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Two cases with new mpox strain detected in UK WORLD, PAGE 6



Coming to life

Visitors keen on ancient Egyptian civilization contribute to tourism LIFE, PAGE 15

CHINA DAILY

GLOBAL EDITION 中国日报 THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2024



President Xi Jinping greets a farmer as he visits a vegetable farm on Tuesday in Panjiawan town of Jiayu county in Xianning during an inspection tour to Central China's Hubei province. Xi inspected the cities of Xiaogan, Xianning and Wuhan in Hubei from Monday to Wednesday. XIE HUANCHI / XINHUA

Xi urges Hubei to drive modernization

By XU WEI xuwe@chinadaily.com.cn

President Xi Jinping has highlighted the pivotal role of Central China's Hubei province in the nation's modernization drive, calling for greater strides in sci-tech and industrial innovation, ecological conservation and deepening comprehensive reform and opening-up.

Speaking during a fact-finding trip to the province from Monday to Wednesday, Xi stressed the need for the region to forge ahead in the high-quality development of the Yangtze River Economic Belt, and to build itself into a strategic fulcrum for the rise of the central region at an early date.

The trip took Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, to the cities of Xiaogan, Xianning and Wuhan, the provincial capital.

Hubei, with a GDP of 5.58 trillion yuan (\$777.46 billion) and a population of 58.38 million in 2023, is not just an economic powerhouse but also a region deeply integrated into China's broader economic architecture. It was Xi's second trip to the province in three years.

Xi toured a museum that exhibits ancient bamboo and wooden slips dating back to the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC) and the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220), and he called for unremitting efforts in archaeological research and the protection of cultural relics.

In Jiayu county, he set foot in a field, surveying the growth of vegetables before shaking hands with a farmer. The development of modern agriculture and building a strong agricultural sector must be underpinned by sci-tech progress, Xi stressed.

The president also visited a village to learn about efforts to ensure that grassroots officials can better perform their duties in serving the people, before sitting down with a family to learn about their jobs, family income, healthcare and pensions.

In Wuhan, Xi toured the Wuhan Institute of Industrial Innovation and Development, where he reiterated the need for greater self-reliance in science and technology and the development of new quality productive forces.

On Wednesday morning, he listened to work reports from provincial authorities and set out clear requirements for their future tasks.

Noting the province's sharp edge

in talent and strong capacity in sci-tech innovation, Xi called for stronger steps in sci-tech and industrial innovation. The province must proactively integrate itself into national innovation chains, striving to build a nationally influential hub for tech innovation, and better harness its role as a source of sci-tech breakthroughs, he said.

He called for enhanced steps in pushing for breakthroughs in the research and development of key technologies, saying that a coordinated innovation mechanism among large, medium-sized and small enterprises must be established.

Hubei, located in the middle reaches of the Yangtze River, must give top priority to the restoration of the ecology and environment of China's longest river, Xi said, and must also stress the development of a secure and resilient modern water network and the unwavering enforcement of the river's 10-year fishing ban, enacted in 2021.

Xi said it is necessary for the province to forge ahead in deepening reform and expanding high-level opening-up, and he called for reforms in key sectors and critical areas, better integration into the unified national market, and the building of a more

equitable and dynamic market environment.

It is important to give equal emphasis to domestic and global opening-up, make the province an inland engine for opening-up and advance regional cooperation, he added.

The president encouraged Hubei to play an active part in the high-quality building of the Belt and Road and make systematic efforts to bolster its role as a hub for opening-up.

Xi also stressed the significance of ratcheting up efforts in rural-urban integration and rural vitalization in the province, which boasts a rural population of 20.16 million and which had an urbanization rate of 65.47 percent last year.

It is imperative that the province advance the protection, preservation and development of its rich historical and cultural heritage, while strengthening research and promotion of the origins of the Yangtze River civilization, he added.

The president also extended a message calling for heightened and more concrete efforts in work on all fronts, especially the economy, with greater urgency to meet the nation's socioeconomic development goals this year.

Trump claims victory, vows to heal nation

Win over Harris in US election signals political comeback four years after leaving White House

By YIFAN XU in Washington and ZHAO JIA in Beijing

Republican Donald Trump claimed victory on Wednesday in a tightly contested race against Vice-President Kamala Harris, a Democrat, to become the 47th president of the United States.

US media reported that Trump had secured more than the 270 Electoral College votes needed to clinch the presidency.

Trump, in a speech delivered early Wednesday at his election headquarters in West Palm Beach, Florida, promised to heal the nation.

"We are going to help our country heal," he said. "We have a country that needs help, and it needs help very badly. We're going to fix our borders. We're going to fix everything about our country."

Trump also said that he would unite the country, adding that the time had come to "put the division of the past four years behind us".

World leaders sent congratulations after Trump claimed victory, signaling his political comeback four years after leaving the White House.

French President Emmanuel Macron and other leaders of member countries of the European Union congratulated Trump, saying they were ready to work together but would defend Europe's interests.

Macron was among the first to congratulate Trump, saying that he is ready to work together, just as before. But in another message on X, Macron

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said he also spoke with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz after Trump's election night speech to supporters.

France and Germany "will work for a more united, stronger, more sovereign Europe in this new context, by cooperating with the United States of America and defending our interests and our values", Macron wrote on X.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a statement issued by his office that Trump's "return to the White House offers a new beginning for America and a powerful recommitment to the great alliance between Israel and America".

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he looked forward to renewing collaboration with Trump, to strengthen the "comprehensive global and strategic partnership" between the two countries.

Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba congratulated Trump on Wednesday on his victory and expressed his wish "to take the Japan-US alliance and Japan-US relationship to new heights".

In Russia, the Kremlin reacted cautiously on Wednesday after Trump declared victory in the US presidential election, saying the US was still a hostile state.

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Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump (front, left) waves at the conclusion of an election night event in West Palm Beach in Florida. Trump was elected the 47th US president on Wednesday, defeating his Democratic rival Kamala Harris. JIM WATSON / AFP

CANTEENS FOR SENIORS FEED DEMANDS OF AGING POPULATION

With support from central government, more dining halls for older people are being established

By ZHANG XIAOMIN in Dalian, Liaoning zhangxiaomin@chinadaily.com.cn



It's lunchtime, and the canteen in a residential community in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, is buzzing with excitement. Inside, a tempting array of freshly cooked dishes awaits the elderly residents of the neighborhood.

A message flashes across a screen as one senior enters — "Mr Chen, seafood and soy products aren't suitable for you today". Personalized reminders appear on the screen for certain residents, and offer meal suggestions based on their health data.

The canteen for seniors in Cuiyuan No 1 Community, one of the first government-subsidized dining halls for elderly people in Zhejiang, offers discounted meals and delivery services for senior residents.

The community is home to over 9,800 people, a quarter of whom are aged 60 or above.

As the dietary needs of the seniors have evolved, so has the canteen's technology.

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BRICS contributing to fairer, balanced global order

Recent BRICS activities hold substantial promise for reconfiguring the global order toward a model that values equity, inclusivity and sustainable progress.

Established initially as a group of rapidly developing economies, BRICS has evolved beyond its economic roots into a platform for political and strategic collaboration. The group's growing influence allows it to assume a pivotal role in promoting global stability, mutual prosperity, sustainable development and multilateral global governance.

The 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, reaffirms the group's commitment to reinforcing multilateralism and enhancing South-South cooperation. While the

WORLD WATCH

By Tahir Farooq

grouping is diverse in its geopolitical outlook and economic models, it addresses global inequities by presenting a unified front to achieve a fairer, more balanced world order.

The Kazan summit introduced several notable initiatives designed to drive global stability, economic cooperation and sustainable development. One of the most groundbreaking developments was the decision to build BRICS partner countries while welcoming potential new members.

The New Development Bank, a key financial initiative by BRICS, has been strengthened with plans to expand its membership and extend financial support to emerging economies. The bank's focus remains on financing infrastructure and sustainable development projects. The bank provides much-needed funding for developing countries with fewer political strings attached.

In an effort to reduce dependency on the United States dollar, BRICS leaders discussed measures to promote transactions in local currencies. This initiative aligns with major developing and emerging market economies' long-term aspiration of diversifying international currency settlements and

facilitating trade and investment across BRICS nations.

If successful, this strategy could lessen the impact of currency fluctuations, reduce the risk of US-imposed economic sanctions and empower developing economies to exercise greater control over their financial systems.

The summit also emphasized collaboration in technology, digital transformation and innovation. Recognizing the transformative power of technology, BRICS seeks partnerships in these areas to bridge the digital divide, enable knowledge exchange, and create job opportunities within member nations.

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Newstand prices: US \$1, Canada C\$1, UK 1.2, EU 1€, Kenya 50 Kenya Shilling, Asia Pacific: Thailand 120, Philippines 120 php, Myanmar 2000 kyat, Japan 210 yen, Dubai 10 dirham, Pakistan 300 rupee

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PAGE TWO

Services: Canteens nourish bodies, souls



Seniors dine at a community canteen in Suining, a county in Jiangsu province, on Oct 23. HONG XING / FOR CHINA DAILY

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"Our canteen has become much smarter," said Xiang Feifei, director of the community residents' committee.

"For seniors who require special care, the day care center monitors their vital signs and feeds this data into the canteen's digital system. If someone is allergic to seafood, the system detects it and generates a customized menu advising them what to avoid," she said.

To protect privacy and ensure security, facial recognition and health data usage are governed by a privacy agreement. Both elderly residents and their children sign this agreement, ensuring the data is used only with their consent and strictly for non-commercial purposes, Xiang said.

The initiative not only improves the quality of life for the elderly, but also provides crucial support for younger family members, including those who have to work during the day and are unable to look after their parents at all times.

For 66-year-old Hu Huali, her visits to the community's seniors canteen, which is just a five-minute walk from her home, have become a part of her daily routine.

"I love the Dongpo pork and braised beef here. The meat is so tender and flavorful," she said. "A hearty meal with one meat dish and two vegetable sides costs around 16 yuan (\$2.25). It's delicious and affordable."

Chen Peng's parents, both of whom are nearing 80, enjoy three discounted meals a day from Monday to Friday.

"In the past, their meals were often makeshift — flatbread and fried dough in the morning, boiled porridge with pickled vegetables — sometimes they would eat like that all day," Chen said. "We were really worried."

Now, this burden has been eased. "For elderly people like my parents, they can enjoy hot, affordable meals and have someone to chat with, which helps alleviate loneliness," he added.

Guidance funds

China, like many other countries, is undergoing a demographic shift. The country has nearly 300 million citizens aged 60 or above, official figures show. That number is expected to top 400 million by 2035 and approach 500 million by around 2050, at which point seniors will account for nearly 35 percent of the country's total population.

At present, about 90 percent of elderly people in China choose home care, about 7 percent rely on community care, and 3 percent live in institutional care, survey data from the National Health Commission shows.

In October last year, the State Council executive meeting reviewed and approved an action plan for actively developing elderly meal assistance services.

This year, it was included in the China National Aging Committee's list of practical matters for the elderly, with the central government allocating 300 million yuan in guidance funds to support the development of assistance services to provide meals for the elderly.

In September, an official from the Ministry of Civil Affairs said at a news conference that the Communist Party of China Central Committee attaches great importance to these assistance services.

Provinces and regions around the country



A staff member shows residents how to make easy payments on a mobile phone at a community canteen in Lanzhou, Gansu province, on Sept 11. MAO JIANJUN / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

have been exploring service models based on their own financial capabilities and actual circumstances.

Chuxin Canteen in Hujia village, Dalian, Liaoning province, is one of many new venues providing delicious, nutritious meals to the elderly. At lunchtime, the canteen is the most popular place among the elderly in the village.

The daily menu features both hot and cold dishes, including meat and vegetarian options, along with several choices of staple foods. Since it opened in July, the canteen has won praise from the village's seniors for being clean and convenient, and offering affordable and delicious meals.

"For most of the elderly in the village, their children work and live in urban areas. Their daily meals have become a major concern," said Hu Jin, the Party chief of the village in Shuangdaowan sub-district of Dalian's Lyushunkou district.

"The canteen has addressed this problem."

Chewing over issues

While seniors canteens have won wide-

“We often say that caring for our children is caring for the future of our country. In fact, taking care of our elderly is about caring for each of our own futures.”

Xiang Feifei, director of a residents' committee in Hangzhou

spread approval, questions have been raised over meal management, inappropriate food choices, overcrowding, and inadequate services, highlighting the need for improvement in some areas.

"In the canteen for the elderly near my home, it is not exclusively open to the elderly," remarked one resident who frequents a community canteen in Shahekou district, Dalian.

"During lunchtime, they simply cannot compete with the younger crowd. Has this 'elderly canteen' lost its original purpose?" the resident asked.

At another meal facility for the elderly in nearby Zhongshan district, several seniors are preparing to leave after circling the venue while young people line up for food.

"The dishes with fried meat, fried chicken, and peanuts are abundant," one of the seniors said. "Our teeth are not in good condition, and we cannot chew them. I don't think such dishes meet the dietary needs of the elderly."

Earlier this year, Dalian announced its key livelihood projects for 2024, which included



A canteen worker provides details about the menu to an elderly man at a community service center in Nantong, Jiangsu province, on Aug 22. XU HUI / FOR CHINA DAILY

enhancing basic care services for the elderly in homes and communities.

The work includes a concerted effort to develop meal assistance services for the elderly, with the aim of establishing 100 canteens and meal assistance facilities for seniors throughout the city.

The city already has 78 such facilities, with the total number set to reach 100 by the end of the year, the Dalian Civil Affairs Bureau said.

In response to the issues faced in seniors canteens, a bureau official said some of them will be addressed in upcoming regulations. The official, who chose to remain anonymous, conceded that meal assistance services for the elderly require higher standards of management.

In practical terms, factors that need to be taken into consideration are the size of a community's elderly population, their dietary requirements, and the reach of a designated service area.

Existing catering resources also need to be assessed to see whether they can be used in

combination with new facilities, while local conditions, planning and appropriate seating arrangements for elderly diners have to be taken into consideration.

Relevant local departments, such as those overseeing market regulation and civil affairs, should regularly inspect prices, food quality and safety, as well as the use of government subsidies. Representatives of the elderly and other age groups should also be encouraged to inspect the services, and address reasonable demands in a more timely and effective manner.

Wang Changqing, a member of Zhongshan district's political consultative conference, said that innovations should be made in the organizational form, service model, and operational mechanism of elderly meal assistance.

Also, full use should be made of existing service resources, facilities, logistics networks, and information platforms, while balancing the public welfare and commercial aspects of elderly care services.

Aging gracefully

Almost one-quarter, or 22.1 percent, of elderly people require meal assistance services, making such services a critical aspect of home-based care, according to a Ministry of Civil Affairs survey.

In response to this data, the ministry and several other government bodies released an action plan in October last year to significantly increase the coverage of meal assistance services across the country by the end of 2025.

Seniors canteens have been popping up across the country in recent years.

Southwest China's Chongqing municipality has already established nearly 1,600 seniors canteens, which are expected to serve over 1.8 million people annually.

In Zhengzhou, the capital of central China's Henan province, plans are underway to open 600 meal facilities for seniors by the end of the year, aiming to cover 40 percent of urban communities and 10 percent of rural villages.

Seniors canteens are a part of China's efforts to boost home-based and community-based elderly care services. Other measures include issuing supportive policies, offering subsidies, attracting private capital and training talent, said Wu Lijuan, an associate professor in the Department of Sociology at Peking University.

In July, over 300 measures were unveiled at a key Communist Party of China leadership plenum to push for deeper comprehensive reform, with the plenum pledging to develop community-based facilities to improve the supply of basic elderly care services.

"The Chinese government's emphasis on elderly care aligns with the long-standing tradition of respecting the elderly and practicing filial piety," Wu said.

Xiang from the Cuiyuan No 1 Community said: "We often say that caring for our children is caring for the future of our country. In fact, taking care of our elderly is about caring for each of our own futures."

"By creating age-friendly communities, we ensure that no one has to fear growing old," she added.



Residents enjoy a buffet dinner at a community canteen in Lianyungang, Jiangsu province. ZHU HUANAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Xinhua and Dalian News Media Group contributed to this story.

TOP NEWS

Country's openness creates opportunities for growth

By OUYANG SHIJIA in Shanghai
ouyangshijia@chinadaily.com.cn

Amid an increasingly complex and challenging international landscape, China continues to make significant progress in deepening reform and expanding high-level opening-up, playing a pivotal role in driving global economic growth, said economists and business leaders attending the ongoing seventh China International Import Expo in Shanghai.

China's commitment to high-level opening-up will generate new growth opportunities for global stakeholders, they added.

Their comments came after the publication of the World Openness Report 2024 on Tuesday at a session of the Hongqiao International Economic Forum, which is held as part of the CIIE. It was jointly released by the Institute of World Economics and Politics of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Research Center for Hongqiao International Economic Forum.

According to the report, China's openness index rose to 0.7596 in 2023, up from 0.6789 in 2008. Also, the nation ranked 38th in terms of openness among 129 economies in 2023, one place up compared with 2022.

"Openness is a clear hallmark of China's modernization," said Qu Weixi, director of the Research Center for Hongqiao International Economic Forum. "By enhancing reform and development through openness, China seeks to foster win-win outcomes, both domestically and globally."

Qu noted that China's high-level opening-up has also spurred reforms in global economic governance.

"Through deep participation in global industrial division and by strengthening multilateral, bilateral and regional economic cooperation, China has shared development opportunities with countries worldwide and played an important role in maintaining a diversified and stable international economic framework," he said.

China is a promoter of, participant in and contributor to better global governance, Qu added.

According to the report, in terms of global openness, the index continued to decline in 2023, dropping 0.12 percent year-on-year to 0.7542.

Despite this downward trend in global openness, Zhang Yuyan, an academician of the CASS, said he believes that "economic globalization has not experienced a fundamental reversal" and the "small streams" that promote opening-up are still converging.

The report showed that global value chains have maintained an overall trend of expansion in recent years despite shocks and setbacks, with the share of foreign added value in global exports reaching an all-time high of 24 percent in 2022, up one percentage point from 2021 and 4 percentage points from 2009.

Cecilia Ugaz Estrada, managing director of the Directorate of Strategic Planning, Programming at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, said that digitalization and energy transition are two new driving forces for global economic growth, and China is emerging as one of the leading forces behind sustainable industrial transformation.

Global entrepreneurs hailed China's efforts to deepen reform and expand opening-up, expressing strong optimism about the country's prospects in the long run.

Anu Rathnide, president of Johnson Controls Asia-Pacific, said the United States-based smart building solutions provider has witnessed new growth unleashed through opening-up and modernization since it entered the Chinese market.

A more favorable business environment and the development of new quality productive forces give the company great confidence in China's long-term growth, he said.

"We will further seize the opportunities presented by opening-up and innovation, as well as the spillover effects of the CIIE, to grow alongside the Chinese market and share a smart, green future," he added.

Jason Te Brake, CEO of Zespra, a cooperative of kiwi fruit growers in New Zealand, said that China "is one of our most important markets" and "we want to continue to grow" here in China.

Lessons in history



Chinese and foreign visitors admire bronzeware unearthed from the tomb of a queen of the Shang Dynasty (c. 16th century — 11 century BC) on Wednesday in Beijing. Over 300 guests visited the Chinese Archaeological Museum to see the exhibition, which is one of the supporting activities of the inaugural World Conference of Classics that is being held from Wednesday through Friday. JIANG DONG / CHINA DAILY

More cooperation with Myanmar in the cards

Premier underlines need to combat cross-border criminal activities

By CAO DESHENG
caodesheng@chinadaily.com.cn

China supports Myanmar in advancing its political reconciliation and transition process, and is willing to steadily promote construction of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor under the framework of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, Premier Li Qiang said on Wednesday.

Li made the remarks in Kunming, Yunnan province, during a meeting with Myanmar's leader Min Aung Hlaing, who is in China to attend the eighth Greater Mekong Subregion Summit.

Li and leaders of the five Mekong countries of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam are to meet on Thursday for the summit.

During the meeting with the Myanmar leader, Li hailed the bilateral ties, saying that China and Myanmar are friendly neighbors connected by shared mountains and rivers with a deep bond of *pauk-phaw* friendship ("pauk-phaw" means fraternal in the language of Myanmar).

