

Solar Great Wall

Photovoltaic project in Ordos set to power Beijing by 2030 GOING GREEN, PAGE 5



Europe should brace for impact of new US policies WORLD, PAGE 9



City of sunlight

TV series sheds light on Lhasa life through stories of young people LIFE, PAGE 15

CHINA DAILY

GLOBAL EDITION 中国日报 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2024

China, Indonesia to bolster relations

Xi underscores strategic nature and high level of bilateral ties during meeting with Prabowo

By ZHAO JIA zhaojia@chinadaily.com.cn

The joint efforts by China and Indonesia to forge an exemplary comprehensive strategic partnership and build a China-Indonesia community with a shared future of regional and global influence have highlighted their traditional friendship, according to officials and experts.

The efforts also have positive and significant implications for the region and beyond, they said as Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto wrapped up his three-day state visit to China on Sunday.

It was Prabowo's second visit to China this year and his first foreign trip after taking office on Oct 20. The 73-year-old former Indonesian defense minister also chose China as his first overseas destination in March following his victory in the presidential election.

The two visits have underscored that Prabowo attaches great importance to developing relations with China and also speak volumes about the high level and strategic nature of China-Indonesia relations, President Xi Jinping said on Saturday while meeting with Prabowo in Beijing.

Xi pointed out that adherence to strategic autonomy, mutual trust, mutual assistance, win-win cooperation, fairness and justice summarizes the experience in developing bilateral ties over the past decades, and should be followed for ensuring the sustained and stable development of relations in the future.

He said China is ready to work with Indonesia to write a new chapter of seeking self-improvement via solidarity, and boosting coordination and mutually beneficial and win-win cooperation among major developing countries.

China has been Indonesia's largest trading partner for 11 consecutive years and one of Indonesia's most significant tourist source countries, while Indonesia is China's second-largest investment destination among the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

"Prabowo's two visits have underscored China's importance to Southeast Asia's largest economy," said Du Lan, deputy director at the China Institute of International Studies' Department for Asia-Pacific Studies.

Du said that in addition to infrastructure engagement, such as the Jakarta-Bandung High-Speed Railway, both countries would further promote integrated development and cultivate new driving forces in fields including the digital economy and green development, in order to boost their modernization efforts.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and next year marks the 70th anniversary of the Bandung Conference, at which representatives from 29 Asian and African countries and regions gathered to discuss independence, peace and economic prosperity.

Describing China and Indonesia as "major developing countries, emerging markets and major members of the Global South" during the talks, Xi called on the two nations to make efforts to steer global governance in a fairer and more equitable direction.

China is ready to carry out closer multilateral strategic coordination with Indonesia, oppose unilateralism and protectionism, advocate an equal and orderly multipolar world as well as inclusive economic globalization that benefits all, and jointly safeguard regional peace and stability, Xi said.

Prabowo said that Indonesia follows an independent and non-aligned foreign policy and will not join any military alliance or "exclusive bloc" against a third party.

He said the country is willing to enhance coordination with China in such multilateral frameworks as the G20, in order to make positive contributions to safeguarding the common interests of the Global South and promoting a multipolar world.

Analysts said greater solidarity and cooperation between China and Indonesia will boost global development as well as peace and stability, and provide important impetus to



President Xi Jinping and visiting Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto attend a welcoming ceremony on Saturday before holding talks at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. FENG YONGBIN / CHINA DAILY

multipolarization as the world undergoes profound changes amid ever-emerging global challenges.

"Prabowo has repeatedly proposed that Indonesia should play the role of mediator in geopolitical

conflicts such as the Ukraine crisis and the Palestine-Israel conflict. He also agrees with many of China's views and policies on regional and international affairs, such as jointly advancing China-ASEAN cooperation and safeguarding peace and stability in the South China Sea," said Du, the China Institute of International Studies scholar.

See Ties, page 3

Baselines for Huangyan Island released

By ZHOU JIN zhoujin@chinadaily.com.cn

China released baselines for the territorial sea adjacent to Huangyan Island on Sunday, a move to lawfully strengthen marine management and counter infringement actions by the Philippines.

The delimitation and declaration of the territorial sea baselines is a natural step by the Chinese government and is consistent with international law and common practices, the Foreign Ministry said in an online statement on Sunday.

A spokesperson stressed in the statement that Huangyan Island has always been China's territory.

The baselines of the territorial sea adjacent to the island were delimited and announced in accordance with international law, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone, the spokesperson said.

The announcement came two days after the Philippines enacted the so-called "Philippine Maritime Zones Act", which the spokesperson said severely violates China's territorial sovereignty as well as its maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea.

The Philippine act aims to further solidify the illegal arbitral award on the South China Sea in the form of domestic legislation and to illegally include China's Huangyan Island and most of the islands and reefs of China's Nansha Islands and their relevant waters in the Philippines' maritime zones, the spokesperson said.

China firmly opposes this and will continue to do everything necessary in accordance with law to firmly defend its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, the spokesperson added.

The territorial sea baseline is the starting line for coastal countries to establish maritime jurisdiction claims, and it normally follows the low-water line of a coastal state.

According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, coastal states can have a territorial sea width of 12 nautical miles (22.22 kilometers).

Also on Sunday, the China Coast Guard blasted the frequent provocations by Manila at Huangyan Island and in its adjacent waters.

China has been exercising, peacefully and effectively exercising sovereignty and jurisdiction over Huangyan Island, the China Coast Guard said in a statement.

Recently, however, the Philippines has frequently dispatched military vessels and aircraft, as well as government ships, to intrude into the surrounding sea and airspace of Huangyan Island and stir up trouble, which seriously infringes on China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights, the statement said.

Furthermore, Manila has encouraged its fishing boats to enter the lagoon at Huangyan Island for illegal fishing activities, according to the statement.

The China Coast Guard said some Philippine fishing vessels have engaged in illegal practices, such as using toxic substances to catch fish and fishing for endangered aquatic life, that damage the fragile ecosystem of the surrounding waters.

The China Coast Guard will firmly maintain order in the relevant maritime areas, protect the ecological environment and biological resources of these waters, and resolutely safeguard national territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, the statement said.

Model offered for developing nations

China, the birthplace of one of the earliest civilizations, has made an impact across the globe, including the coast of Kenya, for centuries. The People's Republic of China was among the first countries to forge diplomatic relations with Kenya soon after its independence from British rule in 1963.

Over the centuries, even as China made historic achievements in the fields of culture, literature, science and philosophy, the glorious phases of development were interrupted by invasions of foreign forces.

Finally, in 1949, after decades of struggles, conflicts and wars, the PRC, under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, was founded.

The strategy of social and national liberation developed by the CPC

WORLD WATCH By Benedict Wachira

more than seven decades ago has inspired and is still inspiring the many movements promoting social progress, such as anti-feudal and anti-apartheid struggles, in Africa and in the rest of the world. In fact, some decades ago, China provided moral and material support for the national liberation movements that freed African countries from European colonialism and apartheid.

The founding of the PRC showed the exploited and oppressed of the world — particularly countries emerging from colonialism — that

true freedom and liberation could be brought about through the socialist path of development. China has proved this through its rapid social, cultural and economic development, which continues today.

Before the founding of the PRC, the country suffered from hunger, poverty and underdevelopment. The socialist revolution that founded the PRC was the basis of the policies, strategies and ideology that transformed China into a major political, economic, industrial, military, scientific and technological power that has made positive impacts not only on the lives of the Chinese people, but also on the world at large, particularly emerging and developing nations.

See Partnership, page 3

SPREADING HOPE ALONG THE BELT AND ROAD

Humanitarian aid programs muster volunteers nationwide to help partner countries, regions

By ATLAS SHAO in Hong Kong atlasshao@chinadailyhk.com

In-depth

At the age of 20, few people are as definite about their career choice as Emily Chan Ying-yang was.

Her parents hoped for her to follow the family tradition and become a respected doctor, but she also had a strong desire to do humanitarian aid work.

Since she made her decision, Chan, now 50, has had numerous front-line experiences bringing care and hope to people around the world.

In war-torn Kosovo, she had

a gun pointed at her forehead while escorting a pregnant patient to another region. In Cambodia, she freed young girls from the "fiery pit" of the sex-trafficking trade. In the slums of Thailand, she sought out people with AIDS and helped them to discover their self-respect and start a new life.

See Aid, page 2

Witness of progress

Foreign talents and their families who hold permanent residence permits visit the pavilion of China at the seventh China International Import Expo in Shanghai, on Saturday. The expo concluded on Sunday. FANG ZHE / XINHUA

See story, page 3



www.chinadailyglobal.com

A member of ANN China Daily Global ©2024 All Rights Reserved

Newsstand prices: US \$1 Canada C\$1 UK 1.5 EU 1.6 Kenya 50 Kenya Shilling Asia Pacific: Thailand 120 THB; Philippines 120 PHP; Myanmar 2000 MYR; Japan 210 yen; Dubai 10 dirham; Pakistan 300 rupee

INSIDE Building multipolar world order Global Views, page 13

PAGE TWO

Aid: HK medics forge global healing bonds



Above: Tiffany Sham Sze-tung (left) distributes disaster preparedness kits and supplies at a village in Sichuan province. **Left:** Emily Chan Ying-yang removes gauze from a patient after surgery in Mauritania. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

From page 1

Decades later, and Chan is now chief executive officer of the GX Foundation, a Chinese medical humanitarian aid and charitable organization based in Hong Kong. As part of her role, she shows young people how to conduct humanitarian work in Belt and Road participating regions and countries, such as Cambodia.

Life choices

In her fourth year of secondary school, Chan was sent to the United States to study. Attaining first place in chemistry in California, she gained admission to Johns Hopkins University and qualified to do medical studies after completing a Bachelor of Science degree.

She soon learned that laboratory research was not for her. After the recommendation of her mentor, she joined a United Nations humanitarian project in drought-stricken Zimbabwe in southern Africa as a junior research assistant. The work involved assessing levels of nutrition and vaccinations.

The fragility of human life that Chan felt deeply during her time in Zimbabwe instilled in her the importance of doing humanitarian work. "I want to help those in need at a time of adversity," Chan said.

It was the first time she had witnessed a world torn by war, disaster and disease, and it made her realize that she wanted a life different from that of her parents.

Chan, of course, was met with strong objections from her parents when she broke the news to them that she wanted to stray from the path they had set for her. At one point, she even thought about dropping out of the prestigious medical school she was studying at and remaining in Africa.

Chan's success also reflects Hong Kong's deep connections to humanitarian activities.

She said as a city with high-level healthcare ability, the humanitarian support work carried out by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is equivalent to any other, and the SAR's international standing helps link contributions from different areas.

"Hong Kong has been blessed with a good culture of 'contribution' and 'resources giving' for the public good during the past century. Most of the charities and local NGOs are well developed, with proper financial monitoring and management systems," Chan said.

Leung Chun-ying, founder and chairman of the GX Foundation and a former HKSAR chief executive, noted that the procedures for setting up a nongovernmental organization in Hong Kong are simple. He added that the HKSAR government has good management of local NGOs.

Under the advantages of "one country, two systems," Hong Kong enjoys convenient access to many countries and regions. As a global maritime center and a regional transshipment hub, the SAR can transport mobile operating theaters and medical supplies to countries in West Africa, Leung said. It also has advantages in the entire process of procurement, payment, delivery, and management.

In addition, the city's bilingual education system has cultivated a generation of young people eager to travel and work outside the Chinese context, Chan added.

Forging bonds

Tiffany Shum Sze-tung was among the first batch of GX Foundation volunteers. In 2019, she then medical student at the Chinese Uni-



Above: Nicole Tung Wing-hei (middle) learns from Guangxi medical team nurses how to use eye examination equipment. **Left:** Tiffany Sham Sze-tung (right) observes cataract screening done by the medical team. **Right:** Nicole Tung Wing-hei (right) checks the blood pressure of a patient. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



versity of Hong Kong, traveled to Cambodia with doctors and medical workers from the Chinese mainland.

During her time volunteering, Shum was deeply impressed by the "people-to-people bond" between the Chinese volunteers and the Cambodians.

Doctors from the Chinese mainland had also left behind their families and put their work on pause for several months to participate in one regional aid program.

Engaging in humanitarian aid overseas gave the young doctors opportunities to see Belt and Road Initiative projects under construction, as well as the people and efforts involved, Shum said. Chinese engineers working on BRI infrastructure projects in Cambodia stayed in their posts for two years during the COVID-19 pandemic and did not go home, she said.

"I could see their determination, and feel their joy when they saw that we are all Chinese," said Shum, who is now a medical doctor. "There is a lot of hard work behind the tall buildings we see in these countries."

Volunteering in underdeveloped areas has

also made Shum appreciate the joy of living in Hong Kong. The city has sufficient resources and a well-developed medical system, which are both important to spur young people to go out in the world and help promote exchanges with less-fortunate people.

Nicole Tung Wing-hei, a then fourth-year medical student studying at the University of Hong Kong, was shocked by the scarcity of medical resources when she went to Cambodia in January to participate in a project to treat cataract blindness. She said she realized the importance of going in person to areas in need of help, to provide support.

"There was only one doctor in that province who can do eye surgery, and that doctor is now a university dean and no longer does clinical work," Tung said.

Although the place she interned in had the largest hospital in the impoverished province, the equipment was in poor condition and the wards were crowded. Instead of seeing local doctors, wealthy locals went to Thailand or the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh for better medical treatment.

Tung was responsible for triaging the patients at the hospital, conducting health education, and visiting patients in rural villages. She got to know and work with students from Macao, the Chinese mainland, and Taiwan.

Tung told China Daily that medical students in Hong Kong have few opportunities to do practical medical work during their first three years of study. Therefore, opportunities to go overseas for humanitarian support are highly valued.

The Cambodia project that Tung participated in was the GX Foundation's first over-



seas intern program involving students from the mainland and other regions of China, Chan explained.

"After COVID-19, we had a lot of interest from young graduates from the mainland and Macao who wished to join the GX Foundation. They see the GX Foundation as one of the Chinese medical humanitarian work platforms that allows them to work and contribute overseas," Chan said.

"Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, there were students who wished to take part in humanitarian support work."

By October, the foundation had conducted over 16,000 cataract surgeries in five countries — Laos, Cambodia, Djibouti, Mauritania and Senegal. In January this year, it launched the first project of its kind for health protection against dengue fever in Timor-Leste. It also distributed 50,000 rapid dengue diagnostic kits, 500 mosquito nets, 2,600 mosquito lamps and 30,000 insect glue traps.

Volunteers ready

A volunteer pool of young medical students and retired medical professionals from

both the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong, keep the GX Foundation's numerous aid programs running.

Hong Kong has gradually increased the platforms and opportunities for young people to participate in the growing humanitarian relief work.

In its 2022-2023 report, the Hong Kong Red Cross, for example, said it carried out emergency relief, post-disaster recovery and reconstruction work in 17 countries and regions, benefiting over 430,000 people. OXFAM Hong Kong said it implemented 272 projects globally in the same period and reached a total of over 1.5 million people in its global poverty reduction efforts.

The GX Foundation has also carried out training in Laos and Cambodia for local medical clinics, with the aim of preparing them to perform their own surgeries.

Providing medical care is the first step in humanitarian assistance and training local medical personnel is the next, Chan said.

Shum said: "There are only a few ophthalmologists in Cambodia."

Senegal has very few ophthalmologists in the whole country, with maybe one for thousands or tens of thousands of people."

In November last year, a GX Foundation team visited villages in Kanh Chriech, Cambodia, along with a medical team from China's Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, to conduct eye examinations. They also trained 12 local medical personnel on how to screen for cataracts.

When the team returned to the villages in June, the trained medical personnel were proficient in conducting vision tests, measuring eye pressure, and screening patients for cataracts.

Channa, one of the local health workers, used to obtain medical knowledge from watching online videos and struggled to win the trust of her patients.

After receiving training from the team, she can identify the characteristics of cataracts and can use the correct examination methods. More patients are now willing to come to her hospital for eye examinations.

In September, the foundation rolled out a program in Timor-Leste, which utilizes nanotechnology-based equipment to provide clean water that can be drunk directly.

Leung, GX's chairman, said the foundation's next step will be to openly raise funds on the mainland and in Hong Kong. It also plans to solicit donations from communities on the mainland and the SAR in the future, he added.

Leung said as a national civic organization, which is also a distinct Hong Kong organization, the GX Foundation does not use the money of the SAR government or the country, but raises funds from private enterprises and families.

"Instead of hegemony and war, we bring humility and peace to the world. Instead of guns and death, we bring medicine and health to the world," he said.

In June, Shum led a team of 11 Hong Kong medical students to Senegal for mosquito prevention education, in the hope of passing on knowledge and experience from one generation to the next, just as her mentor Chan had done.

Being able to lend a helping hand overseas has made the young doctor understand in tangible ways the significance of the Belt and Road initiatives as well as people-to-people bonds.

TOP NEWS

Remembering the dead



Members of the Catholic Church hold a mass on Saturday in memory of migrants who died during their journey to the United States at the Mexico-US border, as seen from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. JOSE LUIS GONZALEZ / REUTERS

US scholar: Cooperation possible despite competition

By XU-PAN YIRU
xupanyiru@chinadaily.com.cn

A US political science professor has acknowledged that while strategic competition defines the relationship between the United States and China, there are areas where cooperation between the two nations is both possible and necessary.

In an exclusive interview with China Daily's *Media Unlocked*, John Mearsheimer, a distinguished political science professor at the University of Chicago, said that global issues such as climate change and nuclear proliferation require joint efforts, but such cooperation would always occur within the broader context of competition.

"Cooperation can take place, but it will always be subordinated to the competition," Mearsheimer said.

He emphasized that the US-China rivalry will shape international relations for the foreseeable future. "This is a competition that will last for many decades, if not the rest of the 21st century," he said.

The competition between the

US and China is frequently misinterpreted as a battle between different ideologies, but in reality the core issue is power, with the US attempting to contain China's rise, he said.

Dismissing the ideological framing of bilateral relations as a battle of so-called "democracy" versus "authoritarianism", he said: "It's not about ideology.

What's changed is the balance of power."

Mearsheimer said the US and China had cooperative relations from 1991 to 2017. The shift, he said, was driven by China's growing economic and military power.

He acknowledged that the US uses the ideological rhetoric to bolster its own position globally, casting China as the "bad guy" and the US as the "good guy". However, he argued that the real dynamics at play are much more pragmatic, revolving around strategic interests and power rather than values.

"The US is principally interested in containing China," Mearsheimer said about the strategic objective of US policy. He added that Washington is deeply con-

cerned about China's rising influence, and these concerns have driven the US to pursue a policy of containment, often referred to as the "pivot to Asia".

Mearsheimer said the US fears that China will challenge its dominance in the East Asia region.

However, US efforts to contain China are complicated by its involvement in other issues, such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the Palestine-Israel conflict, he said.

"This all works to China's advantage," Mearsheimer said, suggesting that the US is unable to fully concentrate its resources on countering China.

When asked about US restrictions on China's access to semiconductor technologies, Mearsheimer expressed skepticism about their long-term effectiveness. "In the short term, the US can hurt China," he said, but he believes China will ultimately overcome these challenges.

