sampling, archaeo-botanical analysis, and focused excavations of key areas. By further improving this working model, we believe we will discover more early rice fields, further advancing our exploration of early rice agricultural society," says Zhang.

Zhang Chi, an archaeology professor at Peking University, also highlights the preservation of the settlement landscape.

He points out the layout of two platforms — if they are analyzed to be of the same time, they may offer clues for a very elaborate society.

"The two platforms, or two settlements, are separated by a moat. They possibly belonged to two different groups of people living together," Zhang Chi says.

Similar phenomenon had been discovered at the Baiyinchanghan Site of the Xinglongwa Culture, a Neolithic culture dating back 8,200 to 7,200 years in today's Inner Mongolia autonomous region and Northeast China, he adds.

He says the Baiyinchanghan Site in Chifeng, Inner Mongolia, also unveiled two settlements separated by moats, very close to each other. And the Huangchaodun Site is more than 1,000 years earlier than that.

Zhang Chi urges more studies on the identification of the rice field and reasons why it can still be preserved to this day.

"We generally believe it's hard for a rice field to be preserved for several thousand years. Only under very special conditions, could the field have continued to be utilized by people of later generations. We still need further studies to confirm if it was really a rice field," he says.

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Environment forced changes thousands of years ago, findings suggest

By **WANG RU**

An underwater Neolithic discovery unveiled buried facts of daily subsistence and environmental adaptation several thousand years ago, the National Cultural Heritage Administration revealed on Sept 13.

Covering 80,000 square meters, the Caoyangang Site in Xinghua, Jiangsu province, has been confirmed as a Neolithic site dating back 7,200 to 6,900 years. It is now under a pond covered by a natural sediment layer of nearly 2 meters.

The special water-saturated environment has allowed the preservation of many organic relics, including wooden architectural components, plants and seeds, animal bones and even fossilized excrement.

Other significant finds include more than 200 house foundations, fences, refuse pits and ditches, wells and over 2,800 pottery, bone, stone, wood, jade and clamshell artifacts.

Gan Huiyuan, a researcher with the Jiangsu Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology, says they have discovered 151 refuse pits, with more than half paved with wood at the bottom with traces of *sunmao* (mortise-and-tenon) joints. Therefore, they are believed to be wooden architectural components.

"The pits are distributed in a relatively concentrated way but lack a clear layout pattern. ... Archaeological studies uncover that they were made at the same time, shortly

“The rise and fall of the site and the development of prehistoric cultures in the area vividly demonstrate the relationship between environmental changes and human adaptability ...”

Gan Huiyuan, researcher with the Jiangsu Provincial Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology

before the abandonment of the site. This may suggest some collective behavior of the ancient people before their migration, like sacrifices, for example," says Gan.

Some pits, on the other hand, are paved with mat and clamshell.

Researchers have also discovered house foundations at the site, most of which are made of reeds and wood. The number four foundation, for instance, remains 11 meters long from east to west and 7.7 meters wide.

It was constructed using wood and reeds as raw materials, with the main structure located on the northern side. A wooden fence is located on the

outermost southwestern and southern sides, forming a semicircular enclosure. A reed fence or wall is located inside the wooden fence, with a remaining length of 5 meters and a width of over 1 meter, says Gan.

Reed architecture was common in the early stage of the site, but in the later period, wooden structures seemed to have developed to a higher level, he adds.

Among various artifacts unearthed, Gan says the bone relics are especially well-made and rich in number and type.

"We have found more than 1,600 bone artifacts like spade-shaped farm tools, boot-like artifacts, arrowheads, hair clasps, daggers, awls and needles. They are exquisitely crafted and entirely polished. In addition to the finished products, some blanks and semifinished pieces were also unearthed," says Gan.

The plant and animal relics help people gain an understanding of ancient people's subsistence. Researchers have identified remains or seeds of water chestnuts, rice, Gorgan fruit and wild soybean.

"The rice remains unearthed at the site are identified as cultivated rice. ... Therefore, the early settlers' food acquisition included at least agricultural production and gathering of wild edible plants, with rice farming being an important component of their livelihood," says Gan.

The animal remains include

domesticated pig and wild animals. This shows that although domestication of livestock had already begun, hunting wild animals and fishing remained the main ways of acquiring meat, he adds.

"The site is well-preserved, which is rare to see. Since it is located in the Lixiahe area, a low-lying area vulnerable to the transgressions of sea, we didn't expect such an old site to be found there," says Zhang Chi, an archaeology professor at Peking University.

From the discoveries of the site and environmental analysis, Gan tries to tell a story of ancient people adapting to the environment several thousand years ago.

"About 8,500 years ago, the site area was 10 meters lower than now. Then, with global climate and environmental changes, including fluctuations in sea levels and the deposition of sediment from rivers, the site area underwent multiple changes between land and sea. About 7,200 years ago, the site area became a coastal wetland, a habitable place with abundant wildlife and plant resources," says Gan.

Therefore, people chose to settle there, engaging in rice cultivation, hunting and fruit gathering, and thrived for hundreds of years. However, with subsequent transgressions of the sea, the area was no longer suitable for habitation. People then were forced to migrate to other places, he adds.



Top: An aerial view of the Caoyangang Site located in a water-saturated region of Xinghua, Jiangsu province. **Above:** A jade artifact (left) and a pottery jar unearthed from the site dating back 7,200 to 6,900 years. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

In the late Neolithic period, the area became habitable again and gave rise to a number of sites. Today, the area is located over 100 kilometers away from the coast of the Yellow Sea.

"The rise and fall of the site and

the development of prehistoric cultures in the area vividly demonstrate the relationship between environmental changes and human adaptability, providing valuable insights for addressing today's global climate change," says Gan.