In the 70 years since they established diplomatic relations, the two countries have always treated each other with sincerity and mutual assistance, and bilateral relations have stood the test of international changes and advanced steadily, he said.

Noting that China has always placed great importance on developing relations with Myanmar in its neighborhood diplomacy, the premier said the nation will continue to support Myanmar in choosing a development path that suits its national conditions.

Li expressed China's willingness to work with Myanmar to consolidate and enhance political mutual trust, deepen strategic cooperation, tackle challenges together, and further promote construction of the China-Myanmar community with a shared future, in order to deliver more benefits to the people of the two countries.

He underlined the need for both countries to jointly combat cross-border crimes such as online gambling and telecommunications

fraud, to safeguard the interests of the two peoples.

Li also expressed the hope that Myanmar will take effective measures to ensure the safety of Chinese nationals, institutions and projects in the country.

China is willing to strengthen unity and cooperation with Myanmar in multiple fields and work with other developing countries to resolutely safeguard their common interests, he said.

Min Aung Hlaing said that Myanmar and China are traditional friendly neighbors who are as close as brothers.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two countries have always followed the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and bilateral relations have made significant progress, he said.

The Myanmar leader reiterated his country's commitment to adhering to the one-China principle, saying that Taiwan is an integral part of China.

Myanmar sincerely appreciates the valuable assistance provided by China for its economic and social development and disaster

response, as well as the positive role played by China in its peace and reconciliation efforts and the stability of northern Myanmar, he said.

Myanmar will spare no effort to ensure the safety of Chinese nationals, institutions and projects in the country, he added.

On Wednesday afternoon, Li also met with Masatsugu Asakawa, president of the Asian Development Bank, who is also in Kunming to attend the summit.

He expressed the hope that both sides will continue to focus on development and further expand cooperation. China is willing to strengthen financial cooperation with the ADB in such areas as environmental protection, green and low-carbon development, elderly care and healthcare, he added.

Li expressed the country's commitment to actively participating in and supporting economic cooperation in the Greater Mekong Subregion, and working with all parties to promote regional development and prosperity.

Asakawa said that China's stable economic growth is of great significance to the economic recovery of the Asia-Pacific region and the whole world. The ADB highly values and is committed to developing a more robust and comprehensive cooperative relationship with China, he said.

The ADB is willing to continue working with China to safeguard free trade, oppose protectionism and promote common development in Asia, he added.



Visitors exchange ideas at the Trade and Investment Matchmaking Conference held as part of the seventh China International Import Expo on Wednesday at the National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai. ZHANG WEI / CHINA DAILY

Partnership: BRICS key to green future

From page 1

China, with its strengths in digital technology and telecommunications, plays a leading role in this agenda, enabling BRICS countries to harness the benefits of technological advancements for economic growth.

The commitment to combating climate change was another critical theme. The BRICS summit reaffirmed its dedication to green energy initiatives and sustainable development projects. China's green technology advancements, particularly in renewable energy, are pivotal to shaping this agenda.

Together, the BRICS nations aim to use their resources sustainably, achieving greener economic growth, reducing carbon emissions and contributing to a healthier planet.

China's economic prowess has positioned itself as the primary driver of BRICS' economic agenda. Through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative, China has extended its infrastructure investments to other BRICS nations, promoting trade, improving connectivity and creating opportuni-

China's commitment to fair, inclusive development ensures BRICS is well-positioned to foster an environment where diverse voices are respected, potentially reducing conflicts stemming from economic and political exclusion.

ties for mutually beneficial partnerships. Its leadership lends stability to BRICS, reinforcing the group's potential as an economic powerhouse capable of influencing global markets.

China's diplomatic efforts have long emphasized multilateralism and collaboration over confrontation. Within BRICS, China actively supports South-South cooperation, which includes development assistance, technology transfer

and capacity building among developing countries. By facilitating dialogue and cooperation, China strengthens BRICS' collective bargaining power on global issues, from trade regulations to climate commitments.

China's soft power within and beyond BRICS is evident through its emphasis on technology and green development. Its advancements in renewable energy, digital transformation and technological innovation enable other BRICS nations to make strides toward sustainable development. This collaborative approach to problem-solving strengthens BRICS, creating opportunities for shared progress and growth.

For the world at large, BRICS' rise brings hope for a more equitable distribution of power. The inclusion of new members from Africa and the Middle East signifies BRICS' intention to be a global force, with representation beyond the traditional confines of economic powerhouses. China's leadership and commitment to fair, inclusive development ensure BRICS is well-positioned to foster an environment where diverse voi-

ces and interests are respected, potentially reducing conflicts stemming from economic and political exclusion.

In an increasingly polarized world, BRICS emerges as a beacon of collaboration and inclusivity, with China playing a pivotal role in steering the group toward its ambitious goals. Through its recent activities, BRICS demonstrates that the current global order can — and must — be reformed to address the needs and aspirations of all nations, particularly those in the Global South.

As BRICS continues to expand its influence, its model of partnership and cooperation offers a hopeful vision for a world where nations stand as equals, free from the shackles of unipolar domination. The impact of BRICS, underpinned by China's balanced leadership, marks a significant step toward realizing a multipolar, harmonious global order that benefits all.

The author is editor-in-chief at Daily Ittehad Media Group & Pakistan Economic Net. He is also the vice-president & chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

Election: Beijing's policy on US will remain consistent

From page 1

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Trump had made some important statements about wanting to end the Ukraine crisis during his campaign, but only time would tell if they lead to action.

Peskov said he was not aware of any plans by President Vladimir Putin to congratulate Trump on his victory.

When asked whether the outcome of the US general election would affect China's US policy, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said at Wednesday's daily news briefing that China's policy on the US has remained consistent.

"China will continue to view and handle China-US relations under the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation," Mao said.

"The presidential election of the United States is its internal affair. China respects the choice of the American people," she added.

Sourabh Gupta, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Institute for China-America Studies, said that

"The presidential election of the United States is its internal affair. China respects the choice of the American people."

Mao Ning, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman

China and the US must pay attention to stabilizing their relationship, which will require high-level attention and people-to-people exchanges.

Michael Davidson and Margaret Pearson, scholars at the Brookings Institution, had said in an article published two weeks ago that climate change would remain a key issue in the US-China relationship.

Yang Ran in Beijing and agencies contributed to this story.

Contact the writers at yifanxu@chinadailyusa.com

CHINA



A J-15T, a new variant of the J-15 carrier-borne fighter jet, arrives at the Zhuhai Jinwan Airport in Zhuhai, Guangdong province, on Wednesday, making its formal public debut. TAO RAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

Navy fighter makes public debut

J-15T set to participate in country's biggest arms show in Zhuhai this month

By ZHAO LEI
zhaolei@chinadaily.com.cn

A new variant of the J-15 carrier-borne fighter jet arrived at an airport in Zhuhai, Guangdong province, on Wednesday morning, making its formal public debut.

The light gray-painted, catapult-capable J-15T landed at the Zhuhai Jinwan Airport and was soon surrounded by maintenance workers who appeared to be from the Aviation Industry Corp of China, a State-owned defense contractor and the nation's leading aircraft maker.

The J-15T is scheduled to take part in the upcoming 15th China International Aviation and Aerospace Exhibition, set for Nov 12-17 in Zhuhai, according to the People's Liberation Army Navy. It will be the first time the Navy will showcase its aircraft in

the biennial exhibition, which is China's biggest arms expo and is commonly known as the Zhuhai Airshow.

Wednesday's debut also formally signaled the declassification of the J-15T variant. Though the Navy had published pictures of a group of what appeared to be the new planes taking part in a recent dual-carrier exercise in the South China Sea, it had not disclosed any information about the previously classified jet model.

The design of the J-15T is based on the baseline type of the J-15 and was modified to allow it to be launched by an aircraft carrier's catapult system, which means it is able to carry more fuel and munitions and fly farther.

Compared with the original J-15, the catapult-capable model is characterized by its strengthened nose landing gear, the removal of the air-speed tube from its nose and the use

of new materials, avionics and indigenous turbofan engines.

Upon its large-scale deployment, a carrier strike group will have more firepower and stronger operational capability, according to Wang Yanan, chief editor of Aerospace Knowledge magazine.

He said the J-15T can be deployed both on the Navy's two current aircraft carriers — the CNS *Liaoning* and the CNS *Shandong*, both of which have a standard displacement of around 50,000 metric tons and use a ski jump method for launching fixed-wing aircraft — and its future third carrier, the much larger CNS *Fujian* that will use the cutting-edge electromagnetic catapult to launch fixed-wing aircraft. The Fujian is in the middle of its sea trial phase and is expected to be commissioned in the near future.

"The J-15T will gradually replace the old J-15s and become the backbone of naval aviation units. The combination of J-15T and the carrier-

based variant of the J-35 stealth fighter jet will tremendously enhance the Chinese carrier force's operational reach and give commanders more options when choosing assets for different scenarios," Wang said.

In addition to the J-15T, there is also a new variant called the J-15D, which is tasked with performing electronic warfare operations, similar in broad form and function to the United States Navy's EA-18G Growler, he said.

The twin-engine J-15 family was developed by the Shenyang Aircraft Design and Research Institute, an AVIC subsidiary in Liaoning province.

Spearheading the nation's carrier force, the J-15 series is able to carry anti-ship, air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles and precision-guided bombs.

Military experts said that it has comprehensive capabilities comparable to those of Russia's Su-33 and the US' F/A-18 Hornet.

China hopes for positive results at upcoming COP29

By HOU LIQIANG
houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn

With a series of proactive efforts to enhance global climate multilateralism, China has laid a good foundation for achieving positive outcomes at next week's COP29.

Xia Yingxian, director of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment's department of climate change, made the remarks in a news conference in Beijing in the lead-up to the annual United Nations gathering on Wednesday.

COP29, formally known as the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, is slated to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from Nov 11 to 22.

China has maintained close communication and collaboration with Azerbaijan, the UN, the UNFCCC secretariat and a wide range of developing and developed countries to advance global climate governance, Xia said.

In the face of a complex international landscape, China has hosted various climate diplomacy events, including the 8th Ministerial Conference on Climate Action, the BASIC Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change and a gathering of like-minded developing countries, he added.

The director emphasized the remarkable role of the 8th Ministerial Conference on Climate Action in bridging the divide between the Global South and North, aiming to foster favorable outcomes at COP29.

Taking place in Hubei's provincial capital Wuhan in July, the conference saw participation from delegates representing UN entities and 34 countries. The attendance of 30 ministerial-level officials marked a historic high for the meeting, he said.

He said the gathering was not only supported by COP29 host Azerbaijan, but also by the United Arab Emirates, which hosted COP28 last year, and Brazil, where the UN climate change conference is going to be held in 2025.

In the meeting, delegates were engaged in frank, in-depth discussions about a series of key topics, including coordinating biodiversity and climate considerations, and striving to build trust, dispel doubts and seek common ground while reserving differences, he noted.

A chairman's summary document was released after the conference, reaffirming the commitment

Developed countries should fulfill their funding obligations and continue to lead in mobilizing funds, encouraging other countries to participate voluntarily."

Xia Yingxian, official of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment

of all parties to the basic principles of the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement, Xia said.

"This summary document helps clarify critical issues for future climate negotiations, ensuring a balanced reflection of concerns from both the Global South and North and also pinpointing potential bridging solutions," he said. "It has also established a robust groundwork for attaining favorable results at the forthcoming Baku climate conference."

A key task for COP29 is to establish a New Collective Quantified Goal on climate financing, which represents a post-2025 climate financing commitment from developed economies to developing nations.

"Climate finance, as a focal point, hot spot and challenge in the international climate process, is crucial for building trust between developed and developing countries, and it is key to advancing multilateral progress," Xia said.

He said it is crucial to uphold the principles, provisions and mandates of the Paris Agreement, ensuring that there is no renegotiation or alteration of its pertinent provisions on climate financing.

"Developed countries should fulfill their funding obligations and continue to lead in mobilizing funds, encouraging other countries to participate voluntarily," he said.

Xia underlined the critical importance of funding from developed countries being predominantly sourced from public funds.

"Funding from public sources can send strong and consistent policy signals to the global community, thereby amplifying and broadening financial support from multilateral development banks and private sector investments," he added.

Nation braces for big boom in cold-weather sports

By SUN XIAOCHEN
sunxiaochen@chinadaily.com.cn

More than two years after the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics concluded, the legacy of the Games lives on, providing a boost to China's winter sports industry with governments, business owners and experts all bullish on the sector's robust growth during the country's next five-year plan period.

With yet another major international event, the 9th Asian Winter Games, set to open in February next year in Harbin, Heilongjiang province, the approaching winter season is expected to witness new highs in the number of ice and snow sports activities, the revenue of related businesses and the number of tourists at skiing destinations, according to officials attending a Wednesday news briefing on winter sports development.

"Since the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics, the surging public demand for ice and snow sports and related leisure activities has popularized the winter sports sector, while the recent boom only indicates a consistent and even stronger growth in the next five-year development period," said Peng Fuwei, head of the

social development department of the National Development and Reform Commission.

The commission, China's economic planning body, will roll out a broad package of policies together with the country's sports governing body and tourism administration, among other departments, to help grow the winter sports sector's total market value to 1.5 trillion yuan (\$210 billion) by the end of the 15th Five-Year Plan (2026-30), according to an industry guideline issued by the State Council on Wednesday.

Citing the remaining untapped potential in cold weather sports consumption, the new guideline highlights facility development, winter sports-themed tourism, resort operations and a variety of amateur events among key areas to be further explored.

Better infrastructure support such as more high-speed railway services and domestic and international flights connecting resorts with target markets; streamlined border-entry formalities for overseas professionals, including high-level coaches, trainers and executives in the industry; and more flexible financial policies in loan approval and tax reduction for

small businesses are among 24 measures tailor-made in the guideline to address pressing issues hampering winter sports development.

"The guideline kicked in right on time, providing important references for all the government departments, administrators and business owners to develop and implement their own plans accordingly," said Li Jing, a vice-minister of the General Administration of Sport of China.

Driven by major attractions such as the Asian Winter Games in Harbin and a series of World Cup Tour events in speed skating, snowboarding and freestyle skiing, bigger tourist flows are expected at resort clusters and traditional winter holiday destinations across China's northern regions this winter.

Traveling to watch sports events has been a trending holiday choice among China's younger generation, prompting more and more Chinese cities to introduce ice and snow sports events to complement a diverse array of themed tourism packages.

According to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Harbin welcomed over 87 million tourists during the 2023-24 winter season, up 300 percent year-on-year, and saw a total

revenue of 124.8 billion yuan. Both figures are expected to increase during the hosting of the Asian Winter Games from Feb 7 to 14.

Thanks to a long industrial chain, from equipment manufacturing to skills training and sporting goods sales, the ice and snow sports tourism market boasts strong growth potential, according to Zhang Li, executive vice-president of Asia Data Group, a consultancy and promoter of winter sports.

"The growing demand for ice and snow activities taps into a wide variety of business subdivisions, including tourism, education, fitness, accommodation and training," Zhang said during last month's World Winter Sports (Beijing) Expo. "The development speed of China's ice and snow industry has entered a more stable and sustainable stage, with a lot more growth ahead."

China's technological progress is also pushing winter sports to break seasonal and geographic boundaries, with new solutions such as artificial dry-snow slopes and virtual reality skiing simulators diversifying business offerings at both indoor and outdoor venues, added Hao Lishun, an official with the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

Harbin winter tourism heats up ahead of games

By ZHOU HUIYING in Harbin
zhouhuiying@chinadaily.com.cn

Winter tourism in Harbin, capital of Northeast China's Heilongjiang province, has begun to heat up.

Since early October, searches and bookings for Harbin winter tourism products on various online travel, group-buying and social media platforms have been steadily increasing, more so than during the same period last year, according to a recent Harbin Daily report.

Data from major online services platform Meituan shows that searches for winter activities such as skiing, ice fishing, snow hiking, and

aurora and rime viewing in areas around China have increased by 72 percent. Among them, Harbin has the highest search volume, with attractions such as Harbin Ice and Snow World, Harbin Ice Wonderland and the Yabuli Ski Resort dominating interest.

Hotels and guesthouses in Harbin have already begun preparing for guests to ensure they have a comfortable, enjoyable experience.

Data from the Harbin Market Supervision Bureau shows that in the first nine months of this year, the number of accommodation providers in the city has increased 198 percent year-on-year.

"Two new hotels located in the north of the Songhua River in Songbei district will open in early November," said Zhang Xinyu, the person in charge of Bochen Chain Hotels. "We have three hotels in the south of the river, and the two new ones are expected to provide our customers with a beautiful view of the Songhua River outside their windows during their stay."

As Harbin is gearing up to host the 9th Asian Winter Games in 2025, Harbin Madieer Group Co is fully leveraging its strengths to provide high-standard service guarantees to tourists across the world, according to the company.

For instance, its Modern Hotel, which is located on Central Avenue, is undergoing renovations and is upgrading its guest rooms to welcome the arrival of the Asian Winter Games and the ice and snow season.

"We have been receiving many phone inquiries recently regarding room booking," said Zhang Jinying, manager of the group's brand promotion department.

"To build a more optimal environment for our customers, we will continue to provide personalized services, such as prioritizing check-in for elderly guests to reduce their waiting time and offering children's

books and toys, as well as children's toothbrushes, slippers and baby supplies for families traveling with children to enhance their travel experience.

"For female customers, we have prepared makeup storage boxes, hand jewelry storage bags, waterproof pads, brown sugar water and disposable face towels to enhance their comfort," said Zhang, adding that English explanations about the hotel's history and culture will be provided for foreign tourists.

Despite its name, Modern Hotel boasts a history of over 100 years. Among the city's scenic spots, Harbin Ice and Snow World, which was recognized in January by Guinness World Records as the world's largest ice and snow park, is the most popular. This winter

season, it will be expanded from 810,000 square meters to 1 million sq m.

After 25 consecutive years of operation, the 26th Harbin Ice and Snow World will fully integrate Asian Winter Games elements to create a more dazzling park combining ice, snow, sound and lights.

Liu Yuanqi, an English teacher in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, said she is already looking forward to the winter holiday and is paying attention to the ticket sales information of the Winter Games.

"During last year's Hangzhou Asian Games, I watched several matches in my city," she said. "This winter, I hope to visit Harbin to enjoy ice and snow, as well as the unique charm of ice and snow sports."

Live chatbot



Visitors interact with a robot at the 12th China (Mianyang) Science and Technology City International High-tech Expo in Mianyang, Sichuan province, on Wednesday. CHEN DONGDONG / FOR CHINA DAILY

CHINA

Assistance improves healthcare imbalance

Sending experts to less well-off areas ensures better medical outcomes

By WANG XIAOYU in Beijing and HU MEIDONG in Fuzhou

When neurologist Luo Bin was sent from his Beijing hospital to a county-level hospital in Inner Mongolia in 2020, he was saddened to see the scale of the patients' unmet medical needs.

During his seven-month stint in the autonomous region, his name was added to the list of the hundreds of medical specialists and other experts that have been sent to Inner Mongolia since 1998 to pass on their skills and help balance the nation's disparities in expertise.

Luo, from the capital's Aerospace Center Hospital, specializes in thrombolysis, a minimally invasive procedure to dissolve blood clots and restore the flow of cerebral blood in patients with ischemic stroke. The doctor is so skilled at the technique that he performs 500 of them annually in Beijing.

"At that time, at the People's Hospital of Horqin Right Wing Front Banner, the most common treatment for acute stroke was clot-busting medications, which often cannot resolve the underlying issue of the narrowing of blood vessels nor greatly improve these patients' quality of life," he said.

Luo's arrival and that of several other medical aid workers were aimed at changing the status quo. Through the aid program, they carried out 150 thrombolysis procedures and trained three local doctors in the practice.

"By the time we left, the local demand for the procedure could be met and patients no longer need to travel to larger cities for the therapy," he said.

Luo is part of the broader drive in China to narrow the urban-rural gap in healthcare services. This drive has played an irreplaceable role in elevating the nation's average life expectancy over the past 75 years.