"China has a large pool of brilliant engineers and scientists, and it has a history of developing cutting-edge technologies. I'm confident that China will rise to the occasion and develop a highly sophisticated semiconductor industry," he said.

Mearsheimer acknowledged

that while the US might have been able to slow China's economic growth in the 1990s or early 2000s, those days are gone.

He said that China's economic rise has made it a peer competitor to the US in terms of economic and technological capabilities.

Mearsheimer noted four potential flash points that could lead to direct conflict between the US and China: the Taiwan Strait, the South China Sea, the East China Sea and the Korean Peninsula.

Despite these concerns, Mearsheimer said he believes that a direct war between the US and China is unlikely, primarily because of the deterrence provided by nuclear weapons.

"Nuclear weapons make both sides extremely cautious," he said. "The presence of these weapons gives the leadership in both Beijing and Washington powerful incentives to avoid escalation."

However, he cautioned that crises between the two powers are inevitable, and careful management will be required by each to prevent conflict.



Online
See more
by scanning
the code.

CIIE showcases openness of Chinese market

Record deals and product debuts among highlights of six-day exhibition in Shanghai

By SHI JING in Shanghai
shijing@chinadaily.com.cn

The seventh China International Import Expo, which concluded in Shanghai on Sunday, served as an important platform where multinational corporations could seek more business opportunities in the massive Chinese market and nurture innovation, said officials and top executives.

Tentative deals worth \$80 billion were achieved during the six-day exhibition, a year-on-year increase of 2 percent, according to data released on Sunday at a news conference held by the CIIE Bureau.

Wu Zhengping, deputy director of the bureau, said that up to 450 new products, technologies and services made their debut at this year's CIIE, compared with 442 last year.

"Apart from various cooperation results, the seventh CIIE manifested China's confidence and resolution to provide new growth opportunities to the world through its reform-driven development," Wu said.

This year's CIIE, covering more than 420,000 square meters, attracted the participation of around 3,500 exhibitors, including a record 297 Fortune Global 500 companies and industry leaders. Of all participants, 186 companies and organizations have attended all seven editions of the exhibition.

Patrick Koller, CEO of Forvia Group, a French automotive technology supplier, said that China, as the world's largest carmaker and automotive market, is of strategic importance to his company's global mapping.

"Participation in the CIIE helps strengthen our ties with the Chinese clients and the market, which is crucial to Forvia's development and success," Koller said.

While the development of sustainable technologies, regional cooperation and efforts to address climate change have met with unprecedented challenges globally, the CIIE has provided an important platform to secure continued dialogues, cooperation and partnership, he added.

German skin care giant Beiersdorf, which debuted at the fourth CIIE with a new product to fight hyperpigmentation, made its second appearance this year.

Beiersdorf CEO Vincent Warnery said the product, which uses the company's patented innovative

ingredient Thiamidol 630, has become the world's biggest-selling single item because of the cross-border e-commerce channels in China.

"Chinese consumers possess robust purchasing power, and the market demonstrates a trend of consumption upgrading. With a dynamic and passionate vibe, the Chinese market offers huge opportunities and warmest welcome to foreign investment and development in China," he said.

Beiersdorf will continuously increase its investment in the Chinese market, especially in innovation, digitalization and sustainability, he added.

Multinational business data analytics service provider Dun & Bradstreet, which attended the CIIE for the fifth consecutive year, had a similar experience to share.

Wu Guangyu, general manager of Dun & Bradstreet China, said the company managed to achieve robust growth in the country over the past few years, which is closely related to its participation in the exhibition.

Dun & Bradstreet debuted at the third CIIE with a data module product that has now become the company's top income generator in China. The product has also helped China remain the fastest growing market among all of Dun & Bradstreet's operations worldwide.

China's close ties with the external market and its fast and deep digitalization in different sectors have provided ample room for the growth of data service providers, Wu said.

Zhou Hanmin, president of the Shanghai Public Diplomacy Association, noted that many multinational corporations have demonstrated at this year's CIIE their most cutting-edge technologies, which may not reach application stage for five or six years. Such advance demonstrations show that these companies are looking for potential partners in China, he said.

Attracted by the massive size of the Chinese market, companies are trying to have a deeper understanding of it by introducing tailor-made products and services, Zhou said.

He added that the competition and cooperation between Chinese and foreign companies that was seen at the seventh CIIE could breed new business ideas and nurture innovation.

Partnership: China committed to path toward development of world civilization

From page 1

For example, 50 years ago, China funded and helped build the Tazara railway that spans over 1,800 kilometers from Tanzania to Zambia. This railway line served many purposes, ensuring that Zambia, a landlocked country, could access the sea by bypassing the dependence on and blockade by some countries and Portuguese colonies at that time.

Today, large infrastructure projects including roads, railway networks, harbors, bridges and housing are found all over the less developed countries, thanks to the development partnership with China.

Unlike the aid from Western countries, the economic partnership between China and other developing nations does not involve imposition of political and ideological conditionalities.

China's founding leaders expounded the ideology and theory of Marxism by emphasizing the fact that Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action; that through the example of China we learn that the path of development of

The founding of the PRC showed the exploited and oppressed of the world — particularly countries emerging from colonialism — that true freedom and liberation could be brought about through the socialist path of development. China has proved this through its rapid social, cultural and economic development, which

socialism depends on the unique material and historical conditions of each country.

As evident from its social and development policies, the country is committed to the freedom and

liberation of the Chinese people by improving the welfare of the farmers and workers.

At the international level, as shown by the position it takes at the United Nations on the various issues affecting the world today, China is always with progressive forces and nations that advocate a just, peaceful and secure world order. It is the voice of emerging nations and against colonialism and neocolonialism. It is among the leading countries of BRICS that seek to pursue a more just and equitable international economic and financial order.

While some Western countries are increasingly worried about China's growing development and positive influence in the world, and try to sabotage it by all means, the country is not distracted but remains focused on the road toward enhancing the development of the people of China, humanity and world civilization.

The author is secretary-general of the Communist Party of Kenya. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.



Huge blaze

Civil defense workers extinguish a fire that started in a giant diesel tank before spreading to a parking lot where more than a dozen cars were gutted and damaging a nearby building, in a residential neighborhood of Beirut, Lebanon, on Saturday.
HASSAN AMMAR / AP

Ties: Strategic coordination enhanced across platforms

From page 1

She added that China and Indonesia, via strengthening strategic coordination across multiple platforms, will enrich the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and the Bandung Spirit with the impera-

tives of the new era, sending a strong message of the Global South pursuing strength through unity and contributing to the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

Xu Liping, director of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Center

for Southeast Asian Studies, said the visit highlighted both countries' efforts to strengthen the resilience and rise of major developing nations through South-South cooperation.

"Regardless of shifting international dynamics, the fundamental of friendly cooperation between China and Indonesia will remain unshakable," Xu added.

After the talks, the two leaders witnessed the signing of multiple cooperation documents in areas such as the blue economy, water conservancy and mineral resources.

CHINA

Menstrual pain leave back in spotlight

By WANG XIAOYU
wangxiaoyu@chinadaily.com.cn

A regulation in Yunnan province that stipulates one to two days of menstrual pain leave for female employees has reignited discussions on the sometimes problematic implementation of such policies across the nation.

Yunnan introduced the regulation last month, allowing female workers who experience severe pain during their periods to take one to two days off after receiving medical diagnoses. The regulation took effect on Nov 1.

At least 20 provincial-level regions, including Beijing, Shanghai and the provinces of Shandong and Sichuan, have had menstrual pain leave in their local regulations since as early as the 1990s, but details vary.

For instance, Guangdong province's policy only applies to female employees who have to work on their feet for more than four consecutive hours.

Jiangxi province offers two to three days leave — longer than the usual one to two days leave provided in other regions.

And some regions do not specify the duration of the leave, only stating that appropriate rest should be arranged for those in need.

Most provincial-level areas require a doctor's note confirming symptoms before leave can be granted.

Shen Jianfeng, a law professor at the Central University of Finance and Economics in Beijing, said during an interview with media outlet ThePaper.cn that although rules on menstrual pain leave have been in place for a long time, it is difficult to ensure proper implementation, and many women have complained about difficulties in obtaining doctor's notes or consent from superiors, as well as workplace discrimination.

"Menstrual cramps are considered private affairs, making it more complicated for employees advocating for the leave," he said. "Some employees are required to present a medical certificate issued by a doctor, which undoubtedly adds to the burden."

A 26-year-old resident in Jiangsu province who only gave her surname, Zhang, said she has to take painkillers to curb period pain each month.

"During my period, my lower abdomen will throbb with pain," she said. "I become listless, have no appetite and sometimes throw up."

In Jiangsu, a regulation that took effect in July 2018 states that for employees who are not able to work due to heavy or painful menstrual cycles, employers should arrange one to two days off for them if medical proof is provided.

"I have worked at my current institution for two years, and neither I nor any of my colleagues have taken days off due to our periods," Zhang said.

She added that her pain is so excruciating that she can barely sit up, let alone visit a hospital to get a certificate supporting her need for leave.

"I believe it is necessary to establish a paid leave system," she said.

Shen, the professor, said that local governments are suggesting clarifying prerequisites for being entitled to menstrual pain leave, such as whether taking days off would affect employees' income, as well as improving related regulations to address their difficulties in getting medical certificates.

Moreover, he said it is important to devote efforts to preventing gender discrimination at workplaces and researching approaches to manage costs incurred by the leave, so as to increase female employees' sense of security.

Ski season begins



Skiers dressed in ethnic winter clothes take to the slopes of Taiwei Ski Resort in Arxan, Inner Mongolia autonomous region, on Sunday. Hundreds of skiing enthusiasts turned up for the opening day of the resort's winter skiing season. BEI HE / XINHUA

Broad-based system needed to boost fertility

Health minister calls for coordinated efforts to lift nation's flagging birth rate

By WANG XIAOYU
wangxiaoyu@chinadaily.com.cn

China's health minister has highlighted the establishment of a childbirth subsidy system, the expansion of childcare services and ensuring the implementation of maternity leave as key steps to building a birth-friendly society and tackling China's demographic challenges.

The nation's total fertility rate — the average number of babies born to each woman of reproductive age — fell to around 1 last year, and a low fertility trend has persisted for over three decades, said Lei Haichao, minister of the National Health Commission, in an article released by the commission on Thursday.

The rate in China fell below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman in the early 1990s. It registered a small rebound to 1.75 in 2016 following a policy change that allowed all couples to have up to two children, but then fell again rapidly.

Declining fertility is regarded as a crucial factor that drove a historic fall in China's total population in 2022. The decrease continued to the next year as the nation's total population fell by 2.08 million year-on-year in 2023.

Lei added that last year, the proportion of children age 14 and under accounted for only 16.4 percent of the population, lower than the global average of 25 percent. The ratio of elderly — defined as

“There is an urgent need to improve fertility supportive policy systems to adjust to new trends in demographic development.”

Lei Haichao, minister of the National Health Commission

those age 60 and above — rose to 21.1 percent, proof that China has become a moderately aging society.

"There is an urgent need to improve fertility-supportive policy systems to adjust to new trends in demographic development," he said.

Lei added that the fertility rate is the most significant factor determining future population trajectories. For China, striving for an appropriate fertility level and population size is an essential prerequisite to achieving high-quality demographic development.

The minister said that the central and local governments had dedicated great efforts to tackling demographic challenges in the past decade, such as adjusting family planning policies, strengthening population surveys and launching a string of supportive measures ranging from tax exemp-

tions and maternity subsidies to leave benefits.

He called for a strong sense of urgency to accelerate the formulation of a fertility-supportive policy system that can cover all aspects and be carried out fully.

As varying levels of cash incentives have already been introduced by local governments, Lei said efforts will be made to integrate them and formulate a wide-ranging, basic system aimed at subsidizing childcare.

Families with multiple children will also be given favorable policies in renting or purchasing homes, while medical insurance coverage and tax deductions will be guaranteed, he said.

Ramping up nursery care services is another essential task, with Lei saying that affordable and government-subsidized care facilities will be strengthened, and varied service models — including care centers based at workplaces, communities and homes, as well as full-day care, half-day care or hourly care — should be developed simultaneously.

"Local governments are encouraged to make bold efforts into exploring approaches to guide and support childcare," he said.

Lei added that maternity leave systems should be improved, and employers are encouraged to allow remote working or flexible office hours to help employees balance families and work.

Efforts should also be made to safeguard maternity subsidies, and the implementation of various maternity leave entitlements should be introduced.

Air travel receipts going digital as of December

By LUO WANGSHU
luowangshu@chinadaily.com.cn

In a move to streamline the travel process, China plans to roll out digital travel receipts for air passengers starting next month, according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China on Saturday.

The "Electronic Flight Receipt" system will replace paper-based flight itineraries with a convenient, digital alternative, greatly enhancing both travel experiences and facilitating financial reimbursements for individuals and businesses, according to a statement released by the administration.

The statement announcing the new system was jointly released by the State Taxation Administration of China, the Ministry of Finance and the CAAC.

The EFR system will allow travelers to access their electronic receipts for air travel for up to 180 days after completing their journeys via airline websites, mobile apps or customer service hotlines. Corporate clients can also retrieve receipts through tax service platforms to manage VAT deductions and other accounting tasks.

The switch to electronic flight receipts will simplify travel logistics and financial processes, the statement said. For passengers, the EFR system eliminates the need for paper receipts.

Travelers will be able to easily download or print receipts directly from their mobile devices or computers. The system will eliminate the need to endure long waits at ticket counters for paper receipts and the risk of losing travel documentation during business or personal trips.

For businesses, it will reduce paperwork and improve efficiency in the accounting process. Financial departments will benefit from seamless, paperless operations for expense reimbursements, tax filings and archiving.

The electronic receipts can be accessed and downloaded directly from the tax service platform, streamlining VAT deductions and ensuring accurate, real-time

accounting. The move will significantly reduce the cost of printing, distributing and storing paper receipts, contributing to both financial savings and environmental sustainability.

To ensure a smooth transition, a dual system will be in place for nearly a year. From Dec 1 to Sept 30 next year, both paper and electronic receipts will coexist, allowing travelers and businesses to continue using traditional paper receipts for reimbursements if needed. However, electronic and paper receipts will not be issued for the same transaction, preventing duplicate claims.

After the transition period, starting Oct 1 next year, paper receipts will no longer be available, and electronic receipts will become the standard for all air travel in China.

The implementation of electronic flight receipts will also help accelerate the digital transformation of the aviation industry, making it more efficient and user-friendly so that it aligns with modern technological trends.

The latest move follows a broader trend of digitalization across the transportation sector in China.

China's rail system is also advancing toward full digitalization. China State Railway Group, the national railway operator, rolled out a nationwide digital invoicing system for railway passengers, starting on Nov 1, offering similar benefits to those of the air travel sector.

Passengers who purchase domestic train tickets, including for cancellations or changes, are able to request an electronic invoice directly from ticket booking system 12306, bypassing the need for paper receipts.

Similar to the airline industry, the railway system's electronic invoices will enable more efficient tax reporting and VAT deductions, benefiting both individual travelers and businesses.

Both the airline and railway sectors' moves to digitalize travel receipts reflect a broader push for modernization and environmental sustainability in China's transportation.

New tricks



A police dog is put through its paces under the guidance of a trainer during an open day at a police dog training base in Beijing's Daxing district on Sunday. ZHANG XIANGYI / CHINA NEWS SERVICE

Vietnam to open consulate in Chongqing to increase trade, tourism

By TAN YINGZI and
DENG RUI in Chongqing

China and Vietnam confirmed on Thursday that a consulate general for the Southeast Asian nation will be set up in Chongqing as part of efforts by both countries to boost investment opportunities and cultural exchanges.

Following the announcement, a large business and media delegation, led by Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, visited Chongqing on Friday to promote exchanges in trade and tourism.

As a major manufacturing and international logistics hub on the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, Chongqing boasts key geographic advantages. The city is a strategic point for national development programs in western regions and serves as a bridge between China and nations involved in the Belt and Road Initiative and the Yangtze River Economic Belt.

"Chongqing has a deep history of close exchanges with Vietnam," said Chongqing Mayor Hu Henghua during an event focused on strengthening business, trade and

logistics cooperation between the city and the country. "In recent years, a number of major Chongqing enterprises have invested in Vietnam, and our automobiles, motorcycles and electronic products have entered the Vietnamese market."

The event drew almost 300 government officials and business representatives from both countries.

Hu added that Chongqing will further strengthen economic and trade exchanges with Vietnam and deepen cooperation in new energy vehicles, electronic information, and food and agricultural products processing.

During his speech at the event, Vietnamese Prime Minister Chinh said, "Our trip to Chongqing presents a crucial opportunity to deepen economic and trade cooperation between Vietnam and China."

He also noted China's status as Vietnam's primary trading partner and underscored his country's drive to make Chongqing a significant focus of collaboration efforts.

"Strengthening cooperation between the enterprises of the two countries will not only bring bene-

fits to the enterprises, but also bring more benefits to the people of both countries," the prime minister said.

He added that Vietnam is currently building smart ports and logistics infrastructure to improve the investment environment.

During the meeting, a signing ceremony for seven memorandums of cooperation was held, covering sectors such as economy, trade, logistics, energy, agriculture and telecommunications.

On Friday afternoon, a reception ceremony was held for a freight train from Vietnam via the China-Vietnam Railway at Chongqing Tuanjiecun Station. The train consisted of 26 standard containers filled with Vietnamese products such as control panels, coil drums and plastic toys. The total value of the cargo was nearly 90 million yuan (\$12.58 million).

As of Oct 30, the China-Vietnam freight trains passing through Chongqing have made 132 trips, carrying a combined total of 4,224 standard containers with a cargo value just north of 1 billion yuan.

In recent years, the New Interna-

tional Land-Sea Trade Corridor, the operational hub of which is based in Chongqing, has strengthened economic and trade ties between western Chinese provinces and Southeast Asian countries.

The freight volume and the value of containers via the trade corridor have increased by 48.6 percent and 108 percent, respectively, indicating a positive trend in cooperation between the two regions.

"The efficient and convenient logistics modes have narrowed the distance between Chongqing and Vietnamese cities, and promoted communication among the two peoples. We are expecting a promising future," said Liu Taiping, president of New Land-Sea Corridor Operation Co.

Dang Ngoc Hoa, chairman of Vietnam Airlines, said in Chongqing that over the past 30 years, Vietnam Airlines has been increasing the number of routes from Vietnam to China. Currently, 66 flights are made between the two nations each week.

"We are considering opening a new route to Chongqing as well," he said.

For the past five years, Vietnam

has remained Chongqing's largest trading partner among Southeast Asian countries. In the first three quarters of this year, the trade volume between Chongqing and Vietnam reached 27.42 billion yuan, with Chongqing's actual investment in Vietnam amounting to 194 million yuan, a 32.7 percent increase.

On Thursday, Premier Li Qiang met with the leaders of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam during the eighth Greater Mekong Subregion Summit in Kunming, Yunnan province.

Li called for greater unity and coordination among gathered countries to further promote pragmatic cooperation in various fields, achieve shared growth and contribute to regional and global peace, development and prosperity.

Vietnam currently has an embassy in Beijing and four consulates — in Shanghai, Kunming, Nanning in the Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region and Guangzhou in Guangdong province.

Contact the writers at
tanyingzi@chinadaily.com.cn

Editor's note: China Daily is publishing a series illustrating the country's efforts to achieve its carbon peaking and carbon neutrality goals.

CHINA'S LOW-CARBON JOURNEY



A photovoltaic power generation plant sprawls across the grassland in Otog Front Banner in Ordos, Inner Mongolia autonomous region, in November last year. WANG ZHENG / XINHUA

'Solar Great Wall' could power Beijing by 2030

By HOU LIQIANG and YUAN HUI
in Ordos, Inner Mongolia

Ordos in the Inner Mongolia autonomous region is advancing an ambitious initiative known as the "Solar Great Wall", aiming to combine the development of renewable energy with efforts to combat desertification, according to local authorities.

This gargantuan project, spanning 400 kilometers in length with an average width of 5 km, not only promises to supply sustainable electricity to Beijing and its surrounding area, but also stands to make a substantial contribution to the preservation of the Yellow River, a mother river of the Chinese nation.

With a total installed capacity of 100 million kilowatts, the project launched earlier this year is expected to generate roughly 180 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity per year by 2030 when it is completed, the Ordos energy administration said.

For reference as to how much energy that actually is, last year Beijing consumed 135.8 billion kWh of electricity.

Located on the south bank of the Yellow River and the northern edge of the Kubuqi Desert, the seventh-largest desert in China, the project will also help prevent soil erosion and thus reduce sediment entering the Yellow River. Overall, it will help treat almost 27 million hectares of desert, the administration added.

In an interview with China Daily, Li Kai, an official with the energy administration of Dalad Banner, stressed the huge eco-

100 million kilowatts

Expected total installed capacity of the "Solar Great Wall" photovoltaic power generation project in Ordos, Inner Mongolia, by 2030

500,000 jobs

are expected to be generated by the "Solar Great Wall" project by 2030.

nomical and ecological benefits the project is expected to generate.

Some 133 km of the "Solar Great Wall" will be built in the banner, and the average width of the section is designed to be 25 km, the official said. Thanks to the project, Dalad's total renewable energy capacity will reach 19 million kW by the end of this decade.

This achievement will result in an annual green power output of 38 billion kWh, leading to savings equivalent to nearly 12.6 million metric tons of standard coal and a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 31.3 million tons, Li said.

By 2030, he said Dalad will be able to transmit 48 billion kWh of green electricity annually to the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region via an ultra-high-voltage electricity

transmission line that is under construction.

While solar panels can directly contribute to desertification control by serving as windbreaks and sand fixers, as well as by providing shade to reduce the evaporation of soil moisture, 2,400 hectares of commercial crops will also be planted beneath the panels to help treat the desert, Li added.

The initiative of utilizing the space under the panels underscores the local government's commitment to achieving a symbiotic relationship between ecological preservation and economic advancement, he stressed.

"All of the projects are invested in by State-owned companies, some of which are centrally administrated ones, and so local governments don't have to make any investment at all," he said.

Li also highlighted measures the authorities in Dalad have rolled out to pave the way for the implementation of the huge project.

The local government has coordinated on-site approval sessions that have brought together officials from involved departments. Additionally, they have designated special officials to provide essential support in managing all official procedures across various stages, he noted.

"In total, approximately 50,000 job opportunities will be generated by 2030, with individuals in these roles experiencing an average annual income growth exceeding 20,000 yuan (\$2,815)," he said.

Contact the writers at
houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn



From left: Workers install photovoltaic panels at a new energy base in the Kubuqi Desert in Ordos, Inner Mongolia autonomous region, in August last year. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY Excavators dig ditches for the installation of photovoltaic panels in Dalad Banner, Inner Mongolia, in March. WANG XIAOBO / FOR CHINA DAILY



China's urban planning sets good example

UN-Habitat head: Balancing affordability and sustainability may inspire developing nations

By HOU LIQIANG and ZHAO RUIXUE
in Weihai, Shandong

Raising China's efforts in narrowing the divide between affordability and sustainability in urban development, a senior United Nations official has also highlighted that China's experiences in urban planning, renewal and sustainability have the potential to help the rest of the globe deal with the effects of climate change.

Ana Claudia Rossbach, executive director of the UN Human Settlements Programme, also known as UN-Habitat, made the remarks during an interview with China Daily on the sidelines of an event for World Cities Day, which takes place annually on Oct 31, in Weihai, Shandong province.



Ana Claudia Rossbach

"I believe China is advancing in closing this gap between affordability and sustainability, which is a major concern globally, especially for the lowest income segments of the populations in countries with limited fiscal resources," she said.

Despite the costs involved, sustainable construction is imperative, Rossbach said, remarking that the technologies she'd seen during her time in China demonstrated significant advancements in this regard.

She stressed the multifaceted considerations essential for sustainable development. When talking about nature preservation in urban development, in addition to emissions, it's also important to look into how and where buildings are constructed, she said.

Rossbach spoke highly of the urban planning in Weihai and Hong Kong, saying they have both intelligently integrated land use planning, heritage conservation, environmental protection and the safeguarding of rural landscapes — a vital component in securing global food sustainability.

"I believe if you combine the construction technology with the planning, you find very interesting solutions in China that could be shared with other cities and other parts of the world," she said.

The executive director underscored the importance of improving resilience to natural disasters associated with climate change, such as heat waves and flooding, that affect a major part of the population around the world, no matter whether the cities they dwell in are better planned or not.

"The problem is major and goes beyond the frontiers of our sector of urban development. But from our sector, I believe we can use some of the solutions that were developed in China," she noted.

Reflecting on her home country Brazil, she mentioned that the media and society have extensively covered China's sponge city concept. While acknowledging the need for further evaluation on the feasibility of replicating this experience, she emphasized the value of delving deeper into the initiative to explore avenues for promotion and emulation in diverse locations.

Designated as a pilot city for promoting the sponge city concept in 2016, Shenzhen

in Guangdong province has had some success in mitigating the effects of flooding caused by heavy rain. When Typhoon Merbok struck the city in 2017, dumping 136.9 millimeters of rain in three days, 55 locations were flooded, according to Southern Metropolis Daily. Three years later in 2020, a monsoon engulfed the city with 162.1 mm of rain over a three-day period yet flooding was limited to 34 locations.

Rossbach added that China's experiences in working out comprehensive housing policies, tapping vertical spaces and promoting urban renewal were also worth learning for other developing countries.

A strong housing policy has been very strategic in China's urbanization process. In Latin America, however, countries experienced urbanization that was not connected to comprehensive housing policies, which resulted in urban sprawl and expansion of informal settlements, she said.

She emphasized that China's experience of having a strong vision of how the city will develop not only horizontally but also vertically is very relevant for countries in the Global South, "because we have to maximize the land that we have".

China has also excelled in urban revitalization, showcasing a growing repertoire of initiatives focused on heritage preservation, cultural conservation and utilizing urban renewal as a strategic tool to safeguard the built-up environment — a critical facet in combating climate change, she said.

Against a backdrop of robust housing policies catering to various income brackets, stimulating market dynamics to encompass a broad swath of the populace, and implementing targeted strategies to support the most vulnerable segments, China's holistic approach presents a compelling model, according to Rossbach.

"I think this comprehensive framework is very interesting for countries in the Global South, especially the ones in the urbanization process," she said.

Rossbach is gearing up for the upcoming 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is slated to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from Nov 11 to 22. With great anticipation, she shared her insights on what to expect from the conference, emphasizing the pivotal role of urban discussions in shaping climate action.

"We'll have a full day dedicated to urban discussions in Baku. This will be the third time UN-Habitat is co-hosting such an event. So we'll discuss about transportation, about adaptations. And we will leverage the discussion about the relationship between cities and the environment, between cities and the climate challenges that we face," she said.

The convergence of minds in Baku holds immense significance, Rossbach underscored. "I believe our role in Baku is to elaborate more to advance on this discussion to promote a critical mass, but also to make this discussion and this agenda visible to the world so as to communicate to the world how relevant cities are and will be as we increasingly urbanize for the battle of climate change," she said.

Contact the writers at
houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn

Developed countries should walk the talk on climate

Driven by nations who've already been hit hard by climate change, there's been a growing consensus that global efforts must be intensified to elevate climate ambitions in order to restrict the rise in temperature this century to well below 1.5 C, thus preventing catastrophic irreversibility.

This call to action directly responds to the pressing demands of the planet, particularly in light of the multitude of devastating extreme weather events occurring worldwide.

In October, a rare deluge of rain raged through the Sahara, one of the driest places on Earth, leaving blue lagoons amid the rolling sand dunes and even creating new lakes in parts of the world's largest hot desert.

In April, the United Arab Emirates experienced the heaviest rains in the



Hou Liqiang
Reporter's
log

past 75 years that records have been kept. The extreme weather events brought much of the country, which is characterized by vast stretches of desert and arid conditions, to a standstill. In Kenya and Tanzania, devastating rains and floods that started in March left more than 400 dead.

These examples of the recent surge in extreme weather events starkly highlight the urgent threat of global warming. They underscore the critical importance of COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, where establishing a New

Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance will be paramount to effectively addressing this global crisis.

While historically not the primary contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, developing countries, particularly the least developed, disproportionately suffer the consequences of climate change.

As the global climate crisis escalates, they find themselves ill-equipped to either mitigate the dangers it poses or adapt effectively. Already debt-burdened, many of them seriously need to be supported both financially and technologically to cope with the situation.

Looking into the global multilateral climate process, however, it's not difficult to find that the financial concerns of the developing countries have not been fully addressed.

In 2009, developed countries pledged to deliver \$100 billion per year in international climate finance by 2020. The 2015 Paris Agreement on climate extended the target, requiring contributing nations to maintain the annual contribution through 2025.

In 2022, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development reported that developed nations mobilized \$115.9 billion in climate finance for developing countries. However, this positive development is overshadowed by the persistent huge funding gap and lack of progress in many other years.

The unfulfilled previous pledge has eroded trust between developed and developing nations. It's against this backdrop that parties are going to negotiate over a new target on climate finance at COP29.

In a previous interview with China Daily, COP29 President-Designate Mukhtar Babayev pledged all-out efforts from Azerbaijan, the host of the UN gathering, to act as a bridge between developed and developing nations at COP29 to reach a consensus.

"We must address the fact that climate finance is currently flowing in at an insufficient scale and in unequal directions. To meet our climate ambitions, we need reform to make finance available, affordable and accessible," he said.

The endeavor of Azerbaijan as COP29 host is crucial to ensure a fair and ambitious climate finance goal, but the true test will be whether developed nations will back their lofty climate pledges with tangible action, not just empty slogans.

Next year marks a crucial deadline for the Paris Agreement where parties must submit their updated climate action commitments, known as

Nationally Determined Contributions. These new commitments are vital for keeping alive the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 C this century. However, for these NDCs to be ambitious, sufficient financial support is paramount, empowering developing nations to implement ambitious climate action plans.

Developed economies, bearing the weighty responsibility of their historical emissions, must demonstrate unwavering commitment at COP29. This demands significantly enhanced financial support, delivered in full, to combat the climate crisis they have largely wrought.

The eyes of the world, particularly those from the most vulnerable nations, are upon these developed nations. Failure is not an option. Inaction will condemn humanity to an irreversible and catastrophic fate.

Contact the writer at
houliqiang@chinadaily.com.cn

CIIE highlights strength of China-France trade

Expo offers impressive platform for firms to thrive through greater cooperation

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Strengthening economic and trade relations between China and France will be mutually beneficial, providing both countries with advantages and adding positive momentum to the global economy amid growing recessionary risks, said government officials and business leaders.

During her meeting with Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao in Shanghai on Nov 3, Sophie Primas, French minister delegate for foreign trade and French nationals abroad, attached to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, said that France is willing to deepen economic and trade ties with China and expressed her pleasure at France's role as a guest country of honor at the seventh China International Import Expo again this year.

The seventh edition of the CIIE, taking place in Shanghai from Tuesday to Sunday, has attracted the participation from over 100 French companies, including notable names like Schneider Electric, LVMH Group and Kering Group, according to China's Ministry of Commerce.

This marks the largest representation among European Union member states, underscoring the strong interest French companies hold in the Chinese market.

Enduring interdependence

Despite a slowdown in global demand for goods in recent years, the strong interdependence between the two countries endures, supported by a stable, cross-industry trade relationship, said Gao Lingyun, a researcher at the Institute of World Economics and Politics, affiliated with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing.

"By enriching business ties, both countries can gain greater access to each other's markets, benefiting

industries ranging from technology and manufacturing to agriculture and luxury goods," said Gao. "This access offers companies with new revenue streams and market opportunities, supporting economic stability and growth for both nations."

Echoing that sentiment, Bai Ming, a member of the Academic Degree Committee at the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation in Beijing, said that as two influential economies, a strong China-France partnership contributes to global economic stability. Their cooperation can help counter recessionary trends by boosting trade values, creating jobs and enhancing confidence in international markets.

China-France trade value amounted to 555.11 billion yuan (\$78.12 billion) in 2023, growing by 3.1 percent year-on-year, statistics from China's General Administration of Customs show.

China exports to France mainly construction machinery, manufacturing equipment, steel, electronics, textiles, garments and household appliances to France.

In addition to passenger vehicles and aircraft, water treatment, chemical and pharmaceutical products, France's exports to China also include fashion, agricultural and energy infrastructure products.

Prompted by China's opening-up measures and the "France 2030" investment plan, the two sides will likely scale up trade and investment in fields such as the digital economy, trade in services, new energy and high-end manufacturing in the years ahead, said Tang Yihong, a professor specializing in cross-border investment at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing.

Launched by the French government in 2021, the "France 2030" investment plan aims to support



The entrance to the French Pavilion at the seventh China International Import Expo features a representation of the Eiffel Tower, the country's iconic landmark, and the mascot of the Paris Olympic Games, the Phryges. ZHANG WEI / CHINA DAILY

the transformation of sectors of excellence in its economy in the automotive, aerospace, digital, green industry, biotechnology, culture and healthcare areas, according to Business France, a French government agency promoting the country's exports and attracting foreign investment.

Growth driver

French tire and mobility company Michelin Group has increased passenger car tire capacity at its factory in Shenyang, Liaoning province, this year, to meet soaring market demand.

The move has been prompted by the enthusiasm shown by Chinese automakers and technology companies in adopting new technologies, which has opened up numerous opportunities and resulted in a significant increase in the use of electric vehicles, new

energy sources and new materials.

As China creates more favorable conditions to cultivate new quality productive forces, Matthew Ye, CEO and president of Michelin China and Mongolia, said the key factor behind this is the growth driver related to sustainability.

This has led traditional industries toward high-end, intelligent and green transformations, while fostering the emergence of new industries, demand and collaboration.

New quality productive forces signify a paradigm shift in productivity, primarily propelled by revolutionary technological breakthroughs, the innovative allocation of production factors, and profound industrial transformation and upgrading.

The French group created a booth with the theme of "Michelin Adventurer" this year, featuring a

China and even Asia premiere of numerous new tire products during the seventh CIIE.

"This year marks the 35th anniversary of Michelin in China. We have created and experienced countless adventures, which not only include numerous technological breakthroughs and product innovations but also bring extraordinary experiences that change people's lives," said Ye.

Long-term partnership

Cathay Capital, a global investment platform, signed a memorandum of understanding with French pharmaceutical group Sanofi to deepen innovation cooperation in the healthcare field early this week.

This collaboration not only strengthens their long-term partnership but also supports China-France cooperation and the

transformation and upgrading of China's pharmaceutical industry, said the company in a statement.

In addition to fostering an innovation ecosystem for Chinese pharmaceutical advancements, this partnership integrates Sanofi's extensive technical expertise in the global pharmaceutical industry with Cathay Capital's industry insights and cross-border investment experience, said the statement.

Cathay Capital to date has invested in more than 47 healthcare-related companies worldwide, promoting global healthcare cooperation and development.

"The signing of this memorandum of understanding not only represents a deep strategic alignment between both parties but also marks a significant milestone in our shared commitment to advancing China's healthcare sector," said Cai Mingpo, founder and chairman of Cathay Capital.

Also upbeat about the Chinese market, French wine and spirits group Pernod Ricard brought nearly 70 cognac and whiskey products from countries and regions including France, Scotland and Ireland to the seventh CIIE this year.

The showcase included the full range of Martell Cognac products, as well as several whiskey brands under its product line, such as Royal Salute, Chivas Regal and Ballantine's.

Meanwhile, the French group also unveiled its locally produced whisky — The Chuan — making its debut at the event. The product is made at Pernod Ricard's whisky distillery in Emeishan, a city in Southwest China's Sichuan province.

"We are proud to put China on the world whisky map by presenting this exceptional malt whisky from The Chuan," said Jerome Cottin-Bizonne, CEO of Pernod Ricard China. "As a large international spirits group, we are committed to proactively responding to the burgeoning enthusiasm and diversified demands of Chinese consumers."

Opportunities rife for world-renowned French spirits group in China

By YUAN SHENGGAO

Renowned French spirits group Remy Cointreau unveiled a global debut product — LOUIS XIII Le Matusalem 6L Haute Couture Limited Edition — at the seventh China International Import Expo in Shanghai. Its CEO emphasized that participating in the CIIE provides the group with a platform to interact with the market, showcases its long-term commitment to China, and pays tribute to the long-standing friendship between China and France.

"This year, France and China celebrate 60 years of their diplomatic relationship, but we started 140 years ago in China. And for us, the presence here is important to testify our love and passion for China," Global CEO of Remy Cointreau Group Eric Vallat said, adding that it's their fifth time participating in the CIIE.

"It's a great opportunity for us to exchange with all the stakeholders in the industry, in China, and abroad to get a lot of insights, which is important," Vallat added.

In their 120-square-meter sustainable development booth crafted from up to 97 percent renewable and reusable materials, the group not only showcased a range of brands such as Cointreau, Bruichladdich and Botanist, presenting exquisite products like liqueur, whisky, and gin, but also introduced the group's diverse product portfolio.

Moreover, for the inaugural occasion, the booth included a sustainable area that underscores the importance of corporate social responsibility.

National gift

Within the group, LOUIS XIII has been chosen as a precious national gift offered by the French delegation to their Chinese counterparts during this momentous Sino-French occasion.

Serving as the centerpiece of the booth, the 6L Haute Couture exclusive design, a collaborative masterpiece with the esteemed Chinese haute couture designer Guo Pei, featured traditional auspicious motifs like dragons, phoenixes and peonies.

These intricate designs were embroidered with three-dimensional gold threads, creating a luxurious texture that beautifully melded the timeless allure of Eastern aesthetics with the finesse of French artisanship.



Clockwise from left: Eric Vallat, global CEO of Remy Cointreau Group. The French spirits group showcases its brands at the ongoing seventh China International Import Expo in Shanghai. LOUIS XIII on display at the CIIE. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



sole country where Remy Cointreau has an innovation team. Some of the innovations originate from the Chinese team and are exported worldwide.