Lei Haichao, head of the National Health Commission, said at a news conference in September that the average life expectancy — one of the three key indicators of a nation's health level — rose to 78.6 years last year in China, compared to 35 years around 1949 and 73.5 years in 2012.

The global average life expectancy was 73.2 years last year and 72.6 years in 2022, according to the World Health Organization.

The two other health benchmarks — the mortality rates for children under five years old and pregnant women — have also fallen significantly in the past 75 years. Data shows that the nation's mortality rate of for those under 5 years old decreased from 200 to 6.2 per 1,000 births during the period, and the maternal mortality rate dropped from 1,500 to 15.1 per 100,000 births.

"Such levels are the best in our history and are also parallel with levels in middle- and high-income countries across the globe," Lei said.

Lei noted that a shortage of high-quality medical resources and their uneven distribution have been a global issue, and that China has taken a three-pronged approach to tackle it.

Those approaches are to expand access to quality healthcare services, to increase the overall capacity and quality of medical resources through establishing regional and national medical centers, and to make use of 5G and other advanced technologies to improve medical outcomes.

A series of programs have been launched to this end, such as establishing paired assistance between top-tier, urban hospitals and county-level medical institutions, and dispatching experienced medical professionals to the countryside and less developed areas through various channels.

"Some 40 percent of clinical departments designated as having national key specialties are located in cities that are not provincial capitals, signifying that the current policies are oriented toward evening out healthcare services across regions," Lei said.

Luo, the neurologist from Beijing, said that the monthslong medical aid program he took part in yielded fast and long-term improvements.

"I received a patient who had been wait-



Above: A system enabling remote medical examination is demonstrated at the 2024 World Health Expo in Wuhan, Hubei province, in April last year. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY
Left: Rural doctor Zhao Jianhua (center) and Zhao Gang (left) check the blood pressure of a villager on her doorstep in Napo county, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, in March 2021. ZENG YIMING / XINHUA



"This approach helped them better absorb knowledge," said Luo.

In addition to offering convenient and affordable access to quality medical services, China has also been striving to ramp up total medical service capacities in recent years, according to Lei.

Since 2017, Lei said that China has established 13 national medical centers specializing in different fields, as well as 125 regional medical centers.

National medical centers are aimed at carrying out the diagnosis and treatment of rare and severe cases of specific disease categories. They also play a leading role in researching and promoting advanced therapies.

Regional medical centers aim to provide patients with quality medical treatment closer to their homes.

Lei added that 114 provincial-level medical centers have also been established.

"Through the construction of these projects, China's overall medical resources and medical service capacities have leaped forward and their distribution is more balanced across the nation," he added.

In Jinjiang, a county-level city in the eastern province of Fujian, a regional medical center was set up in partnership with the Shanghai Sixth People's Hospital Affiliated to Shanghai Jiao Tong University in June 2021. The center is based at the Jinjiang Municipal Hospital.

As of recently, the hospital in Shanghai has sent 46 experts and its management team to the hospital and six of its well-known experts have set up their own offices there.

One of the beneficiaries of the collaboration mechanism is a 17-year-old boy who four years ago was diagnosed with idiopathic scoliosis, a type of scoliosis that causes the spine to develop an abnormal curve.

Progression of the disease in recent months prompted his parents to consider taking him to Shanghai to undertake an extremely complicated, invasive spinal surgery. "Upon hearing that Shanghai experts were coming here, we decided to have the operation in our hometown," said his father.

Zheng Yongqiang, a local orthopedic surgeon, said that the family has so far paid about 50,000 yuan (\$7,000) out of pocket. "If they went to Beijing or Shanghai, it would probably cost them several hundred thousand yuan, adding medical expenditures, travel and accommodation expenses together," he said.

Zheng said he also valued the opportunity to personally observe the surgery. "For us, watching highly experienced surgeons performing and explaining procedures is an important addition to reading textbooks or research papers," he said.

Qin Wei, Party chief of the Jinjiang Municipal Hospital, said that the partnership has introduced 159 novel technologies locally, and the number of outpatient visits, hospitalizations and surgeries have doubled compared to the past.

To further bridge the gap between urban and rural medical institutions, Lei said that 5G technologies and other advanced information technology tools have been used to facilitate remote diagnosis and treatment.

China has set up 3,340 online hospitals that together provide over 100 million consultations online each year.

"We will also guide and regulate the development of private hospitals so that they can complement the network of public hospitals," he said.

As the nation is aiming to make its medical services more diversified to meet the varying demands of residents, Lei said that authorities have announced recently to allow the establishment of wholly foreign-owned hospitals in Beijing, Shanghai and seven other areas.

Deng Jiani contributed to the story.

Contact the writers at wangxiaoyu@chinadaily.com.cn



Online See more by scanning the code.

Timeline of key healthcare milestones

- 1952** China establishes the Patriotic Health Campaign, primarily aiming to improve sanitation and control infectious diseases.
- 1971** Chinese scientist Tu Youyou discovers a traditional Chinese cure for malaria and ultimately extracts a compound called artemisinin. Her discovery has saved millions of lives worldwide and earned her a Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine in 2015.
- 1978** China rolls out a national immunization program, encompassing four routine childhood vaccines against six diseases. The program now contains 14 vaccines that can protect against 15 diseases.
- 1984** China's Drug Administration Law is inaugurated, which significantly improves the scientific management of drug manufacturers, sellers and other related institutions. The law underwent a major revision in 2019, with the goal of toughening crackdowns on violators and promoting drug innovation.
- 1985** China initiates a round of healthcare reform centering around the principles of relaxing policies, streamlining administration and delegating powers, raising funds from various sources and diversifying development approaches.
- 1998** China creates the urban employee basic medical insurance program as part of efforts to create a stronger safety net for its people.
- 2003** The outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome, or SARS, prompts the establishment of the nation's emergency medical response system.
- 2007** China realizes the target of reducing the mortality rate for those under 5 by two-thirds from 2000 to 2015 as set out in the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals seven years ahead of the schedule. The target of lowering the maternal mortality rate by three-quarters was also achieved a year in advance in 2014.
- 2009** China launches a new round of healthcare reform, aiming to provide affordable and equitable basic healthcare for all.
- 2011** China's first domestically developed, small-molecule, targeted anticancer drug is granted market authorization. It took eight years to create the drug named icotinib, which is used to treat non-small cell lung cancer.
- 2013** The National Health Commission replaces the national health and family planning commission as the nation's top health authority. Its establishment reflects a focus from illness treatment in the past to improving overall health conditions.
- 2015** China allows all couples to have two children, abandoning its decades-long one-child policy.
- 2017** China reaches zero domestic cases of malaria for the first time. After reporting no local cases for four consecutive years, the nation was awarded a malaria-free certification from the World Health Organization in 2021.
- 2018** The National Healthcare Security Administration is inaugurated. A slew of measures, such as bulk procurement of drugs and high-value medical consumables and regular adjustment of the national medical reimbursement list, have since been rolled out to ease the medical burden of patients and improve affordable access to medicines.
- 2019** China launches the Healthy China initiative, a national drive aimed at intervening in health-influencing factors, protecting full life cycle health and controlling major diseases.
- 2021** The National Disease Control and Prevention Administration, a body dedicated to disease control, is inaugurated amid the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen the nation's public health system.

WANG XIAOYU

ing for a local doctor capable of carrying out carotid stenting for a long time. Without our arrival, he would have had to travel to Changchun in Jilin province to receive the surgery and leave his small farm behind for months," he said.

Luo said that most patients rendered bed-bound by this type of stroke would be able to stand up and walk one to two days after sur-

gery and check out from the hospital a week later.

During his stay, Luo completed about 150 thrombolysis therapies at the banner hospital. More importantly, he trained three doctors to be capable of performing the operation independently.

"Hands-on guidance is significant. Because I was by their side all the time, we

were able to sort out various questions together, such as how to devise treatment plans tailored to a patient's blood vessel size and time of disease onset," he said.

Besides giving lectures to his local proteges, Luo also asked them to make morning rounds with him and lead discussions of updates on patients' clinical conditions and laboratory results during seminars.

In just 70 years, Chinese life expectancy doubled to 78.6

China's economic development over the past seven decades has been well documented, but the vast improvement in the health of its people is less so.

To put it simply — albeit a bit dramatically — if I were born in 1949 when the People's Republic of China was founded, I would probably be starting down at death already at my current age of 31.

A baby born more than seven decades ago in China would live on average to the age of 35. But one born last year is expected to reach 78.6 years old, which is higher than the average of 77.5 years in the United States.



Wang Xiaoyu Reporter's log

The causes of death have also changed. More than seven decades ago, bubonic plague, cholera, smallpox and a number of infectious diseases would be the biggest threat to my life. If I were pregnant, I would be deeply concerned about pregnancy complications that could kill me or my child.

At present, the prevalence of vaccine-preventable infectious diseases has fallen to an extremely low level, and key infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and hepatitis B have all been reined in effectively.

For myself, feeling healthy and energetic most of the time, my greatest fear with regard to my health is related to my own weaknesses — my unhealthy diet and disrupted circadian rhythm. These things could increase the chance of me having high blood pressure, high cholesterol and other chronic diseases.

According to the National Health

Commission, the biggest killers of Chinese people nowadays are stroke, heart and lung diseases, Alzheimer's and cancers that are often associated with lifestyle choices.

It is impossible to explain the astonishing progress in Chinese life expectancy and health levels in just a few thousand words. Having covered the healthcare sector for about seven years, I get to discover new approaches, solutions and mechanisms at each news briefing and interview I attend, and when out on assignment.

The latest action that intrigued me was

a three-year campaign launched by the National Health Commission and 15 other government departments in June that aims to improve awareness and skills regarding weight control.

The campaign comes as more than half of adults in China are either obese or overweight, which can potentially elevate the risk of potentially deadly diseases such as cardiovascular conditions, diabetes and high blood pressure.

Authorities are so meticulous in instilling knowledge about healthy diets and lifestyles in the people that the commission released seven versions of detailed, recommended dietary guidelines tailored to seven different regions across China. The recommended menus also vary depending on the four seasons.

WORLD

China taking steps to push UN 2030 agenda

By EDITH MUTETHYA
in Cairo, Egypt
edithmutethya@chinadaily.com.cn

Cognizant of the importance of cities as vehicles for modernization, the Chinese government has not only expressed its national dedication but also its readiness to join hands with countries worldwide to write a new chapter on sustainable development in cities.

Speaking at the World Urban Forum in Egypt's capital Cairo on Tuesday, Ni Hong, China's minister of housing and urban-rural development, said the Chinese government is actively taking steps to push forward the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda.

Adopted in Ecuador's capital Quito in October 2016, the New Urban Agenda guides urban planning, design, finance, development, governance and urban regeneration to address both urbanization challenges and opportunities.

Ni said over the past few decades, China has experienced the largest and fastest urbanization process in human history, with the achievements in urban development receiving global recognition.

Since China's reform and opening-up in 1978, the country's urban population has grown from 170 million to the current 930 million, Ni said. This massive expansion came with its share of challenges but the government addressed them successfully.

Among the effective strategies that the government implemented, Ni said, were upholding the

people-centered development philosophy, pursuing people-centered new urbanization, and embarking on a path of urban development with Chinese characteristics.

"We have always stayed committed to creating a good living environment, pushing forward green and low-carbon transitions of our cities, and building cities into beautiful homes where people coexist in harmony with each other and with nature," Ni said.

To successfully address housing issues, Ni said China's approach has been balancing both government support and market mechanisms.

He said the government provides basic housing needs for the public, while also optimizing real estate policies to meet the housing demands. Toward that end, the government constructs low-cost public rental houses for low-income urban households.

The average housing area per urban resident in China increased from 6.7 square meters in 1978 to more than 40 sq m by the end of 2023, achieving housing for all.

Ni said currently, China's housing development has entered a new phase, shifting focus from "availability" to "quality."

China will consistently be an active participant, a powerful advocate for, and a major contributor to sustainable development in cities, Ni said.

"We will continue to support UN-Habitat's work, deepen exchanges and cooperation with all parties ... and jointly promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, and the Global Development Initiative."



A large crowd gathers on Ayalon Highway, blocking traffic, as people take to the streets to protest Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's dismissal of Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, in Tel Aviv, Israel, on Tuesday. YAIR PALTI VIA GETTY IMAGES

Defense minister sacked over rift with Netanyahu

Gallant's dismissal an attempt to deflect blame for failure in Gaza, analysts say

By JAN YUMUL in Hong Kong
jan@chinadailyapac.com

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's firing of his defense minister Yoav Gallant underscores long-standing concerns about the viability of the ground offensive in Gaza and appears to be a strategy to deflect blame, analysts say.

Netanyahu made the bombshell announcement in a video posted on X on Tuesday. He confirmed he had dismissed Gallant, citing a "crisis of trust" and their differences over security matters.

"Over the past few months, the trust between the Defense Minister and me has eroded," Netanyahu said in the video statement, reported by Xinhua News Agency.

"Significant differences emerged regarding the management of the (military) campaign, accompanied by statements and actions that contradicted government and cabinet decisions," Netanyahu said.

In a post on X, Gallant said the dismissal of the State of Israel "was and will always remain the mission of my life". He also paid tribute to the military and civilian victims.

Mehmet Rakipoglu, an assistant professor at Mardin Artuklu University in Turkey, told China Daily that

Gallant's dismissal highlights the Israeli military's "long-standing concerns about the viability of a ground offensive, warning the government of the likely challenges in achieving victory".

"This action seems more like a strategy to deflect blame for these failures rather than a measure to secure gains in Gaza," he said.

"Conducted on the day of the US elections, the timing also signals Netanyahu's defiance of external pressures, particularly from the US, which may increase demands on Israel to cease hostilities," Rakipoglu added.

Public clashes

During more than a year since Hamas attacked Israel in October last year, Netanyahu and Gallant have publicly clashed several times, including in May when Gallant criticized Netanyahu's lack of vision for a post-conflict Gaza.

Gallant has unapologetically accused Netanyahu of putting his political interests and survival above their country.

Netanyahu informed Gallant that his term would end within 48 hours and he would be replaced by Israel Katz, Netanyahu's close associate and foreign minister.

Briefly

IRELAND
PM to call general election this week

Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris said on Tuesday that he plans to call a parliamentary election later this week, likely setting up a polling date for the end of the month. Harris has until March to go to the polls but has been laying the ground for an earlier election since last month's 10.5 billion euro (\$11.2 billion) budget giveaway, with many voters starting to benefit from the package this week. "We need to get through the business of the next few days first," he added, referring to legislation the government aims to pass through parliament by Thursday before Harris names the election date, expected to be Nov 29.

SPAIN
Flood-hit areas to get 10.6b euro aid

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez announced on Tuesday that the government would provide economic and fiscal aid of 10.6 billion euros (\$11.3 billion) for the areas affected by the devastating floods. Sanchez said the regions of Valencia, Castilla-La Mancha and Andalusia affected by last week's torrential floods had been designated as disaster zones, which means the government could apply an urgent law to pass the massive aid package. Authorities said on Tuesday that 89 people are confirmed missing one week after the catastrophic floods in the eastern Valencia region. It is the first figure of those missing to be made public.

JAPAN
Snow on Mount Fuji after record absence

Japan's Mount Fuji finally got its trademark snowcap early on Wednesday, more than a month after it normally would and after setting a record for the most delayed snowfall in 130 years. The first snowfall could be seen from the southwestern side of the mountain, according to the Shizuoka branch of the Japan Meteorological Agency, or JMA. The lack of snow on Mount Fuji on Tuesday broke the previous record set on Oct 26, 2016, meteorological officials said. Global warming is one factor that has led to the slow snow cover, said a JMA official at the Kofu office.

NEPAL
TikTok registered after govt lifts ban

The popular short-video app TikTok has been registered in Nepal, two months after the government lifted a months-long ban on it, a government official said on Wednesday. "TikTok was registered at the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology formally last week and we issued the certification of registration on Tuesday," said Gajendra Thakur, spokesman for the ministry. In early September, Nepal's internet and mobile service providers were directed to lift the ban imposed on TikTok in November 2023, after the cabinet made a similar decision in late August.

AGENCIES—XINHUA

UK records more cases of Clade 1b mpox strain

By EARLE GALE in London
earle@mail.chinadailyuk.com

Doctors in the United Kingdom are working to contain an outbreak of a new, more easily spreadable strain of the mpox virus.

The virus, which was previously spread mainly through the exchange of bodily fluids, can now be shared through such things as household contact.

UK health officials said this week that they have uncovered two additional cases of the new strain in London, among people who shared living space with a man who tested positive after returning from a trip to Central Africa, where the virus is endemic.

After announcing confirmation of the nation's first three cases of the new strain, known as Clade 1b, Susan Hopkins, chief medical advisor at the UK Health Security Agency, or UKHSA, said the strain is more easily transferred but does not amount to a significant risk to the public.

"Mpox is very infectious in households with close contact, so it is not unexpected to see further cases within the same household," she said. "The overall risk to the UK population remains low. We are working with partners to make sure all contacts of the cases are identified and contacted to reduce the risk of further spread."

Mpox, which was known as mon-

keypox until the World Health Organization renamed it in November 2022, typically causes flu-like symptoms within a few days of infection and causes a rash of pus-filled lesions that can persist for up to a month. People infected with the virus often also experience a fever, headaches and a lack of energy. In some cases, it can be fatal.

The previous strain of the mpox virus, Clade 2, caused a public health emergency in the UK in 2022, with the outbreak peaking that July when there were 1,517 confirmed cases.

The WHO declared the Clade 1b strain of the virus a global health emergency this summer, after it became endemic in West Africa and Central Africa, in nations including Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya and Rwanda. Cases attributed to visits to Africa have since been recorded in Germany, India, Sweden, the UK and Thailand.

The UK's Health Minister Wes Streeting said last week that the government is working closely with the UKHSA and the National Health Service "to protect the public and prevent transmission" of the virus.

The WHO and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention have said Africa has had more than 48,000 suspected cases of Clade 1b so far this year, which they linked to 1,048 deaths.

Pollution hazard

Pollution hangs over Lahore, Pakistan, on Tuesday, with government authorities saying the country's second-largest city has closed primary schools for a week after "unprecedented" pollution levels. For days, the city of 14 million people has been enveloped by smog from seasonal agricultural burning and winter cooling.

KHURRAM AMIN VIA GETTY IMAGES



Joint action needed for green transport in Asia-Pacific

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

Government officials and international experts from the Asia-Pacific region have called for collective action and further investments from governments to expand low-carbon transport, to further strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change.

During the eighth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on Transport held from Nov 5 to 7 in Bangkok, policymakers and leading transport sector experts explored ways to advance collaborative efforts in sustainable transport across the region.

The commission reviewed the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2022-26) and found that

all progress indicators set to track its implementation have either been achieved or are on track.

However, many countries have experienced slow progress in the development of green transport in recent years, and most initiatives aimed at enhancing transport digitization are carried out at the national level in silos.

"The transport sector is one of the most challenging sectors to be set on a low-carbon pathway. Without a harmonized policy direction at a regional level, this approach has created fragmented and geographically limited transport services among member states," said Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, under-secretary-general of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, or ESCAP.

She noted that the right policies

must be developed and adopted at regional, national and local levels to support the electrification of public and shared vehicle fleets — one of the most cost-effective electrification strategies — while also increasing the share of renewable energy in electricity generation.

So far, ESCAP has implemented a technical cooperation project in Laos, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Tajikistan, focusing on financing the transition to electric public bus fleets to launch pilot electric bus projects in selected cities later.

Souphany Heuangkeo, deputy director of the road passenger transport division under Laos' Ministry of Public Works and Transport, said Laos' public transport has seen a significant improvement with the construction of Laos-China and Laos-Thailand railways. It has also benefited from Chinese electric

vehicle technologies with 55 electronic buses imported from China plying some of Lao's roads.

Chutinorn Mankhon Rak from the Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning in the Thai Ministry of Transport called for partnerships with countries with EV technology for best practices. "We also hope ESCAP can assist (with) training and give professional guidance," she said.

At a side event on e-mobility in public transport on Wednesday, Li Guanyu, deputy director of the International Cooperation Department in China's Ministry of Transport, shared the country's experiences in promoting e-mobility.