One of the innovations that Vallat takes immense pride in is the Dentree bar.

Sustainability concept bar

Last year, Remy Cointreau chose Shanghai as the launch site for the world's first sustainability concept bar, Dentree, in partnership with Spirits Architects. In 2024, Dentree obtained certification as carbon neutral for both its construction and operations through the world's leading performance-driven building certification program, RESET.

The launch and promotion of Dentree exemplify Remy Cointreau's commitment to sustainability, showcasing its dedication not only to creating exceptional products and experiences but also to various sustainability initiatives. These include local environmental protection, irrigation and water conservation, forest preservation, biodiversity conservation, and the promotion of responsible consumption.

The goal is to halve carbon emissions across the entire value chain by 2030 and achieve zero-carbon emissions by 2050.

"Sustainability is very important for us because we live from the soil and what makes us great today is the soil. Our responsibility now is to hand over the soil to the next generation in proper condition," he pointed out.

To help realize this objective, Remy Cointreau aims to reduce its carbon footprint by implementing initiatives such as the prohibition of air transport, reducing new packaging, and minimizing glass weight or more importantly switching to regenerative agriculture.

To ensure the enduring prosperity of Remy Cointreau in China, Vallat will introduce a novel strategy: innovating new products or forming partnerships that integrate with Chinese culture and traditions.

"If we are still here after 300 years, I think it's because we have managed to stay loyal to our traditions, but always capturing the essence of today. You're happy to have a long tradition and history, but you want to remain relevant," Vallat pointed out.

"We must always blend tradition and modernity."

"It's a piece of art. It proves that traditional French craft and expertise, enriched with Chinese culture and know-how, can aim at delivering exceptional products," Vallat pointed out.

The Remy Cointreau Group, a French family-run business group that leads the global spirits market, has a total of 14 premium alcohol brands, including LOUIS XIII, Remy Martin Cognac Fine Champagne, Cointreau Liqueur, Bruichladdich Single Malt Whisky, the Botanist Islay Dry Gin, TELMONT Champagne and one luxury perfume brand — Maison Psyche.

Since 1880, the prestigious French cognac brand LOUIS XIII received its inaugural order from Shanghai,

China, marking the commencement of a relationship that has spanned over 140 years with the country.

Strategic market

With 300 years rich history, Remy Cointreau has consistently recognized China as one of the most pivotal strategic markets globally. The company eagerly anticipates continued collaboration with its partners to deliver top-tier services that have lasted for 300 years, aiming to enhance the lives of Chinese consumers and contribute to their overall well-being.

"China is very significant for us. It's our No 1 market worldwide for cognac. It's also the market which might be slowing down but has a fan-

tastic growth potential, because imported spirits are only three percent of the total spirits consumed in China.

"But beyond this, China is a very interesting market because it's a pioneering market for direct-to-client activities thanks to the e-commerce ecosystem," Vallat pointed out.

As one of the early pioneers in the e-commerce sector, Remy Cointreau is seizing the opportunities arising from China's digital advancements.

The company is strategically positioning its e-commerce operations, establishing a strong presence on prominent domestic e-commerce platforms, and actively cultivating a more personalized and efficient communication approach with con-

sumers, leveraging platforms like social networks and WeChat.

"Perhaps due to our relatively smaller size compared to our competitors, we have been at the forefront of e-commerce at Remy Martin. It now constitutes nearly 30 percent of our business, a development unimaginable when we first launched it a decade ago. This ecosystem is very specific in China and you need to embrace it if you want to be successful," Vallat said.

Vallat further acknowledged that e-commerce was a significant factor that motivated the group to establish an innovation hub in Shanghai. "With e-commerce, you have to go fast."

According to Vallat, China is the

BUSINESS

MORE NEWS WHENEVER YOU WANT IT · CHINADAILY.COM.CN/BUSINESS

Quality focus rules Singles Day shopping gala

Experts say online sales event playing vital role in lifting consumption

By FAN FEIFEI
fanfeifei@chinadaily.com.cn

Chinese consumers have exhibited robust purchasing power for high-quality and intelligent products containing innovative technologies during the Singles Day shopping extravaganza.

Experts said this has played a vital role in promoting the recovery of consumption and shoring up economic growth in the country.

Major Chinese e-commerce platforms have extended the promotional period, and adopted a simple and more pragmatic approach by canceling presale campaigns this year.

Instead, direct price cuts have become the preferred strategy to attract price-conscious customers and bolster sales during China's biggest online shopping event.

Experts also said that unlike in the past, when record-smashing gross merchandise volume, or GMV, through discount-led sales had come to characterize the 11-11 or Double Eleven promotional campaign, chasing high GMV is no longer the focus now.

Chinese shoppers are becoming more rational and carefully reviewing their needs, with an emphasis on the quality and value of commodities, they added.

Data from Tmall, Chinese tech heavyweight Alibaba Group's business-to-customer platform, showed that in the first four hours after the shopping carnival officially kicked off at 8 pm on Oct 21, 174 brands saw their sales surpass 100 million yuan (\$14 million).

During this period, the turnover of more than 12,000 brands surged over 100 percent year-on-year and the sales of nearly 6,000 brands skyrocketed more than 500 percent compared with the same period last year.

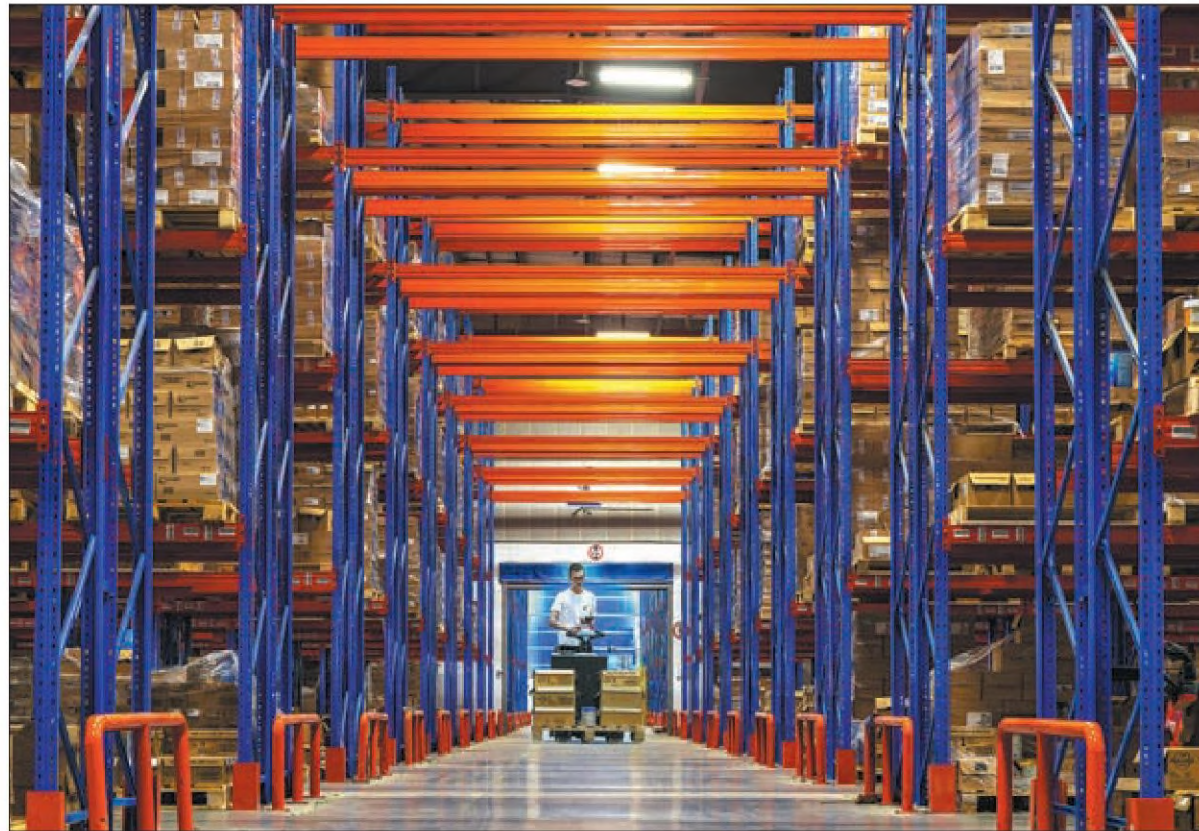
The transaction volume of Apple Inc's products on Tmall exceeded 1 billion yuan within five minutes, while sales of domestic smartphone brands such as Huawei, Xiaomi and Vivo all surpassed 100 million yuan in the first four hours of the promotional event, according to Tmall.

Consumers preferred to snap up bargains via livestreaming on e-commerce platforms, with sales from some top-tier livestreamers on Taobao Live, Alibaba's livestreaming arm, surpassing 100 million yuan within a short period.

JD, another major Chinese e-commerce player, has launched a subsidy campaign worth 10 billion yuan, and given discounts for commodities included in the consumer goods trade-in program, such as home appliances and computers. It has also stepped up efforts to upgrade supply chains and logistics services.

JD said it recorded a double-digit year-on-year growth in transaction volume, orders, and user numbers between 8 pm on Oct 14, when its promotional gala opened, and 9 pm on Oct 31.

More than 16,000 brands saw their sales surge over threefold year-on-year, while the number of brands exceeding 100 million yuan in turnover increased over 400 percent compared with the same period last year. More than 17,000 merchants witnessed their order volumes soar over five times from a year earlier.



An employee picks imported goods for sale during the Singles Day shopping festival at a cross-border e-commerce bonded warehouse in Jinhua, Zhejiang province, on Oct 23. YANG MEIQING / FOR CHINA DAILY



Workers sort express packages on an intelligent sorting line in Nanchang, Jiangxi province, on Nov 3. ZHU HAIPENG / FOR CHINA DAILY



A pedestrian walks past an advertising board of Tmall Singles Day shopping festival in Beijing on Oct 19. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

New users who bought apparel and cosmetics via JD's online marketplace skyrocketed over 140 percent year-on-year, while JD's livestreaming channel saw a 245 percent year-on-year increase in order volumes.

Consumer electronic devices witnessed robust growth during the shopping extravaganza.

The transaction volume of gaming laptops rose 120 percent year-on-year during the shopping spree, and AI smartphones and 4K projectors experienced 100 percent growth in turnover, while the sales of AI learning devices and 3D printers surged over 10 times from the same period last year, JD said.

Furthermore, a series of products that represent scientific and technological innovations achieved by Chinese enterprises have been made available on e-commerce platform Taobao. These products cover fields such as information technology, artificial intelligence, aerospace, new energy and quantum technology.

For example, consumers can directly purchase the country's

independently developed AS700 civil manned airship and enjoy discounts. The airship can be used for sightseeing, emergency rescue and geophysical exploration of the skies, among other things.

The Double Eleven festival was just a 24-hour event on Nov 11 when it was unveiled by Alibaba in 2009, but has stretched into a week-long shopping spree lasting from mid-October to mid-November this year. Online retailers initiated the promotional event one week earlier this year than previously.

"Consumption has become the main driving force boosting China's economic growth, and the Singles Day shopping carnival is pivotal to unleashing consumers' purchasing potential, bolstering domestic demand and promoting consumption recovery," said Wang Yun, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Macroeconomic Research.

More stimulus policies are needed to stabilize and expand employment, improve household incomes, and boost people's ability and willingness to spend, so as to further

perk up consumption, Wang added.

China's retail sales, a significant indicator of consumption strength, rose 3.3 percent year-on-year in the first three quarters of this year, said the National Bureau of Statistics. Online sales remained a bright spot, rising 8.6 percent year-on-year during the January-September period.

Based on a survey by global consulting firm AlixPartners in early October, consumers still view Singles Day as the most important shopping festival. Most consumers are likely to maintain their spending levels from the previous year, with 25 percent of interviewed shoppers saying that there would be an increase in their overall spending, the consultancy said.

Most of the increased spending based on the survey would be in apparel, daily necessities and cosmetics. Consumers are likely to remain sensible in their spending given the current economic backdrop, it added.

Online retailers have made promotional methods simpler this time, with a key focus on improving user experience and seeking high-

quality and long-term growth, as Chinese consumers are more prudent and rational about potential purchases, said Jason Yu, managing director and vice-executive president of CTR Media Convergence Institute.

Yu said retailers hope to roll out new products to attract consumers and build brand image during the shopping spree.

High-quality and intelligent commodities are crucial for stimulating the purchasing appetite of consumers and unleashing new consumption potential, he said.

"A series of pro-consumption policies, such as the consumer goods trade-in program, have played a significant role in bolstering the sales of consumer electronic products and household appliances on major online marketplaces," Yu added.

Meanwhile, Taobao and Tmall have officially integrated JD's logistics during this year's shopping carnival as sellers on these platforms can choose JD Logistics as the delivery method. JD has accepted the mobile payment option from Alipay,

which is operated by financial technology company Ant Group.

Industry insiders said these moves signify a key step in breaking down barriers between the two leading internet companies, enhancing interconnectivity of different platforms, and elevating the online shopping experience of users.

Mo Daiqing, a senior analyst at the Internet Economy Institute, a domestic consultancy, said major e-commerce platforms have ramped up efforts to offer steep discounts and shopping subsidies as well as simplify promotion methods during the prolonged shopping carnival to rev up sales.

"The policy measures to encourage trade-ins of consumer goods have not only stimulated consumers' desire to purchase, but also bolstered the sales and upgrades of household appliances, and propelled the popularity of green and energy-saving products," Mo said.

She noted that Chinese consumers have become more value-conscious and are paying more attention to the quality and cost-effectiveness of commodities. Mo also emphasized that online retailers should launch new products and upgrade supply chains to attract a new breed of young shoppers.

It is noteworthy that generative artificial intelligence technology has witnessed a ramp-up in China's retail industry during this year's 11-11 promotion.

According to a report from consultancy Bain & Company, Chinese retail players are investing in generative AI to boost sales and Singles Day could be the perfect opportunity.

The report said 52 percent of the surveyed merchants have used at least one generative AI-enabled tool. More than half of them have used generative AI-powered customer service chatbot tools, while about one in three have used AI to generate content. The survey interviewed over 500 merchants trading on China's major e-commerce platforms.

It stated that the era of high double-digit increases in the GMV during the Singles Day shopping spree has come to an end, forcing retailers to focus more on sustainable growth, profitability and customer loyalty, rather than a win-at-all-costs obsession with the top line amid current economic headwinds.

Kelly Liu, partner at Bain & Company's Greater China retail and performance improvement practices, said AI's increasing prominence across Chinese retail sector offers a timely boost to a maturing industry that is facing challenges such as slower retail sales growth.

Generative AI gives Chinese retailers access to a powerful tool for increasing sales and lowering cost, Liu said.

"It is vital that Chinese retailers deepen their customer engagement. AI tools can energize customer retention efforts, enabling e-commerce players to hyper-personalize their engagement with consumers and create bespoke shopping experiences for them," said James Yang, head of Bain & Company's Greater China retail practice.

Chinese retailers need to transition faster from AI experimentation to deployment at scale. The retailers that master generative AI in three key areas — deepening customer engagement, turbocharging productivity and cost savings, and finding new growth beyond trade — could build a lasting strategic advantage, according to the report.

Cross-border e-commerce growing in China

REPORTER'S LOG

By Fan Feifei

Having worked as a tech reporter for about a decade, I have witnessed firsthand the rapid growth of China's cross-border e-commerce platforms and how the country's consumers have shown increasing demand for premium imported and foreign-branded products in recent years.

Nowadays, I don't have to visit brick-and-mortar stores. Online

shopping suffices. During this year's Singles Day shopping carnival, I scrolled through some cross-border online marketplaces such as JD Worldwide and Tmall Global to find fresh produce, alcoholic beverages, cosmetics and apparel.

Chilean cherries, Norwegian salmon, New Zealand milk, French red wine and eye shadow and moisturizer from Japan arrived in fine shape at my door in just a few days. They all looked and tasted authentic and seemed worth the prices I paid.

I noticed that a growing number of Chinese shoppers are embracing online shopping for high-quality imported items, driven by enhanced logistics efficiencies and preferential

policies such as lower tariffs, as well as an expanded list of imported goods.

According to a report from Chinese e-commerce platform JD's Consumption and Industry Development Research Institute, imported brands, including mobile phones, personal care products, cosmetics, watches, eyeglasses, infant and maternal goods, nutrition and healthcare products, have gained in popularity among Chinese shoppers.

People in the 26 to 35 age group are the main consumers of imported products, accounting for nearly 50 percent of all age groups. In addition, consumers aged between 46 and 55 have contributed to the fast-

est growth in purchasing imported products, the report said.

In recent months, I have had the privilege of interviewing many industry insiders and company executives in the cross-border e-commerce domain. Some of them told me that although orders for online cross-border shopping platforms are still mainly being placed in first-tier cities, residents in second- and third-tier cities have also shown rapidly growing purchasing power.

Cross-border e-commerce in China has grown exponentially in recent years. Statistics from the General Administration of Customs show that the country's cross-border e-commerce imports and

exports reached 1.22 trillion yuan (\$171.7 billion) in the first half of the year, an increase of 10.5 percent year-on-year.

Li Yanchuan, head of Amazon China Global Store and Prime, said young Chinese consumers, especially Generation Z — born between the mid-1990s to around 2010 — think and judge independently while choosing brands, and prefer to pursue niche lifestyles and personalized products.

Sales of fragrance and skin care products, Japanese kitchenware, outdoor sports brands, virtual reality equipment, and healthcare and nutritional goods, have boomed on Amazon and are being increasingly favored by Chinese shoppers, Li said.

"Price, selection of products and logistics experience are the most important factors consumers con-

sider while buying commodities," Li noted, adding that he is bullish on the prospects of China's cross-border online shopping market.

According to market consultancy iiMedia Research, with China's further opening-up, gradual improvement in logistics and deliveries, and people's rising incomes, demand for imported goods will continue to increase and provide a big boost to consumption upgrade.

Chinese consumers have exhibited increasing purchasing demand for diversified, personalized and niche overseas products, and are attaching more importance to the value of the goods they buy, said Zhang Zhouping, a senior analyst on business-to-business and cross-border activities at the Internet Economy Institute, a domestic consultancy.

BUSINESSINSIGHT

Stable realty, shares key to lifting demand

EAGLE EYE

By Liu Yuanchun

In light of recent economic developments in China, three critical questions arousing public discussion have emerged, all pertaining to the significant policy adjustments made by the Chinese government starting in late September and the subsequent set of comprehensive incremental policies.

First, why have these policy changes happened? Second, what is the nature of these policies — are they an urgent response or a strategic elevation of China's growth stabilization efforts? And, last but not least, what will come next and what outcomes can be expected?

Let us try to answer these key questions.

Why policy recalibration?

The meeting held by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee on Sept 26 has shed light on the rationale behind the policy shift, indicating that the Chinese economy is facing a series of new challenges and phenomena.

These challenges include economic growth in the second and third quarters of the year falling short of the annual growth target of about 5 percent, as well as the policies laid out since the end of last year, especially in the real estate sector, not having achieved outcomes as anticipated, coupled with fiscal challenges at the local government level.