"We will further contribute to the global efforts on tackling climate change and always be happy to join hands with Asia-Pacific countries to promote sustainable development as well as a better future," she said.

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NEW YORK
HEADQUARTERS

1500 Broadway, Suite 2800,
New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212-537-8888
Fax: 212-537-8898

editor@chinadailyusa.com
readers@chinadailyusa.com

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WASHINGTON

National Press Bldg, Suite 1108
529 14th Street NW

Washington, DC 20045

Tel: 202-662-7249

Fax: 202-662-7247

SAN FRANCISCO

235 Montgomery Street, Suite 900, San Francisco,
CA 94104

Tel: 415-348-6288

Fax: 415-348-8388

SEATTLE

800 Fifth Ave, Suite 4100

Seattle, WA 98104

Tel: 206-922-3868

HOUSTON

1001 South Dairy Ashford Suite 100

Houston, TX 77077

Tel: 713-595-7660

CANADA | TORONTO

4711 Yonge Street, 10th Floor

Toronto, Ontario, M2N 6K9

Tel: 416-481-5706

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WORLDUS

Trump's victory suggests shift in US electorate

Some see second term as a pushback by populists against a perceived elite

By HENG WEILI in New York
hengweili@chinadailyusa.com

The day after Donald J. Trump's election to a second term as US president, observers wondered what it suggested about the American electorate.

The New York Times, in a headline at the top of its website on Wednesday, framed Trump's election as a "populist revolt against an elite vision of the US".

"In her closing rally on the Ellipse last week, Kamala Harris scorned Donald J. Trump as an outlier who did not represent America," wrote Peter Baker. "That is not who we are," she declared.

"In fact, it turns out, that may be exactly who we are," he wrote. "At least most of us."

Baker wrote that "the assumption that Mr. Trump represented an anomaly who would at last be consigned to the ash heap of history was washed away on Tuesday night by a red current that swept through battleground states — and swept away the understanding of America long nurtured by its ruling elite of both parties".

Vice-President Harris, in her concession speech Wednesday at her alma mater Howard University in Washington DC, said: "While I concede this election, I do not concede the fight that fueled this campaign. The fight for freedom, for opportunity, for fairness and the dignity of all people."

Harris said she congratulated Trump and said that the Biden administration would "engage in a peaceful transition of power".

As of Wednesday, Trump had 295 electoral votes, 25 more than the 270 needed, and Harris had 226, the Times reported.

Republicans took control of the 100-member Senate from



A person waves a Trump flag outside Trump Tower in New York City on Wednesday after US President-elect Donald Trump won the presidential election. KENT J. EDWARDS / REUTERS

Democrats on Tuesday by securing 52 seats.

In the 435-member House of Representatives, currently controlled by Republicans, they had 204 seats vs 187 for the Democrats, but there were more than 40 seats yet to be decided as of Wednesday. Control of the House will be critical for Trump's agenda and whether he faces any intense opposition.

The election Tuesday also was a repudiation of "the old breed of Republicans who made common cause with corporations and harbored a neoconservative foreign policy", wrote Philip Wegmann for RealClear Politics.

He said "the most visible among them" was former Republican US representative Liz Cheney, the daughter of former vice-president Dick Cheney of the George W. Bush

administration. Liz Cheney campaigned with Harris.

"To Mr. Trump's allies, the election vindicates his argument that Washington has grown out of touch, that America is a country weary of overseas wars, excessive immigration and 'woke' political correctness," Baker wrote.

Trump told his victory party in Florida early Wednesday that his coalition was drawn "from all quarters — union, non-union, African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, Arab American".

Jeff Stein, White House economics reporter for The Washington Post, detailed a shift in voter preference based on income: "Staggering class realignment/shift in working class. Harris lost DESPITE major shift of affluent voters her way.

2020: Trump wins voters over \$100K, 54-52

2024: *Harris* wins voters over \$100K, 54-45

2020: Biden wins voters \$50K-\$100K, 57-42

2024: *Trump* w/ voters \$50K-\$100K, 49-47

2020: Biden wins voters under \$50K, 55-45

2024: Trump massive improvement w/ voters under \$50K, 49-48."

Lanny Davis, who served as White House special counsel to former president Bill Clinton, wrote that the Democrats had some soul-searching to do.

"So now, after a sleepless night, here is my morning-after self-truth-telling," he wrote on RealClear Politics. "It's time we liberal Democrats faced up to the truth: We have become the party of intolerance

and shaming, and a lot of ordinary Americans who once reliably voted Democratic and shared our Franklin Roosevelt-era liberalism that viewed government as a force for good now look at us as out-of-touch elites. And worse, as controlling scolds."

In 2016, Trump won the White House but lost in the popular vote to Hillary Clinton. In the 2024 election so far, he has received about 5 million more votes than Harris. Trump had 72,234,670 votes around 7:30 pm ET Wednesday, to 67,468,223 votes for the vice-president, according to the Times.

Clinton's winning of the popular vote in 2016 sparked a call from some Democrats to abolish the Electoral College, which was enshrined in the US Constitution as a way to prevent a handful of highly populous states from having outside influence over presidential elections.

Trump said at his victory party early Wednesday that Robert F. Kennedy Jr, former presidential candidate and critic of the COVID-19 vaccines, will be tapped to "help make America healthy again", adding that "we're going to let him go do it".

Kennedy, a scion of a dynastic Democratic family, who changed his allegiance to Trump after the Democratic National Committee thwarted his bid for the party's nomination, has pledged to address what he calls "regulatory capture" by the pharmaceutical industry of agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Food and Drug Administration.

Kennedy also has railed against ingredients in processed food that are banned in other countries but allowed in the United States.

But Trump joked about not letting Kennedy, a longtime environmentalist, have a say on energy policy: "Bobby, stay away from the liquid gold (oil). We have more liquid gold than any country in the world. Other than that, go have a good time, Bobby."

Trump also has considered Kennedy's recommendation to end the use of fluoride in the US water supply.

Trump also has pledged to make Elon Musk, owner of X and CEO of Tesla and a vocal supporter of the Trump campaign, a secretary of federal "cost-cutting". Musk has said he can trim trillions of dollars in government spending.

The president-elect now has a 75-day transition period to assemble his team before Inauguration Day, Jan 20.

One key item on the to-do list: filling around 4,000 government positions with political appointees, people specifically picked for their jobs by Trump's team.

That includes everyone from the secretary of state and other heads of Cabinet departments to those selected to serve part time on boards and commissions. Around 1,200 of those presidential appointments require Senate confirmation, which should be easier with the Senate now in Republican control.

Trump's transition is being led primarily by friends and family, including Kennedy and former Democratic presidential candidate Tulsi Gabbard, as well as the president-elect's adult sons, Donald Trump Jr and Eric Trump, and his running mate, JD Vance.

At the start of his first term, Trump assembled a Cabinet that featured some more mainstream Republicans and business leaders who ultimately disappointed or broke publicly with him.

This time around, Trump has said he would value loyalty as much as possible, a philosophy that may ensure he makes picks more aligned to his ideology.

To prevent any delays in future transitions, the Presidential Transition Improvement Act of 2022 mandates that the process begin five days after the election — even if the winner is still in dispute.

Agencies contributed to this story.

Proponents call for more women to seek higher office in the US

By BELINDA ROBINSON in New York
belindarobinson@chinadailyusa.com

The United States is one of the few large Western countries that has never had a female president.

The closest the country has come to having a woman in the executive office is Vice-President Kamala Harris. While Harris lost the presidential election on Nov 5 to President-elect Donald Trump, her campaign still advanced women in politics, say advocates, who added that much more is left to be done.

The number of American women who have become their party's presidential nominees has been minuscule aside from Harris and Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016.

The other two female vice-presidential candidates were Republican Sarah Palin in 2008 with John McCain, and Democrat Geraldine Ferraro with former vice-president Walter Mondale in 1984.

Many other women, dating back to Victoria Claflin Woodhull in 1872, have unsuccessfully run for president in the United States.

"Vice-President Harris' run for office highlights that women can serve at all levels of government and serve well," Deidre Malone, president of the National Women's Political Caucus, told China Daily.

Harris won 54 percent of women voters nationwide while Trump won 44 percent, an exit poll by Edison Research showed. Trump's decisive victory was in the popular vote in addition to the Electoral College.

"I think it's perfectly clear what Harris's candidacy means for American women: we are a country of racist, misogynist, foolish people who prefer vicious lies to the truth in front of them," Nancy J. Hirschmann, professor of political science and gender, sexuality and women's studies at the Ronald O. Perleman Center for Political Science and Economics at the University of Pennsylvania, told China Daily.

"The hatred of women, and the belief of too many men that they

“The numbers are improving, but women are not close to being equally represented in all levels of government.”

Deidre Malone, president of the National Women's Political Caucus

have a right to dominate women can no longer be denied in this country," Hirschmann said.

Democrats Lisa Blunt Rochester from Delaware and Angela Alsobrooks from Maryland, two black women, will serve together in the US Senate for the first time in history. There were 126 women in the House of Representatives and 25 in the Senate before the election.

"The numbers are improving, but women are not close to being equally represented in all levels of government," Malone said. "Women make up 28 percent of Congress, and that's the highest percentage in US history. We continue to have work to do in this area."

The global picture for women leaders is quite different.

In October, Mexico elected its first female leader, President Claudia Sheinbaum.

The United Kingdom has had three female prime ministers. In November, the Conservative Party nominated its first black, female leader Kemi Badenoch.

As far back as the 1970s, Britain's Baroness Margaret Thatcher, dubbed the "Iron Lady" for her economic policies known as "Thatcherism" and toughness, became leader of her party in 1975, and then prime minister of the Conservative Party in 1979. She led her party and country until she resigned in 1990. She was the longest-serving

British leader of the 20th century, weathering several storms, including high unemployment, between 1979 to 1981; economic policies to tackle and reverse high inflation amid a "winter of discontent"; and the privatization of state-owned companies. Thatcher died in 2013.

In Germany, Angela Merkel, the country's eighth chancellor from 2005 until her departure in December 2021, was the first female leader of the opposition from 2002 to 2005 and headed the Christian Democratic Union Party from 2000 to 2018.

Merkel was known as a careful steward of the economy. She was an important figure in the EU and NATO.

Her chancellorship faced several challenges, such as the 2007 to 2008 financial crisis, European debt issues, the 2010 European migrant crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Worldwide, the number of female leaders is growing, but there still are far fewer of them than men. At least 30 women have served as heads of state, in 28 countries since September 2022, according to the United Nations women division. Overall, Europe has had more female leaders than any other region.

Kathleen Dolan, distinguished professor and chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee told China Daily that "voters have become more accustomed to seeing women candidates".

Harris, of black and Asian Indian descent, was district attorney of San Francisco in 2004, elected attorney general of California in 2010, and sworn into the US Senate in 2017.

Malone said that while women in politics have some ways to go to clinch the top job, she is encouraged.

"Some of the roadblocks holding women back from running for office include that they do not see themselves in elected office," she said. "More are showing interest in running because they see other women stepping up and serving."

Reducing food waste can help achieve sustainable development

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CHINA INTERNATIONAL IMPORT EXPO

CIIE living proof of opening-up

Import expo helping poorer countries access China's massive market

By ZHANG KUN in Shanghai
zhangkun@chinadaily.com.cn

The China International Import Expo (CIIE) fully illustrates how the nation shoulders its responsibilities as a leading member of the global community and demonstrates the promising blueprint of China's two-way opening-up as well as its huge market appeal, according to a report published on Wednesday on the sidelines of the ongoing 7th CIIE.

For the sixth consecutive year, Shanghai Academy and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences jointly released a development research report — the CIIE Blue Book. It is seen as a scientific and comprehensive study on CIIE achievements based on massive data and information, as described by Li Youmei, deputy director of Shanghai Academy and editor-in-chief of the CIIE Blue Book.

"Holding the CIIE is of irreplaceable significance to China, as a powerful measure for the country to implement high-standard opening-up and promote economic globalization, Li Peilin, former vice-president of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said at the launch ceremony.

"The CIIE has become an important platform promoting global economic growth and construction of a community with a shared future for mankind," Li said.

The report pointed out that China is a stabilizer and powerhouse of global economic growth against the complex background of weakened global economic activity, a continued slowdown in growth, sluggish overall trade performance and intensifying geopolitical risks.

"Only by further removing obstacles to the development of new quality productive forces and striving to make international trade and investment freer and more convenient can the global economy continuously rejuvenate itself," it said.

The report highlighted CIIE's function on the successful transformation from exhibits to commodities as a large number of new products made their global,

Asian and China debuts at the expo.

More than \$420 billion worth of tentative deals were signed at the earlier six editions since 2018. The exhibition area of enterprises and businesses at the CIIE has expanded from 270,000 square meters for the inaugural edition to 367,000 sq m now.

Beyond the event, global companies can reach a larger customer base and make further investments in the country.

The report also said the CIIE has managed to share development opportunities and achievements with the least developed countries (LDCs) over the past few years by expanding trade volume with these countries, promoting mutual investment between China and the LDCs, and helping these countries to integrate into the multilateral trade mechanism.

During the ongoing CIIE, more than 120 free booths are being offered to the 37 LDCs in attendance. As an important part of the event, the Hongqiao International Economic Forum has invited dignitaries, heads of international organizations and internationally renowned experts and scholars from the LDCs to have in-depth discussions and contribute their wisdom to promoting global cooperation and supporting global economic recovery.

"The CIIE provides a series of preferential measures to facilitate the participation of LDCs, providing a more inclusive open platform to help them link up with the large Chinese market and even the global market, and giving them more opportunities to share in the benefits of globalization," the report says.

In order to further consolidate and increase the effectiveness of the CIIE, the report suggested that the annual trade event should intensify efforts to attract high-tech industries and promote the development of new quality productive forces.

Also, the CIIE should promote the integration of digital and real economies to better achieve two-way opening-up, and find more ways to benefit the rest of the world.



A Porsche electric car on display at the ongoing China International Import Expo in Shanghai.
ZOU HONG / CHINA DAILY

Insiders: Partnerships crucial in driving NEV industry forward

By WANG KEJU in Shanghai
wangkeju@chinadaily.com.cn

Open and collaborative partnerships are the intrinsic forces for developing the global new energy vehicle industry, in order to drive technological advancements and tackle climate change, officials and executives said on Wednesday.

China's NEVs not only provide diversified and cost-effective choices for global consumers, but also help more countries achieve green and low-carbon transformation and sustainable development, they said during the seventh Hongqiao International Economic Forum in Shanghai.

Globalization is the most apparent feature of the automotive industry's evolution. The evidence is clear — it is openness to technology and cooperation across the value chain that have fueled rapid advancements in the sector, said Xiong Jijun, vice-minister of industry and information technology.

China's automotive industry, and particularly its NEV segment, has achieved this impressive growth by persistently driving technological innovation and embracing global division of labor

and cooperation, Xiong added.

In 2023, China's pure electric vehicle market share reached an impressive 62 percent globally, and this has continued unabated through the first eight months of this year, data from the China Passenger Car Association showed.

However, some nations are now resorting to trade barriers such as tariff hikes and technical standards to restrict the use of Chinese-made electric vehicles in their markets. This growing protectionism comes at a time when the world is rapidly transitioning toward sustainable mobility.

More than 50 economies have now set clear development goals for NEVs, from the European Union's target of zero emissions by 2035 to the United States' aim of 50 percent NEV sales by 2030.

In the past, Chinese automotive companies were often in a position to follow and catch up with their Western counterparts, said Yin Tongyue, chairman of Chinese carmaker Chery.

But now that China has gained a technological edge, it has a responsibility to empower these global partners and enable them to also achieve healthy development and

successful transformation, Yin said.

China's vision is not about dominating the global automotive landscape, but rather about leveraging its capabilities to create a shared, collaborative ecosystem that benefits all stakeholders, he added.

On the other hand, the EU and the US have built up extensive expertise in the recycling and repurposing of used EV components and battery packs, and this experience holds strong relevance and lessons for China, said Sam Wu, Ford's global vice-president.

Going forward, China will deepen international cooperation and welcome more enterprises from other countries to increase their investment and collaboration in the country. Efforts will also be made to help these companies resolve the issues they encounter during their development, Xiong said.

China will strengthen its cooperation with other nations on standards and regulations, and explore policies to facilitate the cross-border flow of data, to promote the harmonization of standards and rules, Xiong added.

CIIE is unique and fantastic, says L'Oreal

By HE QI in Shanghai
heqi@chinadaily.com.cn

French cosmetics company L'Oreal is one of the multinationals that has participated in the China International Import Expo for seven consecutive years since its inception in 2018.

In the eyes of Jean-Paul Agon, chairman of L'Oreal, the company's continued participation in the annual event highlights its steadfast commitment to the Chinese market.

"It's the only opportunity that we have once a year to show everything we do in China to the whole Chinese society. It's very important, very vital," Agon told China Daily in an exclusive interview on the sidelines of the 7th expo which runs through Nov 10. "Our consistent seven-year participation in CIIE shows our deep commitment to Chinese consumers, our long-term commitment to China, and our profound commitment to Sino-French relationship."



Jean-Paul Agon

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Sino-French diplomatic relations. L'Oreal has served as the rotating chairman of the Enterprise Alliance and the Special Committee of Consumer Goods for five consecutive years, featuring in sections across the Consumer Goods pavilion, the Innovation Incubation Special Section, as well as the Country Pavilion in this year's edition. Its main booth displays over 220 exhibits from 21 brands, including the global debuts of several highly anticipated products.

"I think it's the first time (at CIIE) that we have had so many square meters, so many booths around, and so many brands covering all aspects," said Agon.

Agon, who first visited China in 1997, recalled his eagerness to work with the expo when the group was approached by the Chinese organizers seven years ago in Paris.

"I remember the first time that we discussed with the CIIE authorities. It was in Paris seven years ago. It was before they started and they explained to us the project, and immediately we said we want to commit, we want to partner with you because we believe in your idea."

Agon pinpointed the expo as one of a kind in the world.

"I'm impressed because it's the only exhibition like this in the world. There is no other country in the world that has organized an exhibition like this. So I think it's really unique and really fantastic."

L'Oreal entered the Chinese mainland in 1997. Headquartered in Shanghai, L'Oreal China currently operates 31 brands, one R&I center, two factories and five offices in the country. After years of deep market cultivation, China is now the second-largest market for the L'Oreal Group.

Over the past seven years, L'Oreal has launched nearly 20 international new brands and dozens of cutting-edge beauty technologies at the CIIE.

"L'Oreal's journey (at the CIIE) has already turned from exhibitor to investor and to partner. The CIIE's spillover effect has been instrumental in our growth, reinforcing our confidence in the Chinese market and driving our continuous investment," said Agon, adding that the group established its world's first intelligent operation center in Suzhou, Jiangsu province, this year.

Agon has been to Shanghai more than 80 times and has witnessed the diverse changes among Chinese consumers.

"The Chinese consumers are more and more savvy and more and more knowledgeable about products. And I think that is very good because they choose the best products. I'm very confident about the market," Agon said.

Briefly

Most business entities private in China

The number of private business entities in China exceeded 180.86 million by the end of September, accounting for 96.37 percent of the country's total business entities, the State Administration for Market Regulation said on Wednesday. Of the total, 55.54 million were private companies while over 125.32 million were self-employed businesses. A large number of private business entities

are engaged in the services sector — in categories such as accommodation and catering, resident services, wholesale and retail trade, as well as transportation, storage and courier services, the administration revealed.

New guidelines for ice, snow economy

China aims to promote its ice and snow economy as a new growth point, with the goal of reaching an economic scale of 1.2 trillion

yuan (\$169 billion) by 2027, guidelines issued by the General Office of the State Council showed on Wednesday. By 2027, the facilities for ice and snow sports will be more complete, the service level will be significantly improved, ice and snow sports will be carried out more widely, and China's international competitiveness in these sports will be further enhanced, according to the guidelines.

XINHUA — CHINA DAILY

Global medical firms utilize opportunity to launch products

By ZHOU WENTING in Shanghai
zhouwenting@chinadaily.com.cn

The seventh China International Import Expo, which opened in Shanghai on Tuesday, has proved to be a premier platform for medical companies from around the globe to showcase their state-of-the-art technologies illustrated by a slew of exhibits making global or regional debuts.

Illumina, a United States-headquartered company specializing in DNA sequencing and array-based technologies, is showcasing MiSeq™ 1100 Series, its simplest and fastest benchtop sequencer for both research and clinical sequencing use at CIIE, marking the global debut of the device.

Achieving an impressive sequencing speed of a minimum of four hours and leveraging the innovative advantages of reagent storage and transportation at room temperature, the device provides a streamlined push-button sequencing workflow applicable to microbiology, infectious diseases and oncology.

To accelerate localization of the innovative product and unlock its

vast application potential, Illumina signed contracts with the first batch of local customers, including Westlake University in Hangzhou city, Zhejiang province, at the CIIE.

At the booth of US-based Gilead Sciences, Seladelpar, a rare disease drug approved recently in the US to treat primary biliary cholangitis, an autoimmune disease that can lead to liver failure, is making its China debut.

Gilead Sciences is also showcasing its oncology R&D pipeline, including four potential oncology indications expected to be approved in China by the end of 2027. The latest progress of how the company's 11 "star" therapies have benefited patients is being highlighted at the booth as well. Such therapies cover HIV prevention and treatment, viral hepatitis, oncology and antifungal fields.

Focusing on core health issues, including cancers, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, and healthy aging, Johnson & Johnson has brought a variety of cutting-edge products and solutions to the CIIE. Two of them are making their global debut and more than

10 their China debut.

Johnson & Johnson MedTech PRONOVA, a new generation of monofilament nonabsorbable suture, is being showcased in China for the first time. Mainly made of polyvinylidene difluoride and its copolymers, the soft suture can form tighter knots and is suitable for minimally invasive cardiovascular surgery.

At its CIIE booth, the company also announced the China market launch of TECVAYLI®, an injection to treat relapsed or refractory multiple myeloma, which has the second highest incidence rate among all blood cancers in China. It is the world's first bispecific antibody to treat the disease, and the first of such that has been marketed in China.

Organon, which is exhibiting its full spectrum of reproductive health solutions at CIIE, leverages the expo to explore women's reproductive health innovations, addressing the evolving needs of Chinese families as the average age of first-time mothers rises.

Currently under development, SJ02, a long-acting recombinant human follicle-stimulating hor-



Illumina's MiSeq™ 1100 Series products attract visitors at the CIIE in Shanghai. ZOU HONG / CHINA DAILY

mane-CTP fusion protein injection, is expected to become the first long-acting FSH in the country upon approval, expanding fertility options and enhancing treatment flexibility for families, according to the company.

"Shifts in population structure affect us all, and the company's commitment is clear: to advance innovative solutions that support

fertility and tackle broader women's and families' health challenges," said Zafer Unluer, president of Organon China. "Through the CIIE platform, we aim to accelerate global innovations in China, and also bring Chinese innovations to the world. We're dedicated to creating solutions that take root and make a lasting difference, for China and beyond."

BUSINESS

Temu gains popularity overseas

PDD's e-commerce arm attracts more consumers with low-price strategy

By LIU YUKUN
liuyukun@chinadaily.com.cn

China's cross-border e-commerce platform Temu is taking the world by storm with its user base reaching 91 percent of Amazon's in August, recent statistics showed.

In a survey covering 84 countries and regions, over 60 percent of users in various areas showed a preference for Temu, particularly in Europe, where 28 countries' users expressed a preference for Temu compared with other e-commerce platforms, Japanese news outlet Nikkei said, citing data from analysis firm Sensor Tower.

The Chinese platform's user base may surpass that of Amazon by the end of the year, Nikkei said.

Experts attributed this success to Temu's low-price strategy as it sells a large quantity of nonbranded goods and minimizes intermediary links in the supply chain to control price hikes. It also leverages local tax mechanisms for low-priced goods to manage costs. Upon arrival in foreign markets, it adopts a "direct delivery" model for consumers, reducing inventory management fees and further lowering prices.

They said Temu's triumph is a microcosm of the rapid expansion of Chinese e-commerce on the global stage.

Temu operates through the temu.com website and Temu app, owned by Chinese e-commerce company PDD Holdings.

"Temu's user base is approaching that of Amazon, showcasing strong growth momentum, primarily driven by its low-price strategy, efficient logistics and diverse product range. In the future, Temu needs to continuously

enhance user experience, strengthen brand trust and enhance global market competitiveness," said Hong Yong, an associate research fellow at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation's e-commerce research institute.

Divided by region, recent data from Sensor Tower said Temu was tops among shopping apps on iOS devices in the US in the third quarter, with downloads exceeding 8 million.

Temu's expansion in Southeast Asia is also accelerating, with recent launches in Vietnam and Brunei. With these additions, Temu now operates in five markets in Southeast Asia.

Temu's global growth rate is remarkable. As reported by media outlet 36Kr, Temu's gross merchandise volume reached around \$20 billion in the first half, surpassing its full-year 2023 sales. By July this year, Temu had expanded to over 70 countries and regions.

Hong said that Temu's success overseas mirrors China's cross-border e-commerce expansion. He noted that government policy support, market diversification and increasing brand influence — along with the rise of emerging markets and technological innovation — are presenting new opportunities for cross-border e-commerce platforms.

"However, challenges such as intensified market competition, high logistics costs, intellectual property protections and cultural differences still persist. In the future, Chinese cross-border e-commerce platforms will need to focus more on branding and technological innovation, deepening international cooperation, and achieving higher-quality global development," Hong added.



Foreign visitors inquire about a healthcare product during the 136th Canton Fair in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, on Monday.
LU HANKIN / XINHUA

Record number of intl buyers seen at Canton Fair

By QIU QUANLIN in Guangzhou
qiuquanlin@chinadaily.com.cn

The 136th China Import and Export Fair, widely known as the Canton Fair, concluded in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, on Monday, recording a historic high in terms of overseas buyers, according to the event's organizers.

As of Sunday, a total of 253,000 foreign buyers from 214 countries and regions attended the fair, marking a 2.8 percent increase from the previous session and surpassing the 250,000 mark for the first time in the global trade event's history, the organizers said.

Buyers from countries and regions involved in the Belt and Road Initiative accounted for over 60 percent of the total, marking a 3.7 percent increase from the

previous session, with the fastest growth in buyer numbers seen from countries in the Middle East, reaching 34,000 individual buyers, or a 32.6 percent increase, according to the organizers.

The fair, held twice a year in Spring and Autumn, demonstrated its significance as a vital platform for international trade, facilitating connections between international buyers and Chinese suppliers, including businesses from Brazil, said Arthur Guimaraes, general manager of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Brazil.

"We support Brazilian companies that want to find reliable partners here in China — every Brazilian buyer who attends the Canton Fair encounters countless options for every product they are looking for," Guimaraes said. Brazilian companies often seek

opportunities in the fields of electronics, renewable energy and machinery, he added.

Meanwhile, the number of buyers from traditional European and countries in the Americas notably rebounded, with 54,000 attendees, an 8.2 percent increase from the previous session, according to the organizers.

The export transaction volume rose slightly, with intended export transactions reaching \$24.95 billion, an increase of 1 percent compared to the previous session, the organizers said.

Transactions with economies participating in the Belt and Road Initiative accounted for over half of the total, while transactions with the traditional European and American markets saw growth, according to the organizers.

Foreign buyers had clear purchasing goals and a strong will-

ingness to cooperate, expecting that more transactions will be achieved through on-site factory inspections and deeper engagement in the future, the organizers said.

"Based on past transaction practices, foreign customers usually visit the factories for inspection and selection of some samples, and then place orders," said Feng Yingying, a sales manager of Taizhou Shenhu Sanitary Co, based in Zhejiang province.

The company has achieved better results at this session of the Canton Fair, with three customers placing orders totaling \$300,000 on-site, and another 15 customers planning to visit the factories, Feng said.

"These customers planning to visit our factories are very likely to place new orders with us," she said.

Chinese green tech finds favor in water deficient areas

By LI JIAYING in Beijing
and HU DONGMEI in Yinchuan

After being effectively implemented during construction of the main stadium for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, China's cutting-edge water-saving technology is expected to witness wider applications in Qatar and related Central Asian countries.

As a crucial advancement in Ningxia Hui autonomous region's efforts to enhance irrigation efficiency, the smart wind-solar complementary water-saving irrigation

technology is fully self-developed by Ningxia University. Central to the technology is the use of wind and solar energy to pump water, coupled with comprehensive smart control through the internet of things, said Sun Zhaojun, a professor responsible for the project at the university, during the 11th China-Central Asia Cooperation Forum in Yinchuan, Ningxia, last month.

The system utilizes underground infiltration irrigation, delivering water and nutrients directly to the roots of crops, thereby significantly reducing evaporation losses. In this

regard, it boasts a water-saving efficiency exceeding 30 percent compared to existing international methods.

Sun added that rigorous testing across various arid environments has generated substantial research data, demonstrating the modality's effectiveness despite the challenges posed by salty soil and extreme temperatures in Central Asian countries.

Ningxia, situated in the Yellow River basin and surrounded by an arid desert, faces challenges similar to those encountered in many other

dry regions such as Central Asian countries. In response, Ningxia has initiated extensive agricultural water-saving projects, with the smart irrigation system now covering nearly 50 percent of the region's irrigated land.

The technology received widespread acclaim during its application in the Qatar World Cup's greening project, ultimately leading to a landmark deal with Saudi Arabia for a smart agriculture project worth \$1.06 billion in August.

Han Zaixiang, a senior executive from a Saudi trade company, said he

is confident about Ningxia's irrigation technology, which possesses excellent market potential in Saudi Arabia and related Central Asian nations. He also emphasized the opportunities for rapidly deploying such advanced technologies across the region.

To date, the technology has pushed forward the establishment of seven experimental demonstration bases both domestically and internationally, covering a total area of 8.64 million mu (576,000 hectares) and achieving over 22 percent water savings in commercial crops, along with 26.6 percent energy savings.

With more than 90 percent of its components under independent

intellectual property rights, the technology has obtained international patents in the United States and the United Arab Emirates. Furthermore, a relevant national Sino-Egyptian technology aid project has been approved, and two key laboratories have been established in Oman and Egypt for international collaborative research.

Eyeing expanded partnerships in sustainable development with more countries, Ningxia University said it has also engaged in discussions during the forum with representatives from Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan for potential cooperation.

Contact the writers at
lijiajing@chinadaily.com.cn

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AD

BUSINESSFOCUS

CHINA UP-CLOSE

Remote work boosts off-peak domestic travel

Winter hotel bookings for stays of over one month in southern China double y-o-y

By ZHU WENQIAN
zhuwenqian@chinadaily.com.cn

Dropping temperatures in a large part of North China have led to more people traveling south for warmer weather. Besides seniors, more young consumers have also opted to travel south during the off-peak season and are visiting more niche destinations this winter.

Compared to last year, airfares and hotel prices are relatively cheaper, driving more people to take trips. This winter, the number of bookings for hotels in southern China with stays of more than one month in length has doubled year-on-year, according to Qunar, a Beijing-based online travel agency.

More young people are taking advantage of flexible remote working options to experience something new and travel. Between November and January, the number of domestic hotel bookings with stays of over a month grew the fastest among travelers aged between 25 and 30, and the figure jumped 2.5-fold compared to the pre-pandemic level of 2019.

Zhu Xiaoqing, an office employee in Beijing, said her company allows staff members to take two months for flexible remote work. She recently booked a serviced apartment in Lingshui, in the tropical island of Hainan province, and she plans to stay there for a month this winter.

"Elderly people who live in northern regions like to go to warmer places for winter every year, and then return to the north after the weather warms up," said Cai Muzi, a Qunar researcher. "In the past few years, the work and lifestyles of many have changed, and flexible working has become a popular choice for young people. Some companies also offer employees more flexibility."

She added that at an age between 25 and 30, many people have been working for a few years, are economically well off and don't have children to take care of yet. Being able to work in warmer places and getting away from harsh winter weather could significantly enhance one's sense of happiness.

Besides traditional winter vacation destinations such as Sanya and Haikou in Hainan, young people have been willing to explore small towns and counties with fewer people, beautiful sceneries, suitable temperatures and higher cost-effectiveness.



People traveling south for warmer weather hold a concert in Sanya, Hainan province, in October 2023. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Counties in the south such as Yunnan province, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, Fujian province and Hainan are more popular, with bookings for long-term hotel stays of more than one month increasing threefold year-on-year, Qunar found.

Despite the rapidly growing number of young flexible remote workers heading to warmer climes, elderly travelers still constitute the majority of off-peak travelers. After the National Day holiday break, the proportion of seniors who traveled has been increasing.

In the first week after the week-long break, when prices of flights and hotels declined, elderly travelers began to embark on their trips. Bookings of travel products made by consumers aged 50 and above in that week nearly tripled over the number made during the holiday, according to Trip.com Group, China's largest online travel agency.

When strong cold air hits northern China, domestic cities in southern China see their booking volumes of travel products jump significantly. Besides major destinations, some smaller places such as Tengchong, Jinghong, Mangshi and Mile of Yunnan, have become new favorites of the elderly, Trip.com found.

For example, travel product book-



Residents exercise at a park in Sanya in March. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

ings to Mile this winter have surged 160 percent over last winter. Hotel prices in Mile are about 40 percent lower than those of Dali and 60 percent lower than those in Sanya, according to Trip.com.

For top sources of travelers, residents who prefer to escape the cold include those who come from Beijing; Shenyang, Liaoning province; Xi'an, Shaanxi province; and Qingdao, Shandong province, the online

travel agency found.

Besides hotels, more travelers have been choosing long-term rentals, apartments and homestays.

This winter, the supply of hotel rooms has significantly increased,

and the average price has declined. For bookings between November and January, the average monthly rent of a long-term stay is less than 2,700 yuan (\$377), according to Qunar.

"In the first three quarters, the occupancy rates of some hotels were not ideal, and some serviced apartments and homestays began to target long-term rental business, launching more affordable room types, while providing services such as group meals, meal delivery, laundry and transportation for long-term rental travelers," Cai said.

She added that compared with ordinary residential places, serviced apartments and homestays are often equipped with better decorations, more complete services and similar prices, making them highly competitive.

Tongcheng Travel, a Jiangsu-based online travel agency, also found that after the National Day holiday break, off-peak travel started to gain momentum. Apart from the silver-haired generation, young people, especially freelancers, dominate the main group of those who take trips.

The travel agency started to get prepared for this year's winter travel products in October to optimize the configuration of flight tickets and hotels, besides launching cost-effective products. The company recently launched more than 100 routes designed for those seeking warmer weather this year, and many routes have targeted niche destinations.

Guangxi and Guizhou province have seen rapidly growing popularity in this year's southward migration travel. In addition to well-known cities such as Guilin and Yangshuo in Guangxi, niche destinations like Chongzuo, Nanning, and Beihai in the region have become more sought-after, Tongcheng Travel found.

While residents living in the north would like to go to warmer places, those who live in the south are interested in visiting the northern part of the country.

A large number of consumers who live in Guangdong province have started to prepare cold weather clothing for their trips to Northeast China so they can enjoy some ice and snow experiences.

"While consumers from the north prefer to go south for warmer weather, southern residents prefer to go to the north for 'freezing,'" said Xu Hongfei, domestic vacationing product manager of Tongcheng Travel.

"Keywords such as hot springs and warm weather have both grabbed the attention of consumers in recent days, and the search volumes of travel products in Northeast China, Beijing, Shanghai, as well as Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces have been high."

Southeast Asian destinations perfect for spontaneous trips by young Chinese

By ZHU WENQIAN

Young travelers from China are showing an ever-growing enthusiasm for visiting Southeast Asian countries in a more spontaneous travel style and without extensive planning, industry players found.

Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand have become popular overseas destinations for Chinese visitors, fueled by their visa-free entry policies and proximities to China, with many consumers tending to buy tickets one week, and go on their trips the following week, according to a report by Qunar, a Beijing-based online travel agency, and Scoot, the low-cost arm of Singapore Airlines Group.

A more flexible approach to traveling rather than planning far in advance has become a new trend. For the National Day holiday break, the number of Chinese travelers who booked trips within seven days of departure grew by 21 percent year-on-year, Qunar found.

Southeast Asia has become the top choice for many young Chinese travelers with short flying distances and cheaper prices, making them especially attractive outbound destinations. Travelers have booked more affordable homestays, packages that include flights and hotels,

as well as flights that are operated by low-cost airlines.

Scoot said more than 60 percent of travelers who took its flights for the week-long National Day holiday booked the tickets in September, and 25 percent of travelers booked the flights within seven days of departure.

"Some Southeast Asian destinations with high cost-effectiveness such as Kota Kinabalu and Penang in Malaysia, and Phuket in Thailand, were among the most popular destinations in the region during the National Day holiday break," said Bernard Sim, the recently promoted general manager for Scoot in China.

Besides, many young people no longer tend to carry heavy luggage. Instead, they opt for lightweight travel with just a backpack or a 20-inch carry-on suitcase for a trip, the report found.

As of July, the number of flights connecting China and Singapore fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels seen in 2019, and the number of Chinese travelers visiting Singapore reached 106 percent of 2019 levels, according to the Singapore Tourism Board.

Travel is no longer about sightseeing, and going to a place for a variety of shows, exhibitions, sporting events or concerts has become a

new way for young people to enhance their travel experiences.

During the period when Taylor Swift held a concert in Singapore in March this year, the number of post-1990s Chinese travelers visiting Singapore hit a historic high, data from the Singapore Tourism Board showed.

In the second half of the year, Singapore and Malaysia held concerts by superstars including Jay Chou, Andy Lau and Dua Lipa, as well as hosting several international music festivals.

On the day when the tickets of popular concerts went on sale, fans who secured the tickets also quickly booked their flights at the same time, the report found.

In addition, more young Chinese travelers no longer prefer popular internet-famous tourism spots. They tend to seek places with beautiful sceneries and fewer crowds, and hidden gem destinations that haven't been overly commercialized. More young people also prefer to travel during off-peak periods to enjoy better experiences at a lower cost, the report found.

Sarawak, a niche destination in eastern Malaysia, saw the number of Chinese mainland travelers from January to July surpass the total number seen in the whole of 2023, according to Sarawak Trade



Chinese tourists visit the Grand Palace in Bangkok, Thailand, in October. XINHUA

and Tourism Office Singapore.

Over the seven-month period, the number of Chinese mainland visitors jumped 90 percent year-on-year. In July, a peak travel season in summer, Sarawak saw a record

number of monthly visitors from the Chinese mainland, data from the office showed.

Moreover, hiking, camping, diving, spelunking, rock climbing and other outdoor activities have

become increasingly popular for Chinese travelers. During the Golden Week holiday break, Surabaya in Indonesia was popular with many outdoor enthusiasts, Scoot said.

COMMENT

Editorials

Chance of a new beginning for world's most important bilateral relationship

Republican Donald Trump won the US presidential election on Wednesday to become the country's 47th president after winning more than 270 electoral votes that are needed to enter the White House.

Yet following celebrations given his stunning political comeback, the 78-year-old former US president does not have much time to waste before he pitches in to get the real work done.

The election has exposed the depths of division the country has never before seen, and the healing process could take years. Trump made the first step in that direction by saying it was "time to unite" as a country during his election victory speech in Florida.

Once in office, Trump will be facing more pressing challenges, ranging from the economy to jobs and to immigration. That voters whose top issue was the economy voted overwhelmingly for him serves as a testament to the political mantra "it's the economy, stupid". High price rises over the past four years that have caused financial difficulties for many, especially low-income households, were considered one of the main reasons behind Democratic candidate Kamala Harris' defeat.

A solution that Trump has offered to end the US' economic woes is higher tariffs, which he said would "launch an economic boom". He even proposed to impose 60 percent tariffs on Chinese imports, which many economists warn could only lead to inflation, thus even higher prices for US consumers.

That issue alone raises enough worries about huge uncertainties for future China-US relations. Other differences that could potentially pit the two countries against each other range from the Taiwan question to the South China Sea issue.

It is natural for China and the US, the world's two largest economies, to have differences. How to responsibly manage them will determine the future of Sino-US ties.