Another new phenomenon that prompted the shift in policy stance was the start of interest rate reductions in the United States and the broader world economy, which have provided more scope for China's policy adjustments.

More importantly, a new consensus has emerged that stabilizing the real estate sector and promoting reforms to shape a stable performance of the capital market are the focal points in efforts to stabilize expectations, boost business confidence and shore up domestic demand.

In other words, stakeholders have shared the understanding that the stability of both the real estate sector and the capital market is not only a medium-term objective for institutional reform and economic restructuring, but an increasingly immediate short-term priority that serves as a prerequisite for expanding domestic demand.

Stopgap or systemic shift?

Based on the new consensus, financial authorities and government bodies have convened a series of news conferences to unveil a range of policy tools since late September.

These tools are primarily aimed at stabilizing the real estate market, boosting stock market sentiment, implementing countercyclical adjustments to expand domestic demand and providing relief measures for enterprises.



CAI MENG / CHINA DAILY

The pivotal question remains whether these measures are merely stopgap solutions. Without policy steps that follow, fundamental changes can hardly happen, a scenario many are concerned about.

To answer this question, it deserves reemphasizing the change in mindset behind the policy moves.

That is, stabilizing the real estate sector and the capital market has turned pivotal for boosting people's confidence, which in turn is the prerequisite for expanding domestic demand.

Other key clues to this question include the two targeted monetary policy tools

aimed at supporting the capital market as well as the establishment of a joint working group for central bank treasury bond transactions.

First, the introduction of the Securities, Funds and Insurance Companies Swap Facility and the central bank lending facility for share buybacks and shareholding increases have marked the prelude to the central bank's asset purchasing initiatives through an indirect channel.

In simple words, the SFISF facilitates financial institutions' asset pledging for financing to invest in the capital market, while the central bank lending program

provides financing to listed companies' share buybacks.

The design principles behind these tools are to address the persistent pricing distortions and market inefficiencies plaguing China's capital market, evidenced by the prevalence of companies trading below their net asset values.

Before Sept 25, nearly 800 of the more than 5,000 onshore listed companies were trading below their net asset value. Close to 100 companies trading below their net asset value saw dividend payout ratios even exceed 5 percent, indicating a systemic distortion in China's capital market pricing.

By encouraging major shareholders to buy back shares and eligible institutions to increase stock holdings, these measures imply a significant paradigm shift, aiming to establish a market floor and address the widespread, persistent issue of stock market values falling below book values.

Correcting the pricing distortion will play a major role in recouping the capital market's functioning and fostering rational investor behavior.

Second, the establishment of a working group on treasury bond open market operations by the Ministry of Finance and the People's Bank of China signifies a significant reorientation in the future positioning of fiscal and monetary policies.

This institutional move is closely tied to the comprehensive enhancement of China's modern central banking system, emphasizing the marketization of interest rates and signaling the extensive expansion of the government bond market's depth and breadth. These changes herald a transformative shift in monetary policy operations and the future fiscal policy framework.

Structural changes implied

Therefore, contrary to popular opinion that these measures are merely simple stimuli to mitigate short-term difficulties, they are actually aimed at instigating fundamental changes in incentive systems and market players' behavioral patterns.

For instance, policy efforts to forge a stock market bottom aim to alter investor behavior while the incentives for listed company restructuring and long-term investments seek to reshape the structure of the capital market.

Similarly, initiatives such as local government debt resolution and functional reorganization aim to address the stagnation in some regional economic engines, hinting at substantial reforms on the horizon.

Looking ahead, it becomes evident that the focus on stabilizing first-tier real estate markets and key real estate enterprises has yielded positive outcomes, as indicated by remarks by officials recently that China's property sector has started to bottom out. This is a crucial foundation for predicting future policy moves.

Moreover, the objective of expanding domestic demand would be achieved via improvements in social welfare, rather than simply expanding consumer goods trade-in deals.

The focus on fostering consumption is shifting to boosting long-term income growth and repairing households' balance sheets, and there will be a continuous roll-out of incremental policies to consolidate this policy direction.

In short, recent policy moves go beyond typical stimulus campaigns. We must understand the policy resolve behind this and recognize the structural and institutional changes implied.

The writer is president of Shanghai University of Finance and Economics.

The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

CHINA PERSPECTIVE

Proactive policy helps address price weakness

MAIN STREET

By Xiao Lisheng and Li Xiaojian

The latest data show that the downward pressure on China's price levels is still a drag on the country's economy. In September, the growth rate of the consumer price index, the main gauge of inflation, fell by 0.2 percentage point year-on-year to 0.4 percent, remaining flat month-on-month.

Compared to consumer goods, the performance of industrial prices has been even more gloomy, with the growth rate of the producer price index — which measures factory gate prices — declining by 2.8 percent in September, down 1.0 percentage point from August.

Viewed from a longer perspective, China's PPI had remained in negative territory for 24 consecutive months, from October 2022 to this September.

The persistent low-level movement of price levels has also weighed on the country's nominal growth, as the GDP deflator — or the ratio of nominal GDP to real GDP to gauge the change of prices for all goods and services produced in the country — has been below zero since the third quarter of 2023.

This not only dampens economic sentiment among households, but also constrains the profitability of enterprises and the performance of asset prices.

Specifically, China's price movements have several characteristics. Driven by the rebound in pork prices cycle, food prices

have performed relatively strongly, with food and tobacco prices in the September CPI growing 2.3 percent year-on-year, providing support to the overall CPI.

The core CPI growth rate has continued to decline, falling to 0.1 percent year-on-year in September, an extremely low level in recorded history, with housing rents being an important drag.

Prices of durable consumer goods, such as transportation vehicles, communication equipment and household appliances, have continued to decline, reflecting the current imbalance between supply and demand in the commodity market.

The lack of downstream demand has led to faster declines in upstream industrial goods prices, with the month-on-month PPI for production materials decreasing by 0.3 percent, 1.0 percent and 0.8 percent in July, August and September, respectively.

Insufficient domestic effective demand is the main reason for the relatively low price levels. In the third quarter, China's real GDP growth was 4.6 percent year-on-year, with final consumption expenditure, gross capital formation and net exports of goods and services contributing 1.35, 1.28 and 1.97 percentage points, respectively.

It can be seen that the driving force of domestic demand on economic growth is not as strong as that of external demand. In particular, the deep adjustment of the real estate market may be a key factor constraining domestic aggregate demand.

On the one hand, real estate development investment is an important component of domestic demand, and the cumulative year-on-year growth rate of China's real estate development investment from January to September plunged 10.1 percent.

On the other hand, the adjustment of the

real estate market has brought about a negative wealth effect and has had a significant impact on a wider range of consumption areas.

In the aftermath of the eurozone debt crisis that erupted in the late 2000s, the common currency area found itself mired in a prolonged period of declining price levels.

The crisis was ignited in late 2009, when the three major ratings agencies successively downgraded Greece's sovereign credit rating, setting off a chain reaction that soon engulfed other eurozone members, including Portugal, Ireland, Italy and Spain.

As the debt crisis spread from the government sector to banking and real estate, the eurozone economy was dragged into a protracted slump.

After arduous negotiations, a 750 billion euro (\$806 billion) rescue mechanism, including the European Financial Stability Mechanism and the European Financial Stability Facility, was established in May 2010. However, the bailout package also required debt-ridden countries to implement strict fiscal austerity measures, further exacerbating the eurozone's short-term economic downturn.

The impact of these developments became increasingly apparent in the following years, as the eurozone's Harmonized Index of Consumer Prices and PPI growth rates began a prolonged downward spiral.

From 2013 to 2016, the eurozone PPI remained in negative territory, while the HICP flirted with deflation, underscoring the persistent deflationary pressures weighing on the region.

Bolstered by the European Central Bank's resolute monetary policy intervention, the eurozone saw the turning point come in the

second half of 2016, when price levels in the eurozone began to recover after hitting their bottom.

The catalyst for this shift was the appointment of Mario Draghi as the ECB's third president in November 2011. Draghi and his team subsequently unveiled a series of bold policy actions to tackle deflationary pressure.

The ECB lowered its deposit facility rate to zero in July 2012 and officially introduced negative interest rates in June 2014.

The central bank also rolled out a raft of unconventional monetary policy tools, including the Long-Term Refinancing Operations and Outright Monetary Transactions, which not only provided ample liquidity to the banking sector, but also effectively reduced the eurozone's risk-free rates and yield spreads.

The ECB also strengthened its communication with markets, using forward guidance to influence market expectations about the future path of interest rates, thereby bolstering confidence.

In addition to the ECB's decisive monetary policy moves, the brightening external environment had also played a crucial role in easing inflationary pressure within the eurozone.

Beginning in 2016, the PMI in the manufacturing sectors of both China and the United States started to recover in sync, signaling the onset of a new global economic upswing.

The eurozone's experience in tackling the threat of deflation in the aftermath of the debt crisis has provided valuable lessons and insights for China's policymakers.

One of the key takeaways is the importance of introducing accommodative monetary policy measures at the very onset of a risk event, in order to get ahead of the curve.

Within the traditional macroeconomic analytical framework, the sustained decline in price levels is not a conventional situa-

tion, and therefore cannot be effectively addressed using standard control measures and tools.

It was against this backdrop that the ECB boldly deployed a trio of unconventional policy instruments — zero interest rates, quantitative easing and forward guidance.

The ECB's willingness to think outside the box and utilize these innovative tools was crucial in improving market confidence and liquidity conditions, which in turn helped drive the recovery in price levels.

Historical data show that Southern European countries, which were undergoing fiscal consolidation, faced significantly greater deflationary pressures compared to the core eurozone economies like Germany and France.

These observations clearly indicate that the combination of accommodative monetary policy and proactive fiscal expansion has been crucial in driving a more robust and sustained rebound in the eurozone's price levels.

As the eurozone's experience in overcoming its deflationary challenges has demonstrated, the effectiveness of accommodative domestic policies is significantly enhanced when they are complemented by an improving external environment.

In the case of the eurozone, the region's ability to emerge from the deflationary quagmire in 2016 was not solely the result of the ECB's persistent monetary policy easing. The broader global economic recovery also played a crucial role in alleviating the eurozone's deflationary pressure.

Xiao Lisheng is director of Global Macroeconomy Research Division under the Institute of World Economics and Politics, which is part of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Li Xiaojian is a researcher with Jiujiang Research Institute.

The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

WORLD US

New US policies likely to weigh in on Europe

Countries should brace for impact on security, trade and climate, experts say

By XING YI and ZHENG WANYIN in London

The United States under Donald Trump will have very different foreign policies from the current Joe Biden administration, and countries in Europe should brace for the impact on security, trade and climate, European leaders and experts say.

On the aspect of defense and security, European leaders shared consensus at a summit of the European Political Community held on Thursday that Europe needs to take more responsibility for their security and rely less on the US in response to Trump's repeated criticism of the US making too much contribution to the transatlantic NATO alliance.

"There was agreement that Europe should take more responsibility for its peace and security. To be blunt, we cannot wait for the Americans to protect us," Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban was quoted as saying after the summit in Budapest which gathered more than 40 European leaders.

Other leaders at the Thursday summit had voiced similar messages on boosting European defense, Reuters reported.

"We cannot delegate our security to the Americans forever," France's President Emmanuel Macron, who has long pushed Europe to build up cooperation on defense, said. "We need to be able to defend ourselves."

On Wednesday, Macron and Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz held talks after it became clear that Trump would win the US presidential election. A spokesperson for the German government said the two

had promised to work together even more closely in the future, according to German broadcaster DW.

Another major concern for European leaders was Trump's tariff policy, which the president-elect has said several times during his campaign that he plans to impose a blanket tariff of 10 to 20 percent on all imports to the US.

Finland's Prime Minister Petteri Orpo said he was concerned about the prospect of a trade war: "It should not be allowed to happen," he said at Thursday's summit. "Let's now try to influence the US and Trump's future policy so that he understands the risks involved."

Some EU diplomats have told the Politico website that the bloc had prepared "substantial retaliation" if Trump initiated a trade war.

Tariff issues

Despite having a "special relationship" with the US, the United Kingdom was also concerned about being hit by tariffs. UK Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds has told Politico that "any G7 trade minister like myself would be concerned about the talk of tariffs," and hinted that if Britain was threatened with a trade war, it would be prepared to fight back.

Russ Shaw, founder of Tech London Advocates and Global Tech Advocates, said in the short term, heightened tariffs and trade barriers could raise costs and inflation, impacting UK firms with ties to US supply chains.

"The risk of escalating trade tensions could also slow investment and disrupt cross-border collaboration, particularly in tech," said Shaw.

"In the semiconductor space, Trump's policies could hinder global supply chains, which many UK firms rely on for cutting-edge technology, limiting collaboration and access to essential chips components."

Trump's comeback will also impact the much-needed global green transition, as he has vowed to boost US oil and gas extraction and ship more fossil fuels abroad, and held a dismissive attitude toward climate change.

During an online roundtable on what another Trump presidency would mean for the climate, Belinda Schaepe, a China policy analyst at the Helsinki-based Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air, said Trump's energy and industry policies would result in an extra 4 billion tons of emissions and negate the emissions savings achieved by renewable energy initiatives worldwide over the past five years.

"This means that the US would miss its Paris Agreement targets, further diminishing the chances of limiting global warming to 1.5 C," she said.

With the COP29 starting Monday, Erik Solheim, former executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme, said on social media that participants will be talking about the likelihood that Trump will withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement again.

However, Solheim said the impact will be much less than people fear. "The US, even under Biden, is not a climate leader," said Solheim. "China, India, Europe and many developing nations lead the struggle. They all build green industries and fight climate change because it is in their own interest. They don't do it to please the US."

Contact the writers at xingyi@chinadaily.com.cn.



Immigrants and activists participate in a rally on Saturday in New York against President-elect Donald Trump's plan to deport undocumented immigrants. STEPHANIE KEITH / GETTY IMAGES

Trump wins 312 votes, Harris 226

WASHINGTON — Republican Donald Trump has won the presidential election in Arizona, Edison Research and US networks projected on Saturday, completing a sweep of all seven battleground states and locking in a decisive Electoral College victory over Democratic Vice-President Kamala Harris.

Trump, who had secured the 270 Electoral College votes needed to win the White House early on Wednesday, now has what is expected to be a final total of 312 votes to Harris' 226.

In addition to Arizona, Trump won the swing states of Michigan, Pennsylvania, Georgia, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Nevada. In 2020, Joe Biden defeated Trump by winning six of the seven swing states — and narrowly losing North Carolina and won 306 Electoral College votes to Trump's 232.

Trump won 306 in his 2016 victory over Hillary Clinton.

The Associated Press said Trump has won 74.6 million votes nation-

wide, or 50.5 percent, to Harris' 70.9 million, or 48 percent.

Meanwhile, Republicans on Saturday were close to clinching control of the US House of Representatives, a critical element for Trump to advance his agenda when he returns to the White House in January.

With votes still being counted from the Nov 5 general election, Republicans had won 213 seats in the 435-member House, according to Edison Research.

Republicans need to win five more seats to keep control of the House and they already have enough victories to wrest control of the US Senate from Democrats.

Edison Research said Democrats have won 205 seats so far, including projecting on Saturday that Representative Greg Stanton in Arizona had won reelection. Democrats would need to win 13 of the remaining 17 seats to take control.

Republican senators will decide next week who will serve as the party's leader in the Senate in 2025

with John Thune, John Cornyn and Rick Scott vying for the job.

Trump on Saturday ruled out reappointing two senior figures from his first administration, secretary of state Mike Pompeo and UN ambassador Nikki Haley.

Biden will meet with Trump at the White House in the Oval Office, the White House said on Saturday.

This type of meeting between the outgoing and incoming presidents is considered customary, but Trump did not invite Biden for one after making unsubstantiated election fraud claims that culminated in the Jan 6, 2021, Capitol riot.

Trump also broke with precedent by skipping Biden's inauguration, but the White House has said the Democratic president will attend the upcoming ceremony.

After Congress certifies the Electoral College vote on Jan 6, Trump and his incoming vice-president, US Senator JD Vance, are due to take office on Jan 20.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

Envoy in US: Film can be a 'bridge of friendship'

By RENALI in Los Angeles renali@chinadailyusa.com

China's ambassador to the United States, in remarks to movie and TV festivals, said film can be a "bridge of friendship" between the two countries.

Ambassador Xie Feng made the comments in a video address for the opening ceremony of the 20th Chinese American film and TV festivals on Friday.

The Chinese American Film Festival and the Chinese American TV Festival, held annually in Los Angeles, celebrate the best in Chinese and American cinema and television.

For more than two decades, the film festival has presented more than 8,000 movies, providing a platform for stories that reflect the rich cultural tapestries of both nations.

Xie celebrated the festivals as catalysts for bringing together leading filmmakers from both countries and promoting dialogue through art.

"Film is an art of light and shadow, a mirror of reality, and it is also a medium for cultural exchanges," Xie told the audience.

Xie illustrated cinema's power and impact by referencing iconic films that have resonated in both countries, from American blockbusters such as *Titanic* and *Transformers* to Chinese hits such as *The Wandering Earth* and *YOLO*.

He recalled the history of cultural exchange going back to 1954, when Premier Zhou Enlai invited Charlie Chaplin to a Geneva screening of *The Butterfly Lovers* — China's first color film, often called the "Chinese *Romeo and Juliet*".

Xie spoke of how films captivate audiences across the globe, drawing emotional connections between people of different backgrounds. "Chinese kids singing *Let It Go* from *Frozen*, or American children carrying panda plushies to watch *Kung Fu Panda* — this is the magic of film," he said.



The opening ceremony of the 20th Chinese American Film Festival and the Chinese American TV Festival is attended by an audience of international and Hollywood film stars, entertainment executives and other luminaries in San Gabriel, a neighboring city of Los Angeles, on Friday. ZENG HUI / XINHUA

Highlighting strong bilateral ties in the film sector, Xie pointed to the mutual benefits of collaboration. In the first nine months of this year, 34 American films were screened in China, generating \$674 million in box office revenue.

"Our cooperation has brought fruitful outcomes and holds bright prospects. China's massive and growing film market, with its 1.4 billion audience and 88,000 screens, presents tremendous opportunities," Xie said.

While China offers a vast audience and a rich historical narrative, Xie acknowledged the American film industry's longstanding expertise in funding, technology and marketing.

He emphasized that the two countries, as the world's largest film markets, have much to offer each other in creating cinematic works that resonate globally.

By blending strengths, he suggested, they can jointly overcome new challenges posed by emerging technologies in filmmaking.

Xie highlighted the ongoing collaboration in co-productions by saying, "It is heartening to see that Chinese elements have contributed to the success of a number of American films."

That partnership, he emphasized, demonstrates the power of cultural exchange in enriching storytelling and fostering shared growth.

The ambassador also touched on China's broader commitment to cultural exchange, announcing further institutional reforms to enhance international collaboration in film, telecommunications and other cultural sectors.

"This high-standard opening-up will create substantial opportunities

for high-quality cultural products from around the world," he said.