China insists that the principle of "mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and win-win cooperation" is the guarantee for the smooth development of Sino-US relations and therefore, must be the direction for joint efforts by the two countries on the way ahead.

That the two countries have broad common interests not only in traditional areas such as the economy, trade and agriculture, but also in emerging areas such as climate change and artificial intelligence makes cooperation "the only correct choice" for them. The two countries must work to ensure that the common interests they share transcend the differences that exist between them.

Economic and trade cooperation has always served as a ballast of Sino-US relations, and how to make larger the "cake of economic cooperation" between the two countries, rather than high tariffs or other restrictive measures such as "de-risking" or "decoupling", would help solve the economic problems.

The Taiwan question is the most important and most sensitive issue at the core of Sino-US ties. It is the political foundation of bilateral relations. It is a redline that should never be crossed. The new US administration must stick to the "one-China" principle so as to navigate Sino-US ties through any disturbances that would arise.

China has made it clear that it is a friend and partner of the US, not a threat or an adversary to the country as some US politicians claim. The two countries stand to gain from cooperation, and lose from conflict, as history proves.

Now that the US presidential race has come to an end, new opportunities have emerged for the two countries to push forward the mutually beneficial Sino-US cooperation, which not only serves the interests of the two countries, but also will inject greater certainty and stability into a world that is gripped by unprecedented changes and chaos.

A new starting point has been established. It is now up to the new US leadership to take the overall picture of Sino-US relations into account, and echo the call of China to keep the world's most important bilateral relationship on the track of healthy and stable development.

Israel sends a signal to next US president

It should not be taken as a coincidence that Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant was sacked hours before the US presidential election finished on Tuesday.

In a recorded statement released on Tuesday evening, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that "trust between me and the minister of defense has cracked".

The breakdown in relations between Gallant and the Israeli leader was evident months before in their differences over a Gaza cease-fire and it culminated late last month with an open letter from the defense chief to the Israeli Cabinet opposing a showdown with Iran.

Netanyahu took the long-expected move while Israel is making intensive preparations for a widely anticipated Iranian retaliation for Israel's attacks on Iranian targets late last month, which Teheran has threatened will be of a larger scale to make Tel Aviv feel the pain. It indicates that Netanyahu is seizing all the power in his own hands.

Israel Katz, currently the foreign minister, will become defense minister, and Gideon Sa'ar will replace Katz as foreign minister, the prime minister's office said on Tuesday. That neither has extensive military experience, though Katz has served in the Cabinet throughout the war, means Netanyahu doesn't want any military veteran to throw his weight around in the Cabinet upsetting his war plan.

Gallant is a close interlocutor for the United States, the enabler of Israel's military actions, and he reportedly has daily conversations with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. As the Joe Biden administration will continue to stay in power until the swearing in of the next president on Jan 20, even before he knew who would win the election, Netanyahu, by replacing Gallant with an amateur defense chief, has sent an unmistakable message to the US that he is hell-bent on throwing the helve after the hatchet in steering the Middle East crisis to develop according to his design.

Taking advantage of the critical power transition in Washington as a window of opportunity, he is trying to make that a fait accompli as neither the Democrats nor the Republicans can afford to overhaul the US' politically correct inertia in providing unconditional support to Israel at this moment, not to mention during a possible protracted brawl between the two main US parties over the result of the election.

After Gallant was fired, there was a massive protest in Israel's capital, Tel Aviv, demanding Netanyahu's resignation. Despite the Israeli leader's careful scheming, he cannot avoid the reality that his insistence on pursuing his goals is tearing Israel apart internally, nor that the anti-Netanyahu forces are growing stronger. On the day Gallant was fired, the Israeli police announced that they had launched a criminal investigation "into the events at the beginning of the war", which might incriminate Netanyahu.

Over the past year, the Israeli leader has only made his country more insecure by pitting the nation against seven opponents in its neighborhood at the same time. The more than 100 hostages that are still held by Hamas are no longer on his mind as their use value had been long overdrawn by Israel's brutal attacks on Gaza that have caused the deaths of more than 42,000 Palestinians, among whom two-thirds are women and children.

In a televised statement on his dismissal, Gallant said it was the result of a dispute over three things: the issue of exempting ultra-Orthodox Jews from military service, the abandonment of hostages in Gaza, and the need for an official inquiry into Hamas' Oct 7 attacks. "There is and will not be any atonement for abandoning the captives," he said. "It will be a mark of Cain on the forehead of Israeli society and those leading this mistaken path."

These remarks will continuously ring true as long as Netanyahu presses ahead with his personal war.

Cai Meng



Opinion Line

Kuala Lumpur-Beijing synergy will help parallel modernization

Chinese leaders met with visiting Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim showing the importance China attaches to developing ties with the Southeast Asian nation, and building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future.

Anwar's visit comes less than two months after Malaysian King Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar visited China in September, his first visit to a non-ASEAN country since becoming head of state.

In June, Premier Li Qiang paid an official visit to Malaysia, during which the two sides issued a joint statement on deepening and upgrading the comprehensive strategic partnership and jointly building a China-Malaysia community with a shared future.

China-Malaysia ties go back a long

way. Malaysia was one of the first ASEAN countries to establish diplomatic ties and the first to establish a comprehensive strategic partnership with China. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1974, especially since the establishment of the comprehensive strategic partnership in 2013, relations between China and Malaysia have improved by leaps and bounds. China has been Malaysia's largest trading partner for 15 consecutive years, with bilateral trade from January to June reaching \$100.23 billion, up 10.6 percent year-on-year, and Malaysia remains China's second-largest trading partner and largest source of imports in ASEAN.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the Year of China-

Malaysia Friendship, which will inject new impetus into the development of bilateral ties. At the same time, Malaysia's rotating presidency of ASEAN next year is expected to further strengthen bilateral coordination and cooperation within the China-ASEAN framework, and help boost China's ties with the bloc to promote regional economic integration and safeguard peace and development in Asia.

The two countries should steadily advance flagship projects such as the East Coast Rail Link and the Malaysia-China "Two Countries, Twin Parks", unless the cooperation potential in emerging areas, and constantly expand the space for cooperation in order to expedite their modernization process with high-level strategic coordination.

— WU YIXUE, CHINA DAILY

Go beyond wine, beef and Shanghai

Australia's largest-ever delegation, comprising more than 250 companies and led by Minister for Trade and Tourism Don Farrell, is participating in this year's China International Import Expo that kicked off in Shanghai on Tuesday.

Since 2009, China has been Australia's largest trading partner.

Over a quarter of Australia's export revenue comes from China, through the products its enterprises are showcasing at the CIIE, ranging from beef, wine to milk; it also imports a large number of industrial products from China.

On Nov 1, Vice-Premier He Lifeng, who is also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, met an Australian high-level business delegation led by David Olsson, national president of the Australia China Business Council. At the meeting, He said that while China is advancing high-level opening-up, it attaches great significance to protecting the legitimate rights and interests of foreign-funded enterprises.

The two countries' mutual regard for each other is also on display at the ongoing CIIE. On its official WeChat

account, the Australian Trade and Investment Commission was seen introducing the products exhibited at CIIE, trying to attract Chinese enterprises and customers to pay more attention to them. The Australian government has also recruited seven enterprises to participate in the 26th China Hi-Tech Fair to be held in Shenzhen from Nov 14 to 16. It's the common wish of both Canberra and its enterprises to strengthen economic ties with China and their positive attitude is being echoed from China.

— ZHANG ZHOUXIANG, CHINA DAILY

What They Say

EU puts trade war with China on the cards

At a parliamentary confirmation hearing on Monday, EU trade chief-in-waiting Maros Sefcovic clearly showed his tough stance on the European Union's trade issues with China.

The Slovakian politician, who would also be the commissioner for economic security should he clear a vote by the members of the European Parliament later this month, described China as "our third biggest and most challenging" trading partner, and vowed to "rebalance" ties and be "more assertive in challenging structural imbalances and unfair practices" including "non-market policies driving overcapacity".

Regarding the ongoing negotiations between China and the EU over the "anti-subsidy" tariffs the latter slapped on Chinese-made electric vehicles from Oct 30, Sefcovic seemed to miss the point, saying that the European Commission hoped to avoid any further Chinese "retaliation" through dialogue, while the current focus of the consultations is on whether the two sides can agree on minimum prices of the

Chinese-made EVs in the EU market. The future EU trade chief should be reminded that his primary responsibility is to serve the bloc's interests through promoting healthy and stable development of its economic and trade ties with major trading partners, including China.

The strong complementarity between China's trade with the EU and the United States' trade with it means the bloc will only harm its own interests by blocking imports from China, for which it cannot find a feasible replacement.

A close ally with the pro-US European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on China-related issues, Sefcovic should be well aware that targeting the Chinese-made EVs is a politically motivated move that hurts the EU itself most — since consumers have to pay higher prices, EU carmakers are excluded from cooperation opportunities with advanced Chinese partners and EU's green transition slows down — not to mention the damage caused by China's countermeasures against pork, dairy products

and brandy from the EU.

It is the bad roles assumed by the Washington yesmen in the EU that have led the champions of free trade, open markets, inclusiveness and independence astray, sacrificing the EU's interests and principles on the altar of US hegemony. The EU has come under mounting pressure from the US, which has been pressing it to build "a wall of opposition" and form "a united front" against Chinese products and sectors that outcompete those of the US.

Despite Sefcovic's claim that "the EU is not interested in trade wars. We are looking for a rebalancing of our relations with China", what the EU has been doing as evidenced by its protectionist moves on the Chinese-made EVs is to push the win-win Sino-EU economic relations to a trade war by trying to reset the otherwise healthy relations as Washington dictates.

Ironically, when the America-first US targets imports from the EU, something China has never taken the initiative to do, those Washington proxies in Brussels just keep a studied silence.

— LI YANG, CHINA DAILY

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Contact us at:

China Daily
15 Huixiu Dongjie Chaoyang District,
Beijing 100029
News: +86 (0) 10 6491-8366
editor@chinadaily.com.cn
Advertisement: +86 (0) 10 6491-8631
ads@chinadaily.com.cn
Subscription: +86-400-699-0203
subscription.chinadaily.com.cn
App: www.chinadaily.com.cn/mobile/daily.html

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

China Daily Asia Pacific
China Daily Hong Kong
Unit 1818, Hing Wai Centre, 7 Tin Wan
Praya Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong
+852 2518 5111
editor@chinadailyhk.com
editor@chinadailyasia.com

China Daily USA
1500 Broadway, Suite 2800,
New York, NY 10036
+1 212 537 8888
editor@chinadailyusa.com

China Daily Africa
P.O. Box 27281-00100, Nairobi, Kenya
+254 (0) 20 242 8589 (Nairobi)
editor@chinadailyafrica.com
enquiries@chinadailyafrica.com
subscription@chinadailyafrica.com

COMMENT



China and the World Roundtable | China-US Relations

Editor's note: According to US media reports, Donald Trump was reelected as the US' 47th president on Wednesday. How will Sino-US ties develop in the coming years? Three experts share their views.

Li Yan

US, China should jointly face global issues

China-US relations are the most important bilateral relations of the 21st century, because they impact the well-being of the people of the two countries and will help shape the world's future. And the future of China-US relations could be influenced by the new US president.

While the world faces a plethora of challenges, including geopolitical conflicts, faltering economic recovery, AI governance, global governance reform and climate change, the frictions between major powers have intensified. To overcome these challenges, the world needs global stability and cooperation, especially cooperation between China and the United States.

China and the US worked together on the principle of mutual benefit and mutual respect for four decades since establishing diplomatic ties on Jan 1, 1979. In 2001, China and the US agreed to work together to counter global terrorism. In 2008, the two sides joined hands to deal with the global financial crisis and develop a new pattern of global economic governance. In 2015, they jointly helped finalize the Paris Agreement at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, thereby strengthening the global fight against climate change.

But the tariff war between China and the US since 2018, and the three-year COVID-19 pandemic since 2020, dealt blows to bilateral relations, as well as the global economy. But before the world could recover from the impacts of the pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict broke out in February 2022, followed by the Israel-Palestine conflict in October last year. Not to mention that global growth remains weak and climate governance stagnant.

No country can be immune to the consequences of global issues, and no country can overcome all the challenges alone. Global cooperation, especially cooperation between China and the US, is needed to address all these challenges.

The campaign for the just-concluded presidential election showed that the American people are still most con-



The author is director of Institute of World Political Studies at China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations.

cerned about domestic issues such as the economy, healthcare, immigration, crime and drug trafficking. But the US needs China's cooperation to address the fentanyl drug problem. Fentanyl, a powerful opioid narcotic analgesic, was developed to be used in its citrate form to treat chronic pain, before, during and after surgery.

But due to its high addictiveness,

some people in the US have been using it as a drug. Drug abuse has become a major cause of accidental deaths in the US, with the abuse of opioids such as fentanyl being especially dangerous.

China is a pioneer in global drug control and the first country to formally list fentanyl and all fentanyl-like substances as narcotics. As such, the US can address the fentanyl problem in the country only by working with China to strengthen regulation on opioids.

Since the beginning of this year, China and the US have gradually resumed high-level exchanges and communication at all levels. The two sides have continued to cooperate in areas such as drug control, law enforcement and repatriation of illegal immigrants and fugitives, climate change and AI. So

the new US administration needs to deepen cooperation with China to address some of its domestic problems.

In recent years, the US strategic community has started debating the country's "China policy" and China-US relations during the presidential campaign. And a debate on an issue means the issue is controversial, ambiguous and potentially dangerous.

Though in past years being tough on China and checking China's rise seem to have become the favorite pursuit of the US administration, the Congress and strategic circles, there are some rational voices in the US. For example, Rush Doshi, former director of China Affairs, affiliated with the National Security Council, said that a direct conflict with China is not advisable, and the US should reduce the risk of tensions escalating into a war through "managed competition".

And Ryan Hass, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, said that being obsessed with the thought of confronting China has undermined the US' global leadership. And political scientists such as Jessica Chen Weiss and James Steinberg have said China and the US should not be locked in a zero-sum game, because cooperation between them is key to addressing bilateral and global issues.

It is clear therefore that the US' China policy is not set in stone, and its adjustment from time to time reflects the US strategic community's recognition of the importance of China-US relations.

China's policy toward the US has always been clear, as China has always preferred dialogue and cooperation over zero-sum games. The success and achievements of China and the US are beneficial, rather than a challenge, for both sides. So the new US president should attach greater importance to China-US relations and engage in win-win cooperation.

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

Robert Lawrence Kuhn

What Trump augurs for Sino-US ties

The rhetorical heat remains. The partisan smoke has not yet cleared. Nonetheless, it is surprisingly sure that Donald Trump, the 45th US president, will return to the White House as the 47th US president with a surprisingly decisive victory. US presidential elections have consequences and while Sino-US relations will be one among many, it will be a big one.

It is no exaggeration that nothing matters more for global peace and prosperity, over and above the obvious well-being of the American and Chinese peoples, than good, stable relations between the two largest economies of the world. Everyone wins when Sino-US relations are good; everyone loses when Sino-US relations are not stable.

Consider the background in US politics. It is probative, even revelatory, that while Democrats and Republicans fight over almost every imaginable issue, promulgating radically opposing worldviews, they are remarkably unified in taking a tough stand on China.

In fact, the two major political parties try to outdo each other in being (or just appearing) "tougher" on China. "Soft on China", on the other hand, can be a career-wrecking epithet. Why American attitude toward China has been toughening over the past 10 years or so is beyond the scope of this article, but to assume it is all some deep-seated conspiracy to isolate, weaken and contain China would be to miss essential features of Sino-US relations that could help reverse the deterioration.

Yet the US' China policy was not much featured in the harsh, disputatious election campaign — other than some unsurprising rote rhetoric. This relative unimportance is a good thing. Sure, both Trump and Democrat candidate Kamala Harris criticized the other's China policy, but far more substantial in their non-stop, calumnious debates were, domestically, illegal immigration, the economy, abortion, wokeness, taxation, the list goes on, and internationally, the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Palestine conflicts. That China played the undercard in the campaign rhetoric is a good thing as it affords the winner greater flexibility in optimizing the China policy in the real world.

Over the years, Trump's approach to China has been both consistent and, well, simplistic. On the one hand, he has long blamed weak US policy toward China as responsible for the decline of American manufacturing, an oft-repeated charge that few economists support. On the other hand, Trump professes appreciation and a kind of admiration for the Chinese leader.

Trump is rightfully called "transactional" in that he seeks to make what he believes to be favorable deals for the United States and his perceptions of how such deals would enhance his own image. "Transactional" meaning ideology-free; some would say "values-free".

Trump would not likely care much about "human rights" or "minority rights" in China. He would not focus on China's domestic issues, only those that, in his worldview, affect the US. He would care about drug interdiction, balance of trade, economic competition, and the like.

Trump relishes trade war. He has described himself as "Mr. Tariffs." He sees tariffs as the go-to, first policy prescription for various global ills, whether those of adversaries or allies. He is correct that tariffs would hurt other countries but incorrect that tariffs would overall help the US.

Trump will almost certainly raise tariffs, across the board and with special intensity on Chinese goods. The consequences of such tariffs would almost certainly lead to lower economic efficiencies globally and higher prices for American consumers. However, Trump being Trump, he would seek to make some kind of grand deal with China.

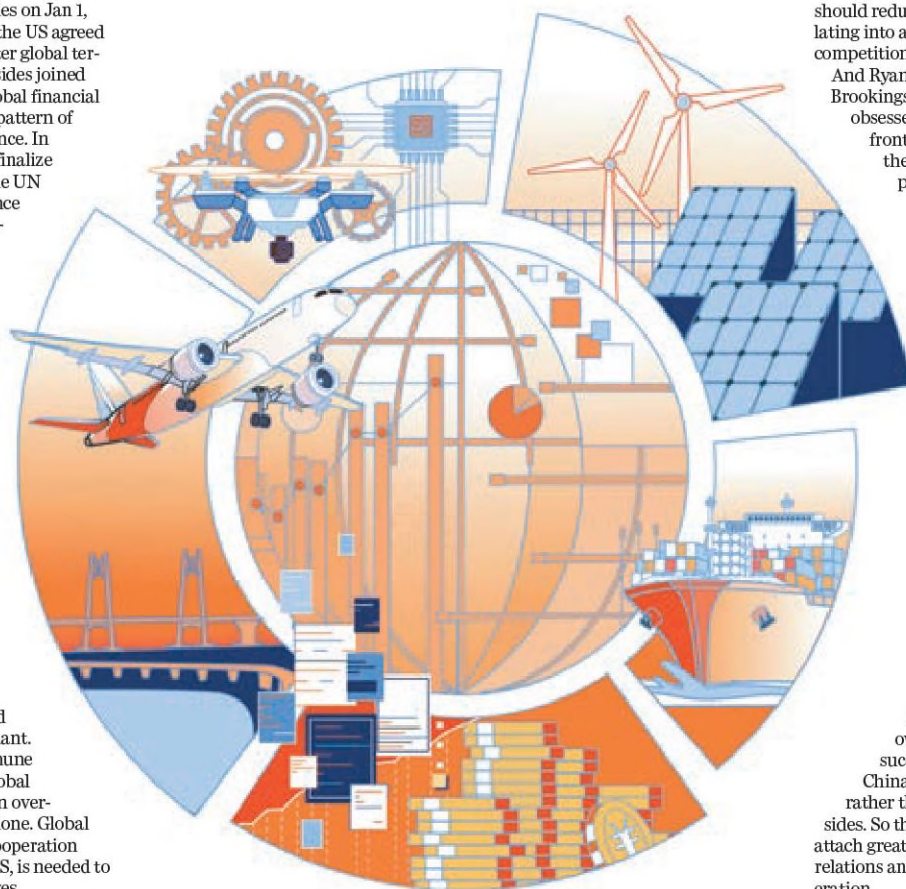
It is usually the case that one can forecast a US president's foreign policy by assessing the background and policy positions of those he picks for the top foreign policy positions, such as secretary of state, national security adviser, and other senior roles. This truism is less true for Trump, who has a history of flouting expert advice, dismissing senior personnel as if actors auditioning for bit parts, and going with his gut instincts.