Xie also warned against misconceptions and divisive narratives. "If we demonize each other, we would be preoccupied by paranoia and caught in a spiral of enmity," he said.

Reflecting on American journalist Edgar Snow's dedication to accurate reporting on China, Xie referenced a recent co-produced documentary — *Snow: The Unfinished Journey* — as a tribute to understanding and goodwill.

"The foundation of the China-US relationship was laid by our peoples, and its future will be created by our peoples," he emphasized, expressing his hope for more storytellers to bring balanced, nuanced portrayals of China-US relations to audiences worldwide.

Chinese Consul General in Los Angeles Guo Shaochun, who attended the event, emphasized the mutually beneficial nature of China-US cooperation in film and television, fostered by supportive policies between the two governments.

"The collaboration between China and the US in film and television is a prime example of mutually beneficial, win-win cooperation," Guo said.

He highlighted the influx of Hollywood films into China, with 40 major releases entering the Chinese market last year alone.

"Many Chinese filmmakers have come to Hollywood to learn and share ideas, and some are now actively shaping the industry and advancing film and television production in China," Guo said, attributing much of the successful exchange to the role of the festivals in facilitating cultural and professional connections.

Reducing food waste can help achieve sustainable development

PUBLIC INTEREST AD: 0086

CHINADAILY 中国日报

WORLD

Joint green development plans sought

China, Japan should identify new growth points for cooperation, Tokyo forum hears

By **JIANG XUEQING** in Tokyo
jiangxueqing@chinadaily.com.cn

China and Japan should make greater alignment in green development strategies, leveraging each other's comparative advantages and identifying new growth points for cooperation, officials from both countries said at a forum in Tokyo.

Speaking at the 17th China-Japan Comprehensive Forum on Energy Conservation and Environmental Protection on Saturday, Yoji Muto, Japan's minister of economy, trade and industry, stressed the importance of partnering with major nations for green, low-carbon transition.

He highlighted China's ambitious targets for peaking carbon emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality before 2060, which are driving key policies and rapid expansion in wind, solar and other renewable energy sources.

"The collaboration between Japan and China on energy conservation and environmental protection contributes significantly not only to the two nations but to global carbon neutrality efforts," said Muto.

He expressed hope that this forum would further strengthen Japan-China cooperation in energy conservation and environmental protection, fostering dialogue between the government and private sector representatives and inspiring additional collaboration.

Since 2006, the China-Japan Comprehensive Forum on Energy Conservation and Environmental Protection has held 17 sessions, resulting in 457 cooperative projects, including 27 new projects signed at this year's event. These new agreements cover areas such as waste-to-energy technology, decarbonization of industrial parks and environmental restoration.

During his meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba last month, Chinese Premier Li Qiang expressed China's willingness to work with Japan in leveraging each country's advantages to identify new growth opportunities in green development.

At Saturday's forum, Zhao Chenxin, vice-chairman of China's National Development and Reform Commission, highlighted Japan and China's complementary industrial strengths, large market potential and solid foundation for cooperation in energy conservation and environmental protection.

Zhao underscored China's eagerness to boost cooperation with Japan in environmental industries, energy-saving equipment and environmental infrastructure, supporting joint demonstration projects and cooperation in third-party markets between organizations and businesses from both countries.

Low-carbon technologies
China also aims to deepen its partnership with Japan in green, low-carbon technologies, actively supporting academic discussions, technology exchanges and joint research while promoting the practical application of green technologies, Zhao said.

This initiative seeks to build a resilient, low-carbon industrial chain and an equitable, open trade and investment environment, further enhancing regional green development and contributing to global environmental governance, he said.

Japanese Environment Minister Keichiro Asao said Japan and China together account for about 20 percent of the world's GDP, which gives them substantial influence on the global economy. Both countries play crucial roles in addressing global environmental challenges and sharing knowledge on climate change.

Japan has set a goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, with plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 46 percent from 2013 levels by 2030, aiming for a 50 percent reduction.

Asao stressed the importance of

Japan and China setting ambitious, actionable emission-reduction goals. He said he hopes the forum would strengthen mutual understanding in energy conservation and environmental protection and further promote friendly bilateral relations.

Chinese Vice-Minister of Commerce Li Fei said China and Japan are companions and good partners in green development. He stressed the importance of multilevel and multi-field policy communication to foster new growth points for green cooperation, advance practical project cooperation, and align green rules under regional multilateral frameworks to drive global governance reform and sustainable development.

Japan and China should actively facilitate green trade, jointly oppose protectionism and unilateralism, and resist new types of green barriers to promote the free flow of green products and technologies, he said.

“The collaboration between Japan and China on energy conservation and environmental protection contributes significantly not only to the two nations but to global carbon neutrality efforts.”

Yoji Muto, Japan's minister of economy, trade and industry

China's high-quality production capacity in electric vehicles, lithium batteries and photovoltaic products contributes significantly to global green development, and it welcomes high-quality products from around the world, including Japan, to enter the Chinese market, supporting green growth across entire industrial chains, he added.

He also called on both countries to leverage their strengths and work alongside Global South countries in connecting markets and resources to jointly explore third-party markets in photovoltaics, wind power and electric vehicles, thus injecting positive energy into the global economic sustainability.

Kosei Shindo, head of the Japan-China Economic Association, said the strong support from both governments encourages confidence in exploring new business opportunities between Japan and China, noting that maintaining this mechanism will be essential going forward.

Chinese Ambassador to Japan Wu Jianghao said energy conservation, environmental protection and green development are key areas for cooperation that the leaders of China and Japan highly value, with a solid foundation and promising outlook.

Global green transition depends on the widespread application of renewable energies and the deep integration of new energy vehicles, energy storage and energy-saving technologies, Wu said, adding it relies on a free, open and inclusive international trade system.

"Hyping up so-called overcapacity in the new energy sector, adopting unilateralist and protectionist measures, and creating exclusive supply chains to isolate specific countries will seriously hinder global economic and trade growth and slow down the global green transition," he said.

As major economies, China and Japan should jointly advocate an open and inclusive approach to cooperation, working together to maintain the global free trade system and stabilize supply and industrial chains, he said. This would create a fairer and more favorable environment for mutually beneficial collaboration between companies from both countries, he added.



Volunteers and residents in the municipality of Massanassa, Valencia, Spain, clear mud from street on Saturday as the area recovers from the deadly flooding. DAVID RAMOS VIA GETTY IMAGES

Thousands march in Spain over floods

VALENCIA, Spain — Tens of thousands of people demonstrated in the eastern Spanish city of Valencia on Saturday over regional authorities' handling of devastating floods that killed more than 220 people in one of Europe's worst natural disasters for decades.

Thousands also marched in other Spanish cities, but the Valencia regional authorities put the turnout in the regional capital at 130,000.

In the latest demonstration over the floods, protesters filled the center of Valencia demanding the resignation of regional government leader Carlos Mazón.

Some demonstrators dumped dirty boots outside the government building while others plastered it with mud.

Residents in stricken areas accuse Mazón of issuing an alert too late, at 8 pm on Oct 29, well after

water was already pouring into many nearby towns and villages.

The Valencian leader has said he would have issued an earlier alarm if authorities had been notified of the seriousness of the situation by an official water monitoring body. Mazón did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

There is anger, too, over what critics say was the slow response of the authorities in the aftermath of the deadly flash floods that affected about 80 towns and cities in the region.

"We want to show our indignation and anger over the poor management of this disaster which has affected so many people," said Anna Oliver, president of Accio Cultural del País Valencià, one of about 30 groups that organized the protest.

Although the protest was largely peaceful, police charged stone-

throwing protesters at one point and objects hurled at the city council building caused minor damage.

Following days of storm warnings from the national weather service from Oct 25 onward, some municipalities and local bodies raised the alarm much earlier than the regional government.

For example, Valencia University told its staff members on Oct 28 not to come to work. Several town halls suspended activities, shut down public facilities and told people to stay home. Weather service AEMET raised its threat level for heavy rains in the area to a red alert at 7:36 am on Oct 29.

Nearly 80 people are still missing in what is the deadliest deluge in a single European country since floods in Portugal in 1967 killed about 500.

AGENCIES VIA XINHUA

Qatar suspends role as mediator in Gaza talks

DOHA — Qatar has suspended its role as a key mediator for a Gaza cease-fire and hostage release deal until Hamas and Israel show "seriousness" in talks, its Foreign Ministry said on Saturday.

The Gulf country has been involved in months of protracted diplomacy aimed at ending the Palestine-Israeli conflict, triggered by Hamas' Oct 7, 2023, attack on Israel, which resulted in 1,206 deaths, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures.

Israel's retaliatory campaign has killed 43,603 people in Gaza, according to figures from the Hamas-run territory's health ministry, which the United Nations considers reliable.

However, the talks, also mediated by Cairo and Washington, have

repeatedly hit problems since a one-week truce in November last year — the only one so far. Each side has blamed the other for the impasse.

"Qatar notified the parties 10 days ago, during the last attempts to reach an agreement, that it would stall its efforts to mediate between Hamas and Israel if an agreement was not reached in that round," Qatari Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed Al Ansari said.

"Qatar would resume those efforts ... when the parties show their willingness and seriousness." On the ground in the besieged Gaza Strip, the fighting showed no signs of abating on Saturday, the conflict's 400th day.

The territory's civil defense agency said Israeli airstrikes had killed

at least 14 Palestinians overnight, including nine at a tent camp in the southern area of Khan Younis.

Araf Tafesh told AFP she had lost relatives in that strike. "We have no food, no water, no place to sleep and we are all the time moving from place to place," she said.

On Sunday, the civil defense agency said that 30 people, including 13 children, were killed in Israeli strikes on two houses in the north.

The conflict has expanded to Lebanon, where Israel intensified its air campaign in September and later sent in ground troops after a year of cross-border clashes with Hezbollah.

Lebanon's Health Ministry said an Israeli strike on Sunday killed 20 people, including three children, in the village of Almat, north of Beirut.

CHINA DAILY USA

NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS

1500 Broadway, Suite 2800,
New York, NY 10036

Telephone: 212-537-8888

Fax: 212-537-8898

editor@chinadailyusa.com
readers@chinadailyusa.com

Subscription: 212-537-8899

Advertising: 212-537-8916

Follow us on:

x.com/chinadaily

facebook.com/chinadaily

usa.chinadaily.com.cn

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

WASHINGTON

National Press Bldg, Suite 1108

529 14th Street NW

Washington, DC 20045

Tel: 202-662-7249

Fax: 202-662-7247

SAN FRANCISCO

235 Montgomery Street, Suite 900, San

Francisco, CA 94104

Tel: 415-348-8288

Fax: 415-348-8388

SEATTLE

800 Fifth Ave, Suite 4100

Seattle, WA 98104

Tel: 206-922-2868

HOUSTON

1001 South Dairy Ashford Suite 100

Houston, TX 77077

Tel: 713-595-7660

CANADA | TORONTO

4711 Yonge Street, 10th Floor

Toronto, Ontario, M2N 6K8

Tel: 416-461-5706

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

Vol. 38 — No. 1455

World leaders condemn terrorist attack in Pakistan

By **XU WEIWEI** in Hong Kong
vivienxu@chinadailyapac.com

The world leaders have expressed their condolences to the people and government of Pakistan, condemning "heinous" terrorist acts over a deadly blast in Quetta city in the southwest.

They also stressed the importance of solidarity, vowing to fight against terrorism with Pakistani authorities.

At least 25 people, including women and children, were killed, and 62 others injured in the blast at a railway station in Balochistan Province on Saturday, health and police officials said. The death toll might rise as several injured people have been in a critical condition.

The railways said in a statement that the bombing took place in the morning at Platform No 1 of the station, where the train Jaffar Express was ready to depart.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the attack and directed the hospital administration to provide the best possible medical treatment to the injured.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres strongly condemned the terrorist attack on Saturday, his spokesman Stéphane Dujarric said in a statement emailed to the Associated Press of Pakistan.

"The Secretary-General sends his condolences to the families of



Security officials examine the site of a bomb explosion at a railway station in Quetta, Pakistan, on Saturday. ARSHAD BUTT / AP

those killed, as well as to the people and Government of Pakistan. He wishes a speedy recovery to all those injured," the statement said.

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, former prime minister of Pakistan, told China Daily that this suicide attack is "a despicable act of terrorism".

"Pakistan has been at the forefront of the war against terrorism in the last 30 years, and over 150,000 people, including the armed forces, civil armed forces, police and civilians, have lost their lives," he said.

"Pakistan will continue to use its

full force to fight terrorism, and this attack will only serve to reinforce the commitment of the people of Pakistan to defeat terrorism."

Sending condolences to Sharif and Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari, Russian President Vladimir Putin described the terrorist acts as a "barbaric crime", adding the culprits should be brought to justice.

"We are determined to continue close cooperation with our Pakistani partners against all forms and manifestations of terrorism," he wrote in a letter.

Malaysian Prime Minister

Anwar Ibrahim strongly condemned the violent acts and conveyed his sympathies to the victims and their families.

"Malaysia stands firmly in solidarity with the government of Pakistan in its steadfast fight against terrorism," he wrote on X.

Turkiye's Foreign Ministry said in a letter, "We will continue to support Pakistan in its fight against terrorism."

The proscribed group Balochistan Liberation Army claimed responsibility for the attack in a press release shared with media and on social media platforms.

The military sources from Quetta told Xinhua News Agency that the target of the attack were soldiers leaving for their homes in other provinces after completing their training in Quetta.

They revealed that a suicide bomber blew up his explosive jacket in a crowd of more than 100 people, including soldiers, railway police and civilian passengers.

Immediately after the incident, police, security forces and rescue teams rushed to the site and transferred the bodies and the injured to a hospital. The authorities also started snap checks in various parts of the city with an additional contingent of police and law enforcements deployed for increased security.

Xinhua contributed to this story.

COMMENT

Editorials

Visit expected to produce fresh impetus for sustainable common development

President Xi Jinping's forthcoming Latin America trip is set to inject fresh momentum into the two sides' joint efforts to chart a new course for global governance and create new prospects for the building of a community with a shared future between China and Latin America and the Caribbean.

President Xi's visit is expected to bring new development opportunities and cooperation points to China-LAC relations. During his sixth visit to the continent since 2013, the Chinese leader will attend the 31st APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Lima, capital of Peru, and pay a state visit to the country from Wednesday to Sunday, and attend the 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro and pay a state visit to Brazil from Sunday to Thursday next week.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Xi proposing the China-LAC community with a shared future. Over the past decade, with the joint efforts of both sides, the building of the community has continuously achieved new results, and China-LAC relations have entered a new era of equality, mutual benefit, innovation and openness, bringing tangible benefits to the peoples of the two sides.

At the two multilateral gatherings, new prospects for shared development and new paths for global governance will be the focus of attention for all parties. Xi is expected to discuss development plans with the other attending leaders, seek to build consensus on cooperation and the generating of new forces for growth, and to find ways to stimulate new momentum for the global recovery.

For more than 30 years, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation mechanism has promoted the development of the Asia-Pacific, helping the region become the world's economic growth center, the anchor of global development stability and the highland of cooperation. As a result, the Asia-Pacific shoulders the responsibility to drive a balanced and sustainable global recovery.

As President Xi once said, the development of the Asia-Pacific region relies on the openness and inclusiveness of the regional economies, learning from each other's strengths and weaknesses, and sharing what they have, rather than confrontational or beggar-thy-neighbor practices.

Apart from weak economic growth, the world also faces security and governance challenges and multiple crises. The G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, with the theme of "Building a Just World and a Sustainable Planet", provides a platform for leaders to put aside their differences and pool their wisdom to address what should be recognized as common concerns.

Under the G20 framework, China has always focused on development issues, particularly the common development of the Global South.

From curbing inflation to dealing with the debt crisis, from promoting global trade, the digital economy and the green transformation to anti-corruption and ensuring food and energy security, China has always stood with the vast majority of developing countries and worked hard to produce a meaningful response to their concerns from the G20. From being the first to clearly express support for the African Union to join the G20, to promoting the bridging of the North-South "digital divide", to promoting reform of the international financial architecture, China has always sought ways to improve the global governance system and enhance the representation and voice of developing countries.

As major players on the world stage, the G20 countries should reflect on the responsibility they shoulder, and play a leading role in promoting development for all countries.

China on its part has proposed the Belt and Road Initiative, and the global initiatives for development, security and civilization, injecting strong momentum into the shared pursuit of a sustainable and inclusive global community. Thus within the framework of the G20, China has always advocated the practice of multilateralism, adhered to the global governance concept of consultation, joint construction and sharing, and promoted global governance reform for fairness, justice, openness and inclusiveness.

China's cooperation with LAC countries on these two multilateral stages can help further promote the unity and self-reliance of the Global South, and play a constructive role in responding to the pressing global challenges and advancing reform of the global governance system.

Manila's legislative trick only fools itself

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr signed into law the Maritime Zones Act and Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act last week to try and make the Philippines' acts that infringe upon China's sovereignty and territorial integrity in the South China Sea appear lawful.

The move only serves to ruin the positive momentum that has developed in the two sides' serial contacts over the past months to settle their maritime disputes through negotiations. It also sends the message to the Marcos government's patrons in Washington that despite the impending change of administration in the United States, Manila can still be counted on to be a reliable pawn of the US doing Washington's bidding to confront China.

The two acts illegally include China's Huangyan Island and most of the islands and reefs of China's Nansha Islands, and their adjacent waters into the Philippines' maritime zones, and are not compatible with international law and the resolutions of the International Maritime Organization.

The Philippines aims to further solidify the illegal arbitral award on the South China Sea in the form of domestic legislation. The so-called arbitral award on the South China Sea is illegal, null and void. China therefore does not accept or recognize it, and it thus opposes and does not accept any claim or action based on the award.

China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea are solidly grounded in history and the law, comply with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and will not be affected by any domestic law of the Philippines.

This domestic legislation of the Philippines seriously violates the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and will only make the situation in the South China Sea more complex. It is the Marcos government's one-sided pro-US policy that has been the root cause for the worsening of the situation in the South China Sea and the deterioration of Sino-Philippine relations, as Washington tries to make Manila its pawn to continuously provoke Beijing.

Manila should stop the tricks that only fool itself, and come back to the negotiation table with Beijing. China reserves the right to take all measures necessary. The Chinese government announced the territorial sea baseline of Huangyan Island according to the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone Law on Sunday. The farther Manila proceeds in the wrong direction it is going on the issue, the smaller space it will have to wiggle in as Beijing will take every chance to secure China's core interests.

China and the Philippines are close neighbors, and good neighborliness, mutually beneficial cooperation and common development are in the fundamental interests of both countries. The positive and negative lessons of China-Philippines relations in recent years have proved time and again that it is not easy to build good relations, but it is easy to destroy them.

China-Philippines relations are facing serious difficulties and challenges, which are rooted in the fact that the Philippine side has repeatedly reneged on its commitments and violated the consensus of the two sides to resolve their maritime disputes through negotiations. The key to putting relations back on the right track is for the Philippine side to fulfill its commitments and refrain from speculating on the US support and its public opinion stunts.