Moreover, Trump seems to have learned questionable lessons from his first presidential term, when many of his former senior staff turned against him, leveling withering criticisms, and so now he prizes personal loyalty above professional competence, a worrying hierarchy of priorities for a US president. I suspect that those deemed most loyal to Trump are those most likely to hold rigid positions opposing China. Yet Trump is bold and fearless and likes to surprise.

What to do? My three-fold prescription for Sino-US relations is simple — I offer both sides the same advice: Don't make things worse, such as by pushing against mutual "redlines"; do find small areas of cooperation, such as fighting illegal drugs, organized crime, epidemics, AI risk, and climate change; and allow time to pass peacefully and to work its calming magic.

The Chinese and American peoples will support it. And the peace and prosperity of the world depend on it.

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SHI YU / CHINA DAILY

David Gosset

New start or old patterns for the two largest economies?

According to US media, the American people have elected Donald Trump as the 47th president of the United States, a momentous event that is significant for not only Americans but also the entire world. The role of the US in global affairs makes every presidential election a matter of great international interest.

As the leader of the world's largest economy with unparalleled military and diplomatic reach, the new US administration's policies and direction will reverberate far beyond the country's borders. One area where the impact of this election will be felt most acutely is the US-China relationship, which stands as the most consequential bilateral relationship of our time.

It is a fact that the Sino-US relationship has evolved into a complex rivalry that encompasses economic, technological, military and ideological dimensions. This is not a rivalry likely to fade any time soon, and it risks becoming a source of greater global division. At its core, this rivalry is rooted in differing visions of global leadership and national identity, with both countries vying for influence on the world stage.

Hence, true change in this dynamic would require a major paradigm shift: a reassessment of the US' understanding of China's strategic intentions.

Much of the tension between the two major powers stems from a perception in Washington that China's rise poses a direct threat to the US' prosperity and the American way of life. This belief fuels a tendency toward defensive and

adversarial policies, which only serve to heighten tensions.

Yet Trump should recognize that the inevitable renaissance of China does not have to be viewed through a lens of threat or antagonism. While China's economic and political influence continues to grow, it does not necessarily follow that this growth will come at the expense of the US or its global standing. In fact, it is not only possible but highly necessary for China's power to harmonize with the US' power for the sake of global stability and peace.

To navigate this evolving landscape, the new US administration must reconsider its approach to China. Viewing China's rise as an opportunity for cooperation rather than as a zero-sum game is crucial. However, a reassessment of China's strategic intentions should begin with an acknowledgment of the peaceful nature of China's rise.

Over the past few decades, China has demonstrated a largely non-interventionist approach to foreign policy, focusing on internal development and economic growth rather than expan-



The author is the founder of the China-Europe-America Global Initiative, editor of China and the World in three volumes, and the creator of the Inspiring Series, a collection of books that aims to introduce China to the world. The forthcoming installment in the series is titled China: Inspiring Greater Bay Area.

sionist or imperialist ambitions. The Belt and Road Initiative is emblematic of China's strategy to enhance its global influence through economic ties and infrastructure development rather than military might.

However, the rise of China does come with complexities. Power is relative, and as China's global influence increases, the US' unilateral dominance in world affairs inevitably erodes. This shift in the global power balance has understandably led to anxiety in the US about its future role in the world.

Nonetheless, this moment in history presents an opportunity for the US to redefine what leadership means in a truly multipolar world. The US can still demonstrate leadership by fostering a global order that prioritizes cooperation, diplomacy, and mutual respect, rather than one rooted in rivalry, conflict and a zero-sum game mindset.

China's peaceful rise, coupled with its massive domestic market and growing technological prowess, can be seen as complementary to global growth rather than as a destabilizing force. The challenge for the US will be to change its mindset from one of containment and confrontation to one of engagement and partnership. By doing so, the US can help shape a future where both nations contribute to a more peaceful and prosperous world.

A critical step toward realizing this goal is through dialogue and diplomacy. Working with China to address common global challenges such as climate change and public health, and to maintain economic stability is essential. Both countries have an interest in

addressing these issues, and cooperation in these areas could serve as a foundation for building trust and reducing tensions.

Moreover, addressing the areas where US-China competition is most intense — such as technology and trade — requires a nuanced approach that balances national interests with the broader need for global stability.

The risk of escalating rivalry between the US and China is real but not inevitable. While competition between the two major powers will likely persist, it does not have to devolve into outright conflict. The new US administration has the opportunity to take a bold step in reassessing its understanding of China's strategic intentions and in crafting a more forward-thinking and cooperative approach to managing the Sino-US relationship. In doing so, the administration can maximize the chances of a peaceful and prosperous future for all mankind.

At this pivotal moment in history, the world is watching. How the US chooses to engage with China will have profound implications not only for the future of the two countries but also for the future of the global order. Now more than ever, the US must rise to the challenge of leadership by embracing diplomacy, fostering cooperation, and striving for a future where the rise of China does not signal the decline of the US but rather an opportunity for shared progress.

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



The author is chairman of The Kuhn Foundation and creator/host of Closer To Truth on science and philosophy, and a recipient of the China Reform Friendship Medal.

GLOBAL VIEWS

YU YONGDING

Saving the international monetary system

The internationalization of the renminbi will continue to help East Asian countries eliminate the negative influence of geopolitical factors

In the post-Bretton Woods era, there exists a fundamental contradiction between the dollar's status as a national currency (in serving US interests) and as an international reserve currency (in serving global interests). The United States must primarily provide international liquidity or reserve currency to the world through current trade deficits. In other words, the US provides the world with reserve currency by issuing "IOUs", and global economic growth requires the US to issue increasingly more "IOUs". The more "IOUs" are issued, the greater the US's external debt. When US debt accumulates to a certain amount, foreign investors and foreign central banks begin to doubt whether the US can redeem these "IOUs" with "real money". As a result, a balance of payments crisis may occur.

In the meantime, despite the rising ratio of US national debt to GDP and net foreign liabilities to GDP, the dollar remains stable because demand for the dollar as a reserve currency from other countries has also been increasing. The continuous growth of foreign exchange reserves held by other nations indicates their willingness to lend money to the US and finance its trade deficits. This way, the gap between domestic investment and savings in the US is filled by foreign savings, significantly alleviating inflationary pressures and the risk of dollar depreciation. Without the strong demand for US dollar reserves from other countries, a collapse of the dollar would have been inevitable long ago.

In the context of the growing sense of insecurity in the international environment, reform of the international monetary system seems to be an impending issue. After the outbreak of the global financial crisis, former president of the International Monetary Fund Christine Lagarde said at the China

Development Forum that the reform of the international monetary system should focus on two aspects. First, ensure that the global financial safety net is large enough, coherent, and works for all. Second, strengthen global cooperation on issues and policies affecting global stability. I have no objection to the second point. However, my question regarding the first point is: how large must this safety net be to be considered sufficiently large? Regardless of how much foreign exchange reserves it holds, it will never be enough. Even \$1 trillion in foreign exchange reserves could be quickly depleted.

The challenge facing the IMF is not merely ensuring that the global financial safety net is large enough, but rather finding ways to reduce the necessity for countries that issue non-international reserve currencies to accumulate reserve assets. In other words, it involves reforming the dollar-centered international monetary system.

From the perspective of international financial relations, a long-standing unresolved issue is the global imbalance that was heatedly debated around 2006, when the US net foreign liabilities stood at \$1.8 trillion, approximately 13 percent of the country's GDP. By 2022, this figure had risen to \$18 trillion, accounting for 70 percent of its GDP. At that time, there were concerns that a sudden halt in foreign capital inflows into the US could lead to a depreciation of the dollar, US debt defaults, or actual defaults triggered by inflation. Considering the present situation, shouldn't we be even more concerned about the impact of the US' net foreign liabilities on international financial stability?

Former chair of the board of governors of the US Federal Reserve, Ben Bernanke, blamed the excess savings of trade surplus countries



MA XUEJING / CHINA DAILY

as the reason for causing global imbalances. In fact, a more significant cause of global imbalances is the insufficient savings of the US, specifically its massive fiscal deficit. In 2020, the US fiscal deficit reached 14.9 percent of its GDP. Consequently, former US treasury secretary Lawrence Summers referred to the country's fiscal policy as "the most irresponsible policy". According to IMF data, in 2023, the US experienced a "substantial fiscal deterioration", with the defi-

cit-to-GDP ratio reaching 8.8 percent, more than double of the figure in 2022. On Dec 29, 2023, the US Treasury's daily report indicated that federal government debt surpassed \$34 trillion. As IMF Chief Economist Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas said, the US fiscal stance is "of particular concern", and "it raises longer-term fiscal and financial stability risks for the global economy".

If, say, we have long been concerned that the continuous increase in US net foreign liabilities would

ultimately lead to a so-called sudden stop, default on US treasury bonds, depreciation of the dollar, and a sharp worsening of US inflation, now a new dimension of threats has emerged for other non-allied countries of the US. Due to geopolitical needs, the US may seize China's overseas assets. As early as 2013, Financial Times columnist Martin Wolf pointed out that in the event of a conflict, the US could well freeze China's foreign exchange assets. Although both parties would suffer substantial losses, China's losses would be even more severe. Wolf's warning has proven to be not merely alarmist. Following the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine crisis, the US froze \$300 billion of the Russian Central Bank's foreign exchange reserves within 72 hours. Who can be confident that the US will not freeze the foreign exchange reserves of other countries in the future? The weaponization of finance or the US dollar represents a fundamental disruption of international financial rules.

The direction for reforming the international monetary system through global or regional coordinated efforts has become increasingly uncertain. The process of fragmentation in the international monetary system may have already begun. For example, during the 2008 global financial crisis, the bilateral currency swap agreements among the US Federal Reserve, Bank of England, Bank of Canada, Bank of Japan, European Central Bank and Swiss National Bank were very effective in lowering interest rates and avoiding liquidity freezes. However, these currency swaps were conducted without collaboration with the IMF. Despite the positive role of the six central banks' currency swaps, it is also undeniable that they have increased the fragmentation of the

global financial safety net. After Western countries froze Russia's foreign reserves, former Reserve Bank of India governor Raghuram Rajan pointed out that SWIFT is an integral component of the global monetary system. Once SWIFT is weaponized, some relatively close countries may wonder if they can create a settlement system among themselves. In this case, from the perspective of the settlement system, the global monetary system is indeed fragmented. The outlook for the global monetary system is similarly concerning.

The process of fragmentation in the international monetary system will further develop, and the possibility of forming monetary blocs based on economic and geopolitical foundations cannot be ruled out. In the face of this potential trend, China's position is clear: China will further promote the strategic adjustment of "dual circulation, with domestic circulation as the mainstay". It will improve the balance of international payments, improve the exchange rate formation mechanism, fulfill commitments to liberalize the financial services industry, and orderly open the capital account for the free convertibility of the renminbi while effectively managing cross-border capital flows. The internationalization of the renminbi will continue to advance. China will continue to work to uphold the authority of the IMF and other multilateral international organizations, adhere to the established rules of the IMF and the Bank for International Settlements, and promote various forms of inter-state financial cooperation. Meanwhile, East Asian countries should eliminate the influence of geopolitical factors and restart regional financial cooperation.

The author is academic member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

UKERU MAGOSAKI

A time for patience

As US dominance comes to an end, it intends to create tensions in Asia, using Japan, the Taiwan island or the Philippines as pawns, but non-G7 countries must treat it carefully

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world was dominated by the United States. The world was compelled to play under Washington's rules, or pay a steep price, from crippling sanctions to outright regime change, according to

Graham Allison, a Harvard professor and expert on international relations.

However, the world has changed.

According to the World Factbook of CIA data in 2024, China has overtaken the US in terms of GDP (purchasing power parity) with \$31.2 trillion to the US' \$24.7 trillion. Furthermore, at \$48.5 trillion, the total GDP of G7 countries — the US, Japan, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy and Canada — is less than \$63.8 trillion, the total GDP of seven top non-G7 countries — China, India, Russia, Brazil, Indonesia, Turkey and Mexico.

The future of economic development depends largely on research and development in each country. Going by the number of top 10 research papers in natural science in 2020-22, China ranks the top, with 28.9 percent of the world's total, followed by the US with 19.2 percent, according to Science and Technology Indicators 2024 by the National Institute of Science and Technology Policy in Japan. This shows the likelihood of China's R&D overtaking that of the US in the future.

This change of economic power has influenced diplomacy and security.

Now, unlike before, the US can-

China can maintain the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. If other non-G7 countries accept the five principles, the world is likely to go toward peace and prosperity.

not impose its will on Russia, Palestine and China. In the case of the Ukraine crisis, the US cannot destroy Russia's economy as intended.

With the change of economic strength, the world is divided into two groups. Group A imposes the US' will on others, while Group B opposes Group A.

Because of the relative decline in its strength, the US has intensified its demand for obedience from allied countries, which can be seen in US-Japan and US-Germany relations. The Group B is loosely coordinated, with its possible leading idea being the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, which promotes mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. This concept excludes the possibility of one country's dominance over others.

Currently, the world faces three major conflicts and tension — the Ukraine crisis, the war in Gaza and the tension over the Taiwan region.

Theoretically, all three can be managed and solved peacefully, if

the world is sincere about achieving peace.

Regarding the crisis in Ukraine, an agreement on NATO not expanding to Ukraine will end the war. As for Gaza, acceptance of a two-state solution will decrease tensions.

As for the Taiwan question, if the US maintains the position, stated in the Shanghai Communiqué in 1972, that "the US acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China", the tension in the region will be reduced.

However, unfortunately, it is unlikely the US wants tension to reduce. And now, China is its biggest target.

In a public opinion Gallup poll conducted in February, 1,016 randomly selected adult residents were asked which country they considered to be the US' greatest enemy today. In response, 41 percent named China, 26 percent Russia, 9 percent Iran, 5 percent the US itself, and 4 percent the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Currently, the US is indirectly participating in the Ukraine crisis. However, to US citizens, the "threat of China" is perceived as greater than the threat of Russia. We should not underestimate this sentiment.

The more time passes, the more China closes in on its economic power gap. The more time passes, the stronger the economic power of non-G7 countries becomes.

We should include the time element in the formulation of policies.

China can maintain the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. If other non-G7 countries accept



WANG XIAOYING / CHINA DAILY

the five principles, the world is likely to go toward peace and prosperity.

However, before that, the US might lay traps to prevent that trend, just as it did in Ukraine where it led Russia to war by stepping up the movement for Ukraine's inclusion in NATO, increasing paranoia among Russians, and providing Ukraine huge amounts of weapons such as anti-tank missiles and land-to-air missiles to counter Russian forces.

The military-industrial complex plays a decisive role in the formulation of US security policies, which are, unfortunately, toward creating political confusion and military involvements in the world.

In the case of Asia, the US intends to create tensions, if possible, military confrontations, using Japan, the Taiwan region or the Philippines as pawns. As far as Japan is concerned, this process is going on with people being unaware.

For non-G7 countries, this is a

time for patience and seeking management in every area of trouble, in order to enjoy peace and prosperity in the future.

The author is director of the East Asian Community Institute and former professor of the National Defense Academy of Japan. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

LIFE



The exhibition *Grace and Garmet* displays costumes worn by Peking Opera maestros Mei Lanfang and Mei Baojiu. PHOTOS BY ZOU HONG / CHINA DAILY

Costumes reveal an enduring legacy

Father and son Peking Opera masters are celebrated in an exhibition of their elaborate stage garments, **Chen Nan** reports.



Top: A costume worn by Mei Lanfang. **Above:** Bai Jin performs an excerpt of *The Drunken Concubine* at the opening ceremony of the exhibition at the NCPA on Oct 22.

In the heart of the exhibition hall of the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, two intricately embroidered costumes stand side by side, capturing the legacy of Peking Opera masters Mei Lanfang (1894-1961) and his son Mei Baojiu (1934-2016).

These stunning garments, both worn in performances of the iconic Peking Opera production *The Drunken Concubine*, symbolize the seamless transmission of artistic genius between these two legends.

The robe, worn by Mei Lanfang, features delicate phoenix motifs and radiates the elegance and grace of his pioneering portrayal of Yang Yuhuan, a concubine of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty (618-907).

The costume worn by Mei Baojiu carries the weight of tradition, infused with his own subtle innovations with embroidered flying birds and flowers.

The two costumes, though separated by decades, embody the artistic continuity and evolution of the performing style created by Mei Lanfang.

The exhibition *Grace and Garmet*, featuring costumes donned by the two legendary artists and curated by the Jingju Theater Company of Beijing, offers viewers a captivating journey into the rich history and artistry embodied by these eminent figures, as depicted through their stage attire.

Peking Opera, or *jingju*, is a 200-year-old art form that combines singing, dancing, acrobatics and martial arts.

Mei Lanfang, one of the most influential figures in Peking Opera history, revolutionized the portrayal of *nandan* roles onstage. These roles refer to males playing female characters — a practice forged in feudal times when women were forbidden to take to the stage.

His groundbreaking performances set new standards for acting, singing and costume design in Peking Opera.

Following in his father's footsteps,



The Jingju Theater Company of Beijing stages *Mu Guiying Takes Command* at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing on Oct 22. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Mei Baojiu, the youngest child of Mei Lanfang, preserved and refined the artistic traditions of the performing style his father founded.

His performances of classic pieces continued to captivate audiences, but he brought his own touch to the roles, subtly evolving the design and interpretation of the characters' iconic costumes.

The exhibition highlights how Mei Baojiu maintained his father's legacy while also infusing his work with contemporary sensibilities, ensuring that the art form stayed relevant to modern audiences.

The exhibition, running until Nov 10, centers around nine representative Peking Opera pieces from the two artists, including *Farewell My Concubine* and *The Legend of Yang Yuhuan*.

On display are more than 30 exquisite costumes and headpieces that were once worn and used by both artists, many of which are being showcased to the public for the first time, according to Qin Yan, director of the Jingju Theater Company of Beijing, one of the country's top Peking Opera companies, which was founded in 1979.

Mei Lanfang was among the artists who made great contributions to the foundation of the company.

There are also old photos of the father and son when they performed together onstage.

they tell about the lives, careers and artistic innovations of Mei Lanfang and Mei Baojiu," says Qin.

"Beyond the visual splendor of the costumes, the exhibition provides rich context for visitors to understand the importance of costume design in Peking Opera."

She also adds that stage costumes are more than ornamental; they are vital to storytelling, character development and mood setting.

The exhibition presents a range of accessories, stage props and historical records, offering a comprehensive view of how costumes were integral to the artistic choices made by both masters. The carefully preserved garments reflect the exquisite craftsmanship of Chinese theater and the personal artistry of the two Mei masters, who used these costumes to breathe life into their performances.

The costumes showcase exceptional traditional craftsmanship and elaborate designs, often hand-embroidered with intricate patterns, symbols and colors that correspond to specific characters and roles. Researchers study these pieces to gain insights into the materials, techniques and cultural symbolism used in traditional Chinese opera costumes, Qin says.

Hu Wenge, a leading Peking Opera actor and disciple of Mei Baojiu, says: "These costumes are not just garments. They are living pieces of history, carrying the weight of generations of artistry. As their successors, it is our duty to honor their legacy and ensure that their spirit continues to shine onstage for future generations."

On the night of Oct 22, Hu performed *Mu Guiying Takes Command*, which was Mei Lanfang's final landmark work capping four decades of tremendous artistry. It premiered in Beijing in 1959 as a gift to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Contact the writer at chennan@chinadaily.com.cn



Top: A costume once worn by Mei Baojiu. **Above:** Hu Wenge performs in the classic Peking Opera *Mu Guiying Takes Command* at the NCPA on Oct 22.

Modernity encounters ancient civilization

By MINGMEILI in New York
mingmeili@chinadailyusa.com

Spanning millennia, the history and mystery of Sanxingdui's ancient civilization is reaching international audiences through modern digital platforms.

The exhibition *Sanxingdui Encounter: A Global Tour of 12K Micro-viewing of National Treasures* opened on Oct 11 at the Memor Museum in New York, offering visitors an opportunity to have an immersive virtual experience of the relics and also see the physical replicas of these treasures.