During his meeting with his Chinese counterpart in July, Philippine Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo said that the Philippines is committed to easing the situation through dialogue and consultation, and is willing to strengthen communication with China in a sincere and pragmatic manner to enhance mutual trust and improve bilateral relations.

Now the dust has settled on the US presidential election, there is no doubt that the China-Philippines relations are at a new crossroad and the only way to avoid conflict and confrontation is for Manila to choose the path of dialogue and consultation. Manila should reevaluate the situation and honor its words with deeds.

CHINA DAILY WORLDWIDE

Contact us at:

China Daily
15 HuiXin 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

Shi Yu



Opinion Line

New chapter being written in seeking strength through unity

President Xi Jinping held talks with Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto in Beijing on Saturday. Prabowo visited China as his first overseas trip right after he was elected in March and chose China as the first country to visit after taking office, demonstrating the great importance he attaches to developing relations with China and the high level and strategic nature of China-Indonesia relations.

The strengthening of mutual trust, mutual assistance and win-win cooperation represents the direction that should be followed to ensure the sustained and stable development of bilateral relations in the future. As Xi told the Indonesian leader, China is willing to work with the new Indonesian government to build on past achievements, and promote the building of a community with a shared

future. It is heartening to hear Prabowo not only warmly echo Xi in those regards but also express Indonesia's commitment to an independent and nonaligned foreign policy.

To that end, the two countries need to strengthen high-level exchanges and cooperation between their governments, legislatures and localities, and firmly support each other in safeguarding core interests and major concerns and exploring a path of modernization that suits their national conditions.

They can unleash the potential in further improving the strategic cooperation layout, promoting political, economic, cultural, maritime and security cooperation and adhering to the high-quality joint construction of the Belt and Road. They should strengthen cooperation in the fields of the digital

economy, advanced manufacturing, and the circular economy, and carry out cooperation in joint development at sea.

China is willing to work with Indonesia to create more people-friendly projects, strengthen exchanges and cooperation in poverty reduction, medicine, food planting and fisheries, provide support for Indonesia's scientific research talent training and vocational education development, and facilitate personnel exchanges.

China and Indonesia should jointly promote Asian values with peace, cooperation, inclusiveness and integration at the core, give new contemporary connotations to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and the Bandung Spirit, and promote global governance in a more just and reasonable direction.

—XINHUA NEWS AGENCY

Marco Polo spirit of mutual learning still valuable

When in 1266 Kublai Khan invited Niccolò and Maffeo Polo, respectively father and uncle of the legendary Venetian merchant and explorer Marco Polo, to Dadu, present-day Beijing, it was driven largely by curiosity. As the first European guests of the ruler of the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), they were questioned extensively about Europe.

A similar curiosity led the two on their return trip to China, when they brought the young Marco on his life-defining adventure to the mysterious East. No edition of *The Travels of Marco Polo* is deemed authoritative, and doubts linger around the truthfulness of his narratives. But his recorded experiences did inspire broad interest in the Far East back home. Christopher Columbus, for one, embarked on his explorations driven at least in part by Marco Polo's book, a copy of which, with handwritten annotations, was among his belongings.

From the Yuan Dynasty on, Marco Polo's name, along with those of Italian

missionaries such as Giovanni da Montecorvino, Matteo Ricci and Giuseppe Castiglione, has inspired cultural exchanges and mutual understanding not only between China and Italy, but also between China and Europe. So much so that, when Chinese President Xi Jinping welcomed Italian President Sergio Mattarella in Beijing on Friday, during the latter's visit, both leaders cited the 700th anniversary of Marco Polo's journey to China as a hallmark of historical links between the two civilizations.

Indeed, the Polos' China stories are fitting illustrations of what Beijing has been painstakingly promoting for contemporary international relations — mutual learning and mutual understanding. Marco Polo opened a window for the West to know China. His recorded experiences in and with China are proof that, when it comes to cross-cultural relations, a healthy dose of innocent curiosity and respect can go a long way, and deliver lasting benefits.

The historical links between China and Italy have been closely associated with the storied Silk Road, whose modern incarnation is now at the center of multiple China-proposed initiatives of broad international cooperation. Significant parts of the Polos' trips to and from China on land and at sea were largely along the Silk Road, the busiest routes of international commerce at the time, which Beijing is breathing fresh life into.

Mattarella, recalling Marco Polo's dealings with China as an illustration of mutual learning, highlighted broader people-to-people exchanges as a means of building unity and preventing confrontation. Italy could play a similar role today as reaffirming friendly relations between China and Italy can set an example for broader Sino-European relations, which would have realistic significance as China and the European Union engage in strenuous negotiations to defuse an impending trade war.

—TAN HONGKAI, CHINA DAILY

What They Say

Clear and firm principles for getting along

Editor's Note: The following are excerpts of remarks by Chinese ambassador to the United States Xie Feng, via a video link, at an event held by the US-China Business Council in Shanghai on Thursday to commemorate the 45th anniversary of the establishment of China-US diplomatic relations:

Whether China and the United States can continue working together and combating common challenges bears on the well-being of both countries and the future of humanity. China's answer is clear and firm. The three principles put forward by President Xi Jinping, mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, sum up the experience of China-US relations over the past decades, and point out the right path for the two countries to get along in the new era.

Mutual respect is a prerequisite. Differences should be an impetus for exchanges and mutual learning, rather than a pretext for exclusion and confrontation. The success of China

and the US is an opportunity, not a challenge, for each other. The two sides need to respect each other's choice of development path and development rights, and respect each other's core interests and major concerns.

Peaceful coexistence is a baseline. Seeing China as a primary strategic competitor, the most consequential geopolitical challenge and a pacing threat is seriously misguided, and will only lead to a "self-fulfilling prophecy". The Taiwan question is the first and foremost redline that should not be crossed in the China-US relationship. The one-China principle and the three Sino-US joint communiques should be honored in both word and deed.

Any attempt to encircle, contain or suppress China will be self-defeating. As

the world's largest developing and developed countries, China and the US have every reason to make the list of areas of cooperation longer. A tariff war, trade war, tech war or industrial war will produce no winner.

Win-win cooperation is a worthwhile goal. Beijing welcomes US companies to invest in China, and also looks forward to greater dialogue and cooperation with the US on global challenges such as climate change and artificial intelligence.

The China-US relationship has never been smooth sailing. The historical trend of peaceful coexistence between them will not change, the ultimate wish of the two peoples for exchanges and cooperation will not change, and the expectations of the whole world for stable Sino-US ties will not change.

COMMENT



China and the World Roundtable | Climate Change Conference

Editor's note: The UN Climate Change Conference is a golden opportunity to strengthen the fight against climate crisis. With global temperatures hitting record highs and extreme weather becoming more frequent and severe, people around the globe are feeling the increasing impact of climate change. Five experts share their views.

Matin Qaim

Joint climate action key to hunger-free world

Climate change poses a serious threat to global food security. Rising mean temperatures and more frequent and severe extreme weather events could push hundreds of millions of additional people into hunger or leave them suffering undernutrition if the international community does not immediately implement effective corrective measures.

Future food security risks are often cited to underpin the need for taking concerted climate action. But a food security crisis is already unfolding due to rising global temperatures. Last year was the hottest year since global temperature records began; and 2024 has reportedly been hotter.

Heat waves, droughts, tropical cyclones, floods and landslides are just a few of the phenomena that many parts of the world are more frequently facing today. These extreme weather events claim lives, and harm human health in various ways. They also destroy critical infrastructure and human livelihoods. The impact of extreme weather events on agriculture has been especially devastating because agriculture is heavily dependent on weather conditions.

Climate change is already reducing crop yield, especially in tropical and subtropical regions, with the African continent suffering the most. Recent studies show that average crop yield in some African countries today is 40 percent lower than what it would have been with out climate change. In parts of Asia and Latin America, average crop yield is 20-30 percent lower, and the situation could get worse. Productivity in the livestock and aquaculture sectors, too, has reduced.

Climate change has also made pest control increasingly difficult in the agricultural sector, as insects, viruses, fungi and other pathogens are evolving and spreading to new areas. Also, rising sea levels are contributing to increasing loss of fertile farmlands.

Agricultural production losses mean the shortage of sufficient food in some areas. Shortage leads to rising food prices, making nutritious food less affordable. And the fact that many poor people in Africa and Asia are smallholder farmers or agricultural laborers means loss of

jobs and incomes due to crop failures.

Food security is not only about calories. Rising food prices and shrinking incomes prompt poor people to eat less nutritious food and shift to cheaper staples to satiate their hunger. As a result, some people may get enough calories but still suffer from deficiency of micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals. Even temporary micronutrient deficiency can have serious health consequences for the people, especially children. To make things worse, many crops contain lower levels of micronutrients due to rising global temperatures.

Since 2015, progress in the fight against hunger has been stagnating, and the number of undernourished people in Africa has increased in recent years. To prevent the food insecurity problem from worsening, actions should be taken in five areas on a priority basis.

First, the world has to take bolder climate action. Every effort to curb global warming is crucial for reducing the likelihood and frequency of catastrophic weather events. Hence, all sectors, including agriculture that contributes in no small measure to climate change, should take immediate measures to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Second, food systems need to be made more climate-resilient, by further diversifying crops and cultivating hardier crops and animal breeds with the help of new genomic breeding technologies. To achieve this, advanced technologies should be made accessible to smallholder farmers in Africa, too.

Third, the functioning of food markets needs to be improved, while measures should be taken to better connect poor households to the markets. Since some regions of the world are more vulnerable to climate change, efficient international exchange is key to preventing food scarcity at the local level. And to ensure efficient international exchange, policies that impede trade need to be abandoned.

Fourth, poor people in many rural areas of Africa and Asia depend primarily on agriculture for their livelihoods. In case of crop failures, these households lose their source of income. So new channels for generating employment in non-agricultural rural sectors should be explored



MA XUEJING / CHINA DAILY

in order to reduce poverty and help people adapt to climate change.

And fifth, there is also a need to strengthen the social safety nets in low- and middle-income countries. Extreme weather events and related shocks are becoming more frequent, hurting poor people the most, so safety nets need to be strengthened to stabilize the dietary intakes of the most vulnerable sections of society.

In other words, more investment is needed to enable rapid action in these five areas, while low- and middle-income countries should take measures on a priority basis to make food systems more

resilient. Not to mention that high-income countries are obligated to shoulder their international responsibility to help low- and middle-income countries to deal with the climate challenge.

With strong global cooperation, a world without hunger remains a realistic goal to achieve.

The author is a professor of Agricultural Economics and executive director of the Center for Development Research at the University of Bonn, Germany. The views don't necessarily represent those of China Daily.

Ren Minghui and Li Na

Extreme weather poses threat to people's health

Climate change is emerging as one of the most severe threats to humanity, with intensifying global warming leading to more frequent and extreme weather events, causing water and food scarcities, disrupting the natural and social systems that underpin human health, exacerbating inequality, and hindering economic growth.

There is growing concern that the extreme weather could result in a great number of climate refugees, potentially triggering political instability and even armed conflicts.

The impacts of climate change on human health are complex and diverse, which can be broadly categorized into direct and indirect effects on people's health and well-being, and healthcare systems.

The direct consequences of climate change include increasing heat waves and cold snaps, floods and wildfires that claim lives, destroy properties and disrupt economic activity. For instance, exceedingly high temperatures could cause heatstroke, and exacerbate cardiovascular, respiratory and urinary diseases, while extreme weather events could cause mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety.

The indirect impacts of climate change are mainly outbreaks of infectious and non-communicable diseases, and mental health and climate-sensitive issues. These become more likely due to the change in the distribution of vectors, water and food shortages, and environmental pollution.

For example, global warming can alter the geographical distribution, reproduction and incubation pattern of vector-borne insects and pathogens, leading to a massive upsurge in bacterial and viral diseases like malaria, schistosomiasis and dengue fever.

Furthermore, the melting glaciers and ice caps can lead to water shortage, affect water supply for domestic and agricultural use, and impact food security and public health. Extreme weather can disrupt food production and supply, threatening food security and increasing incidences of child malnutrition, which could lead to stunted growth, anemia and obesity among children. And mounting air pollution can increase the incidence and death of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and cancer.

Scientific projections indicate that climate change will directly and indirectly result in about 250,000 additional deaths annually between 2030 and 2050, with developed countries facing higher mortality risks due to extreme heat, and some regions in the Global South facing increasing mortality risks from malaria, diarrhea and child malnutrition. The impact of climate change is likely to be more severe on the Global South, though, with children, pregnant women, the elderly, the infirm, outdoor workers and individuals with chronic respiratory and cardiovascular diseases being especially vulnerable.

Climate change can also affect the healthcare and public health systems by disrupting the functioning of medical equipment, pharmaceutical supply chains, energy and transportation systems, and endangering the health of medical workers.

The indirect impact of climate change can weaken the universal health coverage and primary healthcare systems of countries. As such, public health systems across the world are facing a greater challenge today.

At the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference, more than 140 countries, including China, signed the Declaration on Climate and Health. This is a milestone that health is mainstreamed in the global climate change agenda, signifying a step forward from scientific recognition to political action against climate change.

Also, the World Health Organization has issued an operational framework for building climate-resilient and low-carbon health systems, calling for actions to reduce carbon emissions. Hence, countries should strengthen cooperation, share their experiences, technologies and resources, and make joint efforts to combat climate change.

Comprehensive mitigation and adaptation measures, and cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation are necessary to address the impacts of climate change on human health. In September, China's National Administration of Disease Prevention and Control and 12 other governmental agencies issued the "National Climate Change Health Adaptation Action Plan (2024-30)" for enhancing the health sector's adaptability to climate change.

Only through collective action and practical measures can the international community mitigate the risks posed by climate change to human health and healthcare systems. In this context, China should engage in international cooperation and collaboration to combat climate change, implement national action plans and policies to address the health risks caused by climate change, and increase policy support for and investment in research and development.

By doing so, China can contribute to collaborative efforts to combat climate change, and advance the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind.

Ren Minghui is the director of the Institute for Global Health and the China Center for Health Development Studies at Peking University, and former assistant director-general of the WHO; and Li Na is a PhD candidate at the School of Public Health Peking University. The views don't necessarily represent those of China Daily.

Ismahane Elouafi and Lindiwe Majele Sibanda

China can help ensure future food security

Like the economies of other countries across the planet, China's economy, too, is feeling the sting of climate change. In recent months, the country has seen storms, droughts, floods and heat waves that have damaged crops, disrupted food supply chains, and led to higher prices for staple foods. These events threaten China's food security and highlight a broader reality: climate change is undermining agricultural systems worldwide.

By hosting the 2024 World AgriFood Innovation Conference in October, China put the focus on global food security and agricultural resilience could not be more timely. With leaders, scientists and entrepreneurs from around the world in attendance, the event showcased not only China's leadership in agricultural innovation, but also its opportunities for global partnerships in building climate-resilient food systems.

At this critical juncture, China has the opportunity to not just secure its own food future, but to lead globally in addressing agricultural challenges. By investing in scientific research and development — and strengthening South-South cooperation — China can help shape the future of agriculture in a way that strengthens both its own and global food security.

China's recent experience of extreme weather is a powerful reminder of the urgent need for more resilient agricultural systems. Rural livelihoods are under threat, and food prices are rising. This presents a challenge to China's rural revitalization efforts, a central pillar of the country's development strategy. Rural revitalization is not just about building infrastructure; it's also about ensuring that rural communities can thrive in a world where climate change is an ever-present threat.

The same challenges are being faced on a larger scale in Africa, home to 60 percent of the world's remaining arable land. Yet Africa's agricultural potential is increasingly at risk due to severe droughts, soil degradation and extreme

weather patterns. By 2030, an estimated 118 million extremely poor people in Africa will be exposed to droughts, floods and extreme heat. The stability of Africa's food systems will have far-reaching effects on global markets and food security, including on China, which imports a significant amount of food.

In this context, China's experience and leadership in agricultural modernization are critical. Having transformed its own agricultural sector, China is well-positioned to help the world develop resilient, climate-adapted food systems. Through South-South cooperation and partnerships with institutions like Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research — the world's largest global agricultural innovation network — China can support Africa's agricultural transformation while helping secure its own food future.

China's own agricultural success story offers important lessons for both its own future and that of the world. In the mid-20th century, China struggled with widespread food insecurity. However, by using technologies to develop and grow high-yielding crop varieties and employing advanced irrigation techniques, China rapidly increased its agricultural productivity.

Contributing to this transformation were partnerships with international research bodies like the CGIAR. Since China formally partnered with the CGIAR in 1984, the collaboration has led to major agricultural advancements, particularly in wheat and corn production. Joint research helped increase China's wheat output by 10.7 million tons (worth 23 billion yuan or \$3.23 billion) by developing disease-resistant varieties and implementing farming practices such as reduced tillage and water efficiency.

Over the decades, China's innovations have not only enhanced its food security but also lifted millions of people out of poverty in rural areas. The strategies that drove this — investing in R&D, modernizing rural infrastructure and embracing climate-smart technologies — are direct-

ly applicable to meet the challenges facing global agriculture today. As climate change intensifies, the need for resilient agricultural systems gets greater.

In an era of climate change, the future of agriculture depends on research and innovation. Drought-resistant crops, sustainable farming practices, and efficient water use are critical for ensuring that food systems can withstand climate shocks. This is where China's collaboration with the CGIAR continues to play a vital role.

In July 2024, the CGIAR and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences agreed to expand their cooperation in agricultural research. This partnership focuses on improving crop genetic resources and sharing climate-smart agricultural technologies. These innovations will not only benefit China but also support other nations facing similar challenges, especially in Africa.

As the world's largest developing country and a leader in agricultural innovation, China has the opportunity to help build resilient food systems across the Global South. South-South cooperation, particularly with Africa, can support African nations as they modernize their food systems and adapt to climate change.

Africa's agricultural future is important for the African countries as well as the rest of the world. The continent holds vast potential to become a global food powerhouse. But without investment in R&D and technology, this potential may never be realized. China has already pledged 360 billion yuan to African development, focusing on agricultural modernization, industrialization and green development. These investments are critical for securing Africa's food systems, which in turn will have a stabilizing effect on global food markets.

The future of food security, both in China and globally, depends on continued collaboration on, and investment in, agricultural R&D. The Ceres2030 report emphasizes the need to double that investment globally to sustainably meet

the world's food needs. China, with its advanced research capabilities and strong agricultural base, is well-positioned to lead this charge.

Agricultural innovation has historically delivered high returns. The CGIAR's research, for example, has consistently provided a 10:1 return on investment. By investing in R&D and partnering with the CGIAR, China can protect its own food supply as well as help build more resilient food systems in vulnerable regions such as Africa.

As the world faces the intertwined challenges of climate change and food insecurity, China has a pivotal role to play. The recent WAFI Conference offered a timely opportunity for China to showcase its leadership in agricultural innovation and to expand its partnerships with R&D experts like the CGIAR. By investing in agricultural research, strengthening South-South cooperation, and embracing innovation, China can ensure a secure food future for itself — and for the world.