The display will last until Jan 19. Sanxingdui, an archaeological site located in modern-day Guanghan, Southwest China's Sichuan province, illustrates the civilization of the ancient Shu kingdom, which flourished over 3,000 years ago. Sanxingdui was not discovered until the 1920s, and ongoing archaeological efforts continue to reveal discoveries. By the end of 2022, fieldwork on six

newly uncovered sacrificial pits was nearly complete, yielding a wealth of precious artifacts. Over 4,000 items, including jade, stone and pottery, were unearthed during this phase of excavation. Archaeologists are piecing together the history of the ancient Shu civilization and presenting these findings to the public.

The Shu kingdom, which arose in the Sichuan basin during the Bronze Age, was a key hub for early-stage Chinese civilization. Its people produced finely crafted bronze, jade, gold and ceramic artifacts, depicting mythical creatures, rulers, gods and shamans with exaggerated features such as bulging eyes and enlarged ears.

"Sanxingdui's rich heritage deserves international attention, with its vast cultural significance needing to be shared with a broader audience," says Willa Ao, director of the Memor Museum.

"We want to present the relics through a blend of digital and physical experiences."



Replicas of Sanxingdui relics are on display at the Memor Museum in New York. MINGMEILI / CHINA DAILY

One example Ao gives is a bronze figure, which strikingly resembles the stance of an American fitness coach performing a dead lift. Additionally, a bronze tree is adorned with numerous small hanging artifacts, reminiscent of ornaments used to decorate Christmas trees.

Sanxingdui's unearthed bronzes were previously showcased at the

Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2002 as part of a broader exhibition on bronze artifacts, but Ao says this time, she wanted to provide New Yorkers a new and interactive way to feel the relics.

This is done through 1:1 replicas from the Sanxingdui Museum's collection, using ultra-high-definition 12k technology, artificial intelligence

interaction and virtual reality immersion, which required three years of preparation.

Visitors will have the opportunity to view the famous Bronze Mask with Crown and Protruding Eyes, a rare artifact that provides insight into the ceremonial and spiritual practices of the ancient Shu people.

Also on display is the striking Bronze Head Wearing a Gold Mask, first unearthed in 1986, which illustrates a unique blend of social status and ritual significance.

"Although they are replicas, they remain highly valuable," Ao says. She explains that these reproductions of the Sanxingdui Museum's collection were crafted using identical materials to faithfully replicate the original artifacts.

Visitors will be able to explore the relics using VR technology, which brings large artifacts like the Large Standing Man and the Bronze Sacred Tree into the gallery through virtual exploration.

The exhibition also employs 12K

video capture to document smaller artifacts, delicate bronze bells and bird sculptures, magnifying them for a closer look.

Sanxingdui is an important archaeological discovery, not just within Chinese archaeology, but within the world of archaeology, says Kristen Martucci, the exhibition's translator.

Martucci, 26, has been studying Chinese since high school and pursued East Asian studies, particularly ancient Chinese history, at Harvard University.

She primarily helps translate materials into English in a way that is approachable for American and international audiences.

She says her work is also a learning process in both Chinese and history while uncovering the "mystery." "I learned about Sanxingdui in my graduate school courses, but even for me, seeing these replicas and using this exhibition and VR to experience it — that's new to me, so it's really exciting," she says.

LIFE

Wellington College China has witnessed steady growth in the number of expat students at its six schools in four cities over the past 15 years, reflecting foreigners' continued confidence in China's economy and development, says the group's top executive.

There are currently over 5,400 students at the group's Wellington and Hiba schools in Tianjin, Shanghai, Hangzhou in Zhejiang province, and Nantong in Jiangsu province; and the student number has risen, says Joy Qiao Ying, founder and chairman of Wellington College China.

"Taking Wellington College International Shanghai as an example, there were over 300 students when it opened a decade ago. Now, we are near full capacity at over 1,600 students," says Qiao during an exclusive interview on Friday when the school celebrated its 10th anniversary.

"We're extremely lucky as a service provider in the education sector that has been riding on the giant, historical wave of China's rapid economic development," Qiao says.

"Increasingly, I hear multinational companies say they are in China not just because it is a big market or a place for manufacturing but because the country is attractive for its massive talent pool across disciplines and industries and its global perspective and linguistic ability," she says.

By staying in Shanghai, and with China being one of the largest international school markets globally, expat children enjoy top-quality education that they might not have access to in their home countries. This is one attraction or competitive advantage for expats to live and work in China, says Qiao.

Wellington College China schools, for which the annual tuition fees in Shanghai range from 166,000 yuan (\$23,000) to 380,000 yuan, have students from more than 50 countries and regions around the world, especially from the United States, the United Kingdom and other European countries. Many children also come from South Africa, Southeast Asian countries, Australia and Canada, among others.

Parents work in all sectors in China. "Taking our Shanghai schools as an example, the diverse areas relevant to technology and innovation — clean energy, electric vehicles, pharmaceuticals, finance, and advanced manufacturing — have representation in our parent body," says Qiao.

"Recently, we noticed many of the parents of students newly joining us are from the pharmaceutical sector. Perhaps it is a result of our location or the features of Shanghai's economy as a whole," she says.

Many expat parents appreciate that Chinese language courses are mandatory in early years for everyone who attends, says Qiao.

"China is an increasingly influential participant on the global stage. Parents see it as a significant, com-



Left: Pupils from Wellington College in Shanghai compete in a book relay in August. Right: The school celebrates United Nations Day in October with a parade of its international students. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Gaining a competitive edge

Offering high-quality education, China's international schools remain an attractive option, **Zhou Wenting** reports in Shanghai.



Clockwise from top: Students at the school take to the stage to perform on the college's 10th anniversary ceremony on Friday. More than 1,600 pupils and 400 members of staff came together to publicize and celebrate their landmark anniversary in September. Two students try on a classical Chinese musical instrument.

petitive advantage for their children to master the Chinese language, which is the most spoken worldwide and perhaps the most difficult to learn," she says.

Students can also select Chinese culture studies courses, which are a combination of history, geography and moral education.

"Celebrations and activities are held on the campus for all the important traditional Chinese festivals — Dragon Boat Festival, Lantern Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival," says an eighth-grade student from the UK at Wellington College International Shanghai, who asked to be identified as Benjamin. "This allows us to experience the local culture."

About 30 percent of graduates from the Wellington and Hiba schools go to the world's top 20 universities and about 60 percent go to top 50 universities. They ultimately become cultural ambassadors and help the world better understand China.

Qiao recalls a boy named Marcus from a family of Spanish and English parents who began his studies at a Wellington school in Tianjin at age 11. He is currently a senior at Peking University majoring in Chinese literature. He intends to continue with graduate studies in Chinese literature at Peking University.

Qiao also mentioned that the number of Chinese students from the group's Hiba brand (which accepts students of both expat and Chinese parents), who returned to the country after pursuing studies overseas, is on a significant rise.

A report by LinkedIn released in August echoed these statistics — 84 percent of Chinese students pursuing further studies abroad prioritize returning to China as their first option for their career. The percentage almost doubled from the previous year.

Another alumnus named Kevin who graduated from a Wellington school in Shanghai came from a family in Wuxi city, Jiangsu province, where there was a tradition of making *huishan niren*, clay figure handicrafts.

After receiving his university education abroad, he returned to China and modernized the concept of the traditional art form by combining it with coffee.

"He runs a coffee shop where the clay figures are exhibited and sold. Such fusion allows the traditional Chinese art form to be more accessible and appreciated by a younger, global audience," says Qiao.

Wellington College China is scheduled to open its first school overseas in San Francisco in the fall of 2026, providing immersive English and Chinese bilingual education.

"The school in San Francisco will offer education to the offspring of overseas Chinese and a lot of non-Chinese people who see the advantages of learning the Chinese language and culture," Qiao says.

Contact the writer at zhouwenting@chinadaily.com.cn

Chinese tourists experience ancient Egypt coming to life

By **XU LIN**
xulin@chinadaily.com.cn

When Chen Dan gazed upon the Pyramid of Khafre and the Great Sphinx, she felt the pages of history textbooks come to life.

In the Sahara, she enjoyed a peaceful and secluded afternoon, riding in a vehicle at high speeds through the desert known as dune bashing and savoring the sunset, disconnecting from the world as her mobile phone had no signal.

These are unforgettable memories from her 15-day journey across Egypt with her friends in March.

"I'm most impressed by Egyptian hospitality," says the 32-year-old traveler from Hefei, Anhui province.

During the trip, she rubbed elbows with the locals.

A group of youngsters struck up conversations, took photos and waved goodbye as they parted ways on opposite sides of the road.

At a pastry shop, kind strangers offered to translate the menu when they noticed the group's difficulty in reading it.

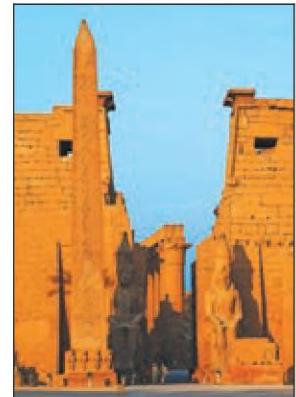
Like Chen, more Chinese tourists are traveling to Egypt to explore the mysterious pyramids, temples, museums and the Nile River.

The number of Chinese visitors to Egypt was 265,000 from January to September, an increase of 65 percent compared to the same period last year.

Amr El-Kady, CEO of the Egyptian Tourism Authority, estimates that



From left: A dancer takes to the air against the backdrop of an ancient Egyptian temple. The Small Temple of Abu Simbel, dedicated to the goddess Hathor and pharaoh Ramses II's wife, Nefertari, is illuminated. Luxor Temple used to be the main venue for ancient Egyptian religious celebrations. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



the country will receive over 300,000 Chinese tourists by the end of this year, aiming for over 15 million global visitors.

The tourism bureau will continue to strengthen cooperation with Chinese authorities and tourism operators. They will participate in tourism fairs in China and enhance their marketing strategies through conferences and seminars.

"Tourism acts as a vital bridge, fostering cultural exchanges and mutual understanding between the two countries," says Sherif Fathy, Egypt's minister of tourism and antiquities. He recently attended

the China Outbound Travel & Tourism Market 2024 in Beijing.

He says that as one of the countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, Egypt views China as a key partner in businesses such as tourism. Egypt has released a series of initiatives and measures to attract more Chinese tourists.

They are actively marketing Egypt as a diverse destination, both online and offline, offering experiences beyond the traditional visits to the pyramids. More Chinese tourists are now exploring Egypt's deserts and the Red Sea.

From July to August 2025, the *On Top of the Pyramid: The Civilization*

of Ancient Egypt exhibition at the Shanghai Museum showcases 788 artifacts from various eras of ancient Egyptian civilization, curated from seven major Egyptian museums.

Fathy believes that the popular exhibition has helped Chinese people learn about Egypt's ancient heritage and encouraged more of them to visit and explore the country's rich culture and history.

Currently, there are 22 to 30 flights per week between China and Egypt. Chinese tourists can obtain a visa-on-arrival when they enter Egypt for a fee of \$25.

"Discussions are ongoing

between the Egyptian and Chinese governments regarding the potential for visa-free entry and these negotiations take time," he says.

To enhance Chinese tourists' travel experiences, Egypt has installed Chinese signage at airports, hotels and scenic areas, trained more Chinese-speaking tour guides and offered Chinese cuisine at some hotels.

Chinese visitors can get abundant information about traveling to Egypt on the Chinese version of the Egyptian Tourism Authority's promotional website.

Tourists have much to anticipate with the upcoming official opening

of the Grand Egyptian Museum, which offers an extensive collection of ancient artifacts.

Egypt is pushing reforms in the tourism industry, with investment in its transportation networks, airport facilities and railway system. Fathy says Chinese hotel management companies and investors are welcome in Egypt's tourism industry.

They invite Chinese partners to promote China in the Egyptian market and introduce various Chinese destinations, going beyond the well-known sites such as the Great Wall and the Forbidden City.

LIFE



The Philadelphia Orchestra stages the first concert of its ongoing China tour at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, on Oct 31, kicking off its nationwide show and cultural exchange programs. PHOTOS BY JIANG DONG / CHINA DAILY

A lucky 13th for Philadelphia Orchestra

China veteran makes triumphal return with passionate performance in Beijing, **Chen Nan** reports.

As the Philadelphia Orchestra returns to China on its latest tour, which began on Oct 31 and runs until the coming Sunday, it is once again making history.

The full ensemble is embarking on its first tour of the country since 2019 and its 13th overall, the most by any American orchestra.

The tour includes Beijing, Tianjin and Chengdu, Sichuan province, as well as Haikou, Hainan province, a first for the orchestra. The concerts in Haikou this coming Saturday and Sunday will be the first time an American orchestra travels to perform in Hainan province.

The program includes music from Mozart, Beethoven and Tchaikovsky as well as the debut of a commission by Grammy-winning composer Mason Bates inspired by *A Moonlit Night on the Spring River*, a classic Tang Dynasty (618-907) poem by Zhang Ruoxu. It made its world premiere at Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts on Saturday and was part of a special program featuring ancient Chinese lyrical texts set to music by composers from around the world. The performance was part of the iSing! International Festival's Echoes of Ancient Tang Poems program, which got its North American premiere with the Philadelphia

Orchestra for Chinese Lunar New Year last year. During the tour, *pipa* (a four-stringed Chinese lute) player Wu Man and pianist George Li are performing with the orchestra as soloists.

"We are glad to be back in China and every time we are here, we meet both old and new friends," says Matias Tarnopolsky, president and CEO of the Philadelphia Orchestra. "This is the beginning of our second 50 years of friendship. We feel the warm feedback even before we perform at concert halls."

On Oct 30, one of the orchestra's string quartets performed three short pieces at the National Museum of China, attracting crowds and receiving applause.

The orchestra's history with China dates back to 1973 when, under the direction of Eugene Ormandy (1899-1985), it became the first orchestra from the United States to perform in China since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Since then, it has returned repeatedly, developing deep, impactful connections throughout China through concerts and residencies. In November last year, 14 of its members came to China to conduct a series of residencies in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the historic 1973 tour. The tour's first concert at the



Principal guest conductor Marin Alsop, who is leading the orchestra's China tour, at the concert at the NCPA in Beijing on Oct 31.

NCPA on Oct 31 opened with the lively overture from Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, which instantly infused the hall with energy and joy. The strings danced playfully, accompanied by bright woodwinds that evoked the warmth of laughter and celebration. This vibrant atmosphere set the stage for an evening of emotion and musical diversity.

Following this lively start, the orchestra transitioned to Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Overture* —

Fantasy. Conductor Marin Alsop skillfully drew out the contrasting themes of conflict and love, beginning with a slow introduction that intensified into a dramatic portrayal of the tragic narrative. The lyrical melodies, especially the poignant love theme played on the English horn, resonated deeply, reminding listeners of the enduring power of love in music and life.

The second half featured Dvorak's *Symphony No 9 in E Minor, From the New World*, a piece that encapsulates both the spirit of exploration and nostalgia for one's homeland. The performance filled the concert hall with a tapestry of sounds that intertwined themes of hope and longing, taking the audience on an emotional journey.

As the official program concluded, enthusiastic applause erupted, prompting the orchestra to return for an encore of Brahms' *Hungarian Dance No 5*, which brought the evening to a spirited close.

"The long friendship between the Philadelphia Orchestra and China is based on mutual respect and understanding. I am very honored to be part of this tour," says newly appointed principal guest conductor Alsop, who has a 30-year history with the Philadelphia Orchestra and is leading the tour. "We also have two musicians in the orchestra this time who came to China in 1973 during that epic tour, violinist Davyd Booth and violist Renard Edwards. They shared lots of memories, which are like they happened just yesterday."

"The Philadelphia Orchestra's journeys to China demonstrate a belief in the possibility of progress through dialogue; they make real the principle that music gives voice

to thoughts and ideas that words alone cannot convey," says Tarnopolsky, adding the tour also features collaborations with Chinese art institutions and young musicians.

He says that the orchestra's signature residency program has created a two-way exchange that demonstrates artistic excellence on stage and an enduring commitment to work in education and engagement.

Following the tour, a group of musicians will travel to Shanghai, Wuxi, Jiangsu province, and Nanchang, Jiangxi province, for additional residency activities, including performances with the Shanghai Philharmonic Orchestra, the Wuxi Symphony Orchestra, and the Nanchang Symphony Orchestra, as well as coaching sessions at Shanghai Tech University, and with members of local orchestras in Wuxi and Nanchang. In Chengdu, members of the orchestra performed side-by-side with members of the Chengdu Symphony Orchestra on Wednesday.

Contact the writer at chennan@chinadaily.com.cn



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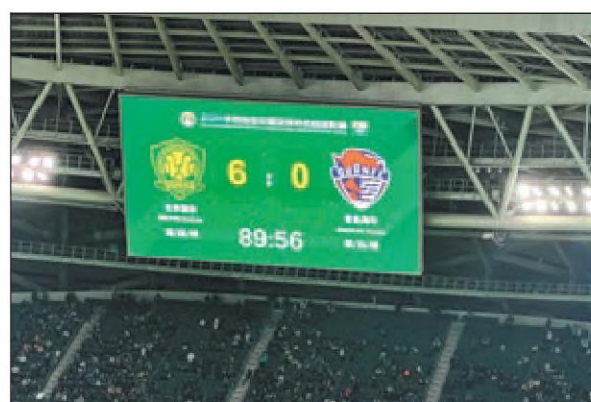
Football is a universal language and a labor of love

After nearly eight months living in the Chinese capital, I finally made it to my first Beijing Guoan match — and the team didn't disappoint by running out 6-0, winning over the hapless Qingdao Hainiu outfit.

The Beijing Workers' Stadium in Sanlitun — and home of Guoan — is an arena of which the city should rightly be proud. Accommodating 68,000 supporters, the ground is a mix of modern, inventive sporting architecture, such as its concrete facade, columns and oval shape, that has been fused with more traditional and historical elements that celebrate Beijing's past.

The old Workers' Stadium, which was known as Gongti for short, stood on the same site from 1959, the 10th anniversary of the People's Republic of China, until it was demolished in 2020 to make way for the current stadium, which opened at the end of 2022.

I was intrigued to experience what a Chinese Super League



Left: The scoreboard near full-time as Beijing Guoan hammers Qingdao Hainiu 6-0. Right: The impressive Beijing Workers' Stadium ahead of the match against Qingdao on Oct 19. PHOTOS BY NICK IVE / CHINA DAILY



match would offer, and I have to say it did not disappoint. Coming from England, football (not soccer!) is a hugely passionate affair that is instilled in you from a very young age.

Quite often you do not have a choice which team you support as that is bestowed on you, more often than not by your dad, and that affiliation is passed down through generations. Unfortunately,

for me, most people will say, my cross to bear is that I was born in north London to a Tottenham Hotspur-supporting father.

While the not-so "Super Spurs" has given me hours of hope and joy, following them religiously has ultimately delivered a lot more pain, anger, frustration and disappointment, much to the annoyance of my girlfriend and

the amusement of many of my friends, whose allegiances lie elsewhere.

But there is nothing you can do to escape a potential lifetime of despondency once you've become a fan. Unlike having a girlfriend, or boyfriend, or wife or husband, you most certainly cannot change your team, and there is nothing more annoying than those who do not follow football,

and who say that it is "just a game", seeing you once again deflated at the final whistle.

Going to a game is a rite of passage for any fledgling football fan, and it was interesting to see the young and excitable Beijing Guoan fans, as well as the older, more seasoned, and therefore more cynical supporters, making their way to the match.

The beauty of football is that it

is a universal language, and despite my very, very basic grasp of Chinese, there were no barriers to understanding the Guoan fans' frustration, amusement at club mascot Jingshi, the Beijing lion, and ultimately joy at watching their team canter to victory.

I even came away from the grounds for an after-match pint or three, having learned a new word — one that is unprintable in a respectable newspaper! But it is clear that whether you are in England or China, football evokes exactly the same emotions.

Sadly, despite rattling in a staggering 14 goals in its last two games, Guoan, which finished fourth, will not qualify for next season's AFC Champions League.

And that about sums up being a football supporter. You will never be content, and you will invariably end up in a world of frustration and pain. Unless, of course, you become one of those deservedly much-maligned and pathetic group of fans called "glory hunters", who do the unthinkable and change sides and opt to follow the flavor of the season!

Contact the writer at nick@chinadaily.com.cn