Today, science has advanced to unprecedented levels, equipping us with the tools and knowledge to pursue development at a pace unimaginable before. Breakthroughs in fields such as biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and climate-smart agriculture enable us to bypass traditional, slower pathways and directly implement solutions that were previously out of reach. With these advancements, we can address global challenges faster and more effectively than ever before. Now is the time to harness these innovations to boost development, particularly in Africa, accelerating progress in ways that create immediate, tangible impacts for communities worldwide and set new standards for sustainable, inclusive growth.

Ismahane Elouafi is executive managing director of the CGIAR; and Lindiwe Majele Sibanda is system board chair of the CGIAR. The views don't necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

GLOBAL VIEWS

NILUFAR N. MAMMADOVA

Building a fair world order

While the multipolar world order is still honing its craft, several key issues must be addressed to achieve the true progress we so emphatically strive for in public policy

As we grapple with the twists and turns of today's geopolitical realities, responding intelligently to even unintelligent foreign policy actions, while trying to reconcile them with domestic policy needs, becomes increasingly challenging. At this inflection point, the global majority is facing numerous policy issues, which require rigorous scrutiny of the existent politico-economic situation and careful consideration of a world order reform rooted in multipolarity.



Complex interdependence has been a constant in international affairs, but it has never been as pronounced as it is today, largely due to the increased interconnectedness among countries, with globalization and the digital revolution serving as the primary drivers of this ever-increasing complexity. At this largely unfair turn of events under the unipolar system the politico-economic situation becomes increasingly concerning with each passing day, particularly due to the crisis in Ukraine and Israel's war on Gaza.

These two events stand out primarily because they are key contributors to increased awareness of the true nature of unipolarity and what it has always represented. In other words, the current world order is less about upholding "Western values" in public policy and more about maintaining global supremacy. This has led to growing support for a multipolar world order among sovereign states that no longer wish to subordinate their national security and sovereignty, instead seeking fair and just treatment in global geopolitics.

While it is not an overnight process, multipolarity is steadfastly setting the stage for the future mise-en-scène of the global order. In retrospect, this process spans nearly three decades, with political discourse crystallizing in the late 1990s through the influence of two countries: China and Russia. In a 1997 joint statement on a multipolar world and the establishment of a new international order, both countries expressed their determination to strive for an international order based on



WANG XIAOYING / CHINA DAILY

the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Since those years, the process has evolved into a larger alliance, bringing together more than two countries. The BRICS economic bloc and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization represent major milestones in the realization of a multipolar world order. However, amid the growing alignment toward multipolarity, the workings of this world order remain largely inchoate. As the multipolar world order takes shape, the political constellation of forces must carefully address several issues that have led to complete disillusionment with unipolarity.

So, what are the key issues we need to address in the multipolar world order?

The first question to consider is whether states can establish a more just and fair system of governance that serves more than just a select few, both in their foreign and domestic policies. Thus, the first issue is defining value systems that do not amount to doublespeak. The current system, established by the Western countries, has often been the opposite of what it claims to be. The liberal international order, being the backbone of the unipolar world order, has been less about liberalism and more about restricting freedom. It has been used skillfully to enforce the West's own interpretation of what things mean and impose that on the rest of us. As a result, various forms of gaslighting, decep-

tion, and atrocities have occurred in the decades following World War II. Replacing Taliban with Taliban is a prime example among many.

The current structure of the unipolar system necessitates concomitant scrutiny of several themes to ensure that the emerging world order does not become a similar system under a different name. As such, a more just and fair system urgently requires states to examine the problem of Western-centrism in economic development in the era of multipolarity and multilateralism. The issue of Western-centrism in economic development is an old topic but it remains new. Historical examinations of economic development strategy reveal a demoralizing picture in which global development paradigms, have primarily served the interests of the imperial core. As a result, the world's moral code has been for sale for a considerable amount of time, leading to political mercantilism in public policy. To maintain its supremacy, the unipolar system has placed the unprincipled and unqualified opportunists in high positions within government under the guise of "democracy." It also pertains, in most cases, to the Western-established international organizations. Despite sounding like an oxymoron, it is a poignant reality. Interestingly enough, this trend has adversely affected not only the Global South but also Western countries, albeit to a lesser extent. Many are of the opinion that the current politico-economic system is rigged against them while the political establishment has become increasingly detached from the public. As a result, we are witnessing increased conflicts, disorder, and chaos around the globe. This outcome leads us to another key issue: trust, which is at an all-time low and requires careful examination.

It is at this crucial point in human history that the Global South is grouping together to form the multipolar world order. Another question that the governments of the Global South need to consider is whether the system can deliver on its aspirations and promises. In this pursuit, another key issue we need to address is the two-tier justice system within the existing international legal framework. For instance, the

principles of "self-determination" and "sovereignty" have often been in conflict with each other and have been skillfully utilized by the West for its political advances. At this point in time, the interests of powerful states within the unipolar world order ostensibly outweigh or undermine the principles of fairness and justice. To rectify this situation, states within the multipolar system must overhaul the mechanisms that define the workings of the international legal system. Another issue deserving attention is the concept of the "rules-based international order", fervently promoted by the West to justify its profound violations of international law.

Sovereign states should also be cautious of the claim that the new multipolar world will be "a real democracy", first because the whole business of democracy has become tainted over the past decades. Second, it was never the ideal form of governance, even at its inception. Numerous acts of malfeasance have been committed in the name of democracy. In the words of Aldous Huxley, "the perfect dictatorship has the appearance of a democracy".

In the end, the question of "What is the better world order?" has been a topic of discussion for a significant period. This moment in history is unique, however, because the global majority has never been so empowered to make choices of their own will. In this sense, the world is changing, driven by countries united by common vulnerabilities. However, concerns remain, and in the fight against the current hegemon, the multipolar coalition must be cautious not to become a monster itself. To rephrase, while the idea of a multipolar world order sounds promising, its success hinges on how well it is implemented. This time, in the multipolar world order, let us choose good over evil by effectively navigating the key issues facing humanity that stem from our differences.

The author is a policy analyst and researcher at the Social Research Center in Baku, Azerbaijan. 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.

YU NANPING AND LIAO MENG

A new future for regional value chain

Through deep integration of the industrial chain and technical cooperation, China and ASEAN will enhance Asia's position in the global economy

At a time when the global economic landscape is undergoing profound adjustment, cooperation between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is becoming more and more important. The two sides have not only established a deep foundation of cooperation in the political and economic fields, but also played an increasingly important role in the development of the Asian value chain. This close link not only promotes the status and influence of the Asian regional value chain, but also provides a new impetus for the stability and development of the global economy.



Yu Nanping



Liao Meng

China and ASEAN have a long history of cooperation and have a profound political and economic foundation. The two sides have established extensive cooperation mechanisms in a number of areas, from political mutual trust to economic integration, and from cultural communication to security cooperation, having formed an all-dimensional and multi-level cooperation pattern. On the political side, bilateral relations have been escalating. From the establishment of dialogue in 1991 to the establishment of comprehensive strategic partnership in 2021, the two sides have deepened their political mutual trust and consensus. In terms of economic cooperation mechanisms, multi-tier and multi-sector cooperation mechanisms provide an institutional basis for shaping regional value chains, such as the China-ASEAN (10+1) leaders' meeting, ASEAN-China, Japan and the Republic of Korea (10+3) leaders' meeting, and the East Asia Summit, as well as the Belt and Road Initiative and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. On the

economic front, China has become ASEAN's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade growing over 100-fold in the past 30 years. In terms of trade structure, the proportion of trade in intermediate products is increasing, which is the core carrier of regional value chain. Behind this series of manifestations is the deep integration and cooperation between China and ASEAN in the regional value chain.

China and ASEAN are closely connected and have clear roles in the regional value chain. At present, China has basically replaced Japan as the supply center of Asia, increasing its position in the global value chain. ASEAN plays a key role in processing and importing of raw materials. China's exports are a major source of ASEAN's value-added products. ASEAN is highly dependent on China's raw materials and spare parts, and the two sides have close industrial chains. In the construction of a regional value chain, the cooperation between China and ASEAN is particularly important. With deepening global economic integration, the regional value chain has become an important part of the global economy. Close cooperation between China and ASEAN in this process has not only strengthened economic ties between the two sides, but also enhanced Asia's status and influence in the global economy.

However, the cooperation between China and ASEAN in the regional value chain also faces a series of challenges. First of all, the restructuring of the global value chain makes the original division of labor system shrink from the global scope to the internal region, which increases the need for cooperation between China and ASEAN. Second, the United States intervenes in the restructuring of the regional value chain in Asia, by trying to build a strategic value chain with itself as the core. This poses a challenge to the cooperation between China and ASEAN. At the same time, China's position in the global value chain has been "squeezed" from both sides. The high-end

manufacturing is returning to developed countries and the mid- and low-end manufacturing to other developing countries, necessitating higher requirements for China's industrial upgrading and transformation.

In the face of these challenges, China and ASEAN must work closely to find a development path in line with the new generation of regional value chains. This requires the two sides to achieve breakthroughs in industrial chain link and cooperation in key technological areas. And the integrated development of the industrial chains between China and ASEAN is key in the manufacturing sector. The transformation of China's mid- and high-end manufacturing industry and the transfer of mid- and low-end manufacturing industry to ASEAN can complement each other and jointly enhance the competitiveness of the regional value chain. In terms of technology chain docking, China's technological innovation capability can provide technical support for ASEAN and promote regional technical cooperation and deep integration of the industrial chain. The coordinated construction of emerging industrial clusters, especially in the field of digital economy and green economy, will become a new highlight of the cooperation between China and ASEAN. In addition, the construction of the coordination mechanism in the regional value chain will help enhance the status and influence of China and ASEAN in the global value chain.

In the future, cooperation between China and ASEAN will be a cornerstone for the development of regional value chains in Asia. In the context of global economic restructuring, close cooperation between the two sides cannot only address the current challenges, but also promote further development of the Asian regional value chain. Through the deep integration of industrial chain and technical cooperation, China and ASEAN are expected to enhance Asia's position in the global econ-



WANG XIAOYING / CHINA DAILY

omy, and realize common prosperity in this region. In the new global economic landscape, cooperation between China and ASEAN will face more challenges, but it is also full of opportunities. Only through continuous cooperation and innovation can we remain competitive in the tide of globalization and jointly shape a more stable and prosperous regional value chain in Asia.

Yu Nanping is a professor at the School of Politics and International Relations at East China Normal University. Liao Meng is a graduate student at the School of Politics and International Relations at East China Normal University. The author contributed this article to China Watch, a think tank powered by China Daily. The views do not necessarily reflect those of China Daily.

LIFE



Dream of success gives artist a unique vision

Subconscious and use of AI help inspire creative process that sparks reflection on human experience, **Yang Feiyue** reports.

A view of artist Zhang Chi's latest Dream series on display at the Town Art Space in Beijing's Chaoyang district.

Stylish vintage cars, bright flowers, vast grasslands, shimmering lakes, towering mountains, stretching rainbows and hot air balloons have a deep connection in artist Zhang Chi's new series of works, Dream, which is on display in an exhibition that runs through Dec 16.

It is the first exhibition marking the opening of the Town Art Space in the commercial complex of Outlets Town in Beijing's Chaoyang district.

Zhang's lifelike depictions and bold yet delicate use of color give visitors a peek into the vibrant tapestry of the artist's inner world.

"They were inspired by my dreams — bad, good and surreal," says Zhang, who was born in the 1980s.

An active international fashion designer, Zhang's works have been favored by many celebrities and are a highlight at red-carpet events at home and abroad.

His experiences in fashion and popular culture have given form to his distinctive painting language, particularly evident in his representative series, Golden Age, which consists of 50 works that took him about a decade to complete.

"In this explosive age of information, art should also undergo rapid updates. Life is short but I have many ideas, which can be better expressed through new technology," Zhang explains.

The Dream series utilizes innovative technology in its creations.

"I need to spend a significant amount of time engaging in dialogue with artificial intelligence, just like I do with my assistant," he says.

Different from the arduous hand-painted creation process of the Golden Age, the Dream series applied AI, which took 100 days to deliver.

The longest work of his Dream series features a vintage car wrapped by an octopus. "I selected it from numerous options, considering everything from the color of the car to the tentacles of the octopus. It is a dream of sleep paralysis enveloping you in a certain way," he says. "However, I approached it with a positive concept for the transformation of what might be considered a nightmare, all the while ensuring it stays dreamlike in a good way."

One of his favorites features a vintage car full of strawberry cream cake in the front.



Top: The art space is set to host more exhibitions. **Left and right:** Two of Zhang's AI-generated art pieces: a vintage car full of strawberry cream cake lifted by a bunch of hot air balloons; and another vehicle entangled by an octopus. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Artist Zhang Chi

In the painting, Zhang pictured himself sitting in a car lifted by hot air balloons, drifting from a dark backdrop into the dusk, with farmlands below.

"The contrast of the all-black and dusk background represents the transition from a dream into a fantastical world. It's part of my desire to express the possibilities of the human experience as much as I could," he says.

He stresses that the new series reflects his playful and experimental attitude and hopes it can engage the audience in narratives that spark more reflections on dreams and the human experience.

Bai Yao, a veteran art broker who curated the exhibition, says Zhang's paintings invite contemplation, allowing viewers to explore their inner worlds while connecting with the universal themes of beauty, struggle and the pursuit of happiness.

"In every piece, he masterfully weaves together the elements of nature, emotion and memory, creating a visual symphony that resonates long after the viewer steps away," he adds.

The Town Art Space was a disused multimedia center in the area and Bai worked with the area's administration to repurpose it.

"It was an open floor with a pointed European-style roof. I put up walls to turn it into a small exhibition area that also functions as a gallery and art shop while being suitable for various activities in the future," Bai says.

More works by other artists will be presented in the space, including an ink art exhibition scheduled right after Zhang's, according to Bai.

The space is an attempt to keep exploring the possibilities and diversity of artistic presentation in an urban public area.

"It will evolve into a multifunctional and hybrid art space. Visitors can appreciate original works by contemporary artists up close and purchase various art derivatives and design products, as well as watch and participate in many art exhibitions and activities," Bai says.

Contact the writer at yangfeiyue@chinadaily.com.cn

What's on



Skill of engraving

Seal engraving constitutes an essential part of traditional Chinese culture. Scholars in ancient times enjoyed commissioning and designing tailor-made seals carved with names and pseudonyms. These engraved characters also provide clues to the evolution of Chinese characters for historians.

An exhibition at the Chinese Traditional Cultural Museum focuses on the features of engraved seals and characters of the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC). It reflects the intensified studies of Qin-era seal art in recent years motivated by many seals and bamboo and wood slips found in archaeological excavations,

as well as the studies of ancient characters.

On show are Qin seals, pottery models and works engraved by modern seal artists influenced by Qin characters. The exhibition runs until Nov 15.

9 am-5 pm, closed on Mondays. 16 Hujing Donglu, Chaoyang district, Beijing. 010-8799-1766.

Figure themes

A hermit fishes alone in the cold winter; a scholar enjoys a private moment in his study to appreciate the porcelain he has collected; women of a well-to-do family play with puppies in a hall richly decorated with cultural objects — recurring motifs in the figure style of classic Chinese painting. In his works, ink artist Huang Huasan renders a modern touch to these themes.

Huang's ongoing exhibition *A Straw Shows Which Way the Wind Blows* at the National Art Museum of China reflects his endeavors in the figure paintings of traditional



style. The works exemplify his attention to detail, conveying poetic emotions. The exhibition ends on Nov 15. Huang studied plastic arts in Germany, which taught him how to blend color applications and a contrast between the light and shadow

of Western art into his creations. 9 am-5 pm, closed on Mondays. 1 Wusi Dajie, Dongcheng district, Beijing. 010-6400-1476.

Close connections

Since its establishment in 1976, Shenzhen Art Museum has enriched the cultural life of the people of Shenzhen, a vibrant city in Guangdong province that is settled by people from across the country. The museum has built links with artists who work and exhibit in Shenzhen, with many of the works contributing to the city's art scene.

In June, the exhibition *Mementos* opened to show these artists' gifts. The exhibition has entered the second phase, replacing the exhibits with new ones, on show until Feb 16.

Classic Chinese paintings include major movements thriving in the 20th century, such as the Haipai (Shanghai), Lingnan (Guangdong province) and Chang'an (Shaanxi province) schools of painting. There are also calligraphic works and let-



ters between the museum's staff members and the artists.

9 am-5 pm, closed on Mondays. 32 Donghu Yijie, inside Donghu Park, Aiguo Lu, Luohu district, Shenzhen, Guangdong province. 0755-2542-6069.

Digital space

The second installment of the *SeeD Pilot Project Exhibition* returned to Shenzhen's Longcheng Creativity Community. The exhibition runs until Feb 26, gathering the works of 10 artists and artists'

groups. It discusses people's critical thinking capabilities in the digital age, in which various life aspects are deeply influenced by artificial intelligence.

Launched in 2023, the *SeeD Pilot Project Exhibition* creates platforms for creative talent and digital artists. Curated by Liu Xiaodu, the exhibition, while embracing the intensified integration of digital art in life, shows works that engage in a discussion on the values of men.

10 am-8 pm, closed on Mondays. Dazhi Lu, Longcheng Jiedao (sub-district), Longgang district, Shenzhen, Guangdong province.

CHINA DAILY



LIFE

Dunhuang destined to dazzle onstage

Musical drama integrates advanced technology with ancient art to tell a contemporary story, **Chen Nan** reports.

When theater director and president of the National Theatre of China, Tian Qinxin, heard the story of artist Chang Shuhong (1904-94), she was inspired and intrigued.

One of the most eminent Chinese artists to study in France, Chang discovered a book containing photographs of hundreds of Dunhuang paintings and manuscripts in an old bookstore in Paris in 1935.

It was written by Paul Pelliot, the French Sinologist, who is credited with rediscovering the Mogao Caves — now a UNESCO World Heritage Site — in Gansu province. Before he read the book, Chang didn't know about the caves, which contain some of the finest examples of Buddhist art in China, and were created over a span of 1,000 years.

The discovery prompted Chang to return to China to study the grottoes. He arrived in Dunhuang, where the Mogao Grottoes are located, in early 1943. He endured poor living conditions, staying in a dilapidated temple, his bed, desk and chairs made of clay. In 1944, he founded the Dunhuang Art Institute, which is now known as Dunhuang Academy.

Her admiration for Chang's courage and determination prompted Tian to write a script, which has been turned into the musical drama, *The Summoning of Dunhuang*.

On Oct 30, Tian announced that the production will premiere in Beijing this December in tribute to the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, and the 80th anniversary of the Dunhuang Academy. The production honors the spirit of Dunhuang culture, and tells a remarkable story that intertwines the lives of generations of youth at different times and places, from France to China.

The narrative spans a century and begins with Chang, who came to be known as the "guardian of Dunhuang", and his wife Chen Zhixiu. As the story unfolds, legendary and moving tales of Dunhuang's past are revealed, so that Chang's story is connected to young people today.

Tian says that unlike traditional productions, the musical drama is a deep integration of theatrical art and digital technology, and explores the creative presentation of traditional Chinese culture.

As playwright and director, Tian says she found the production both challenging and innovative, as it blends art forms such as drama, music and dance, and makes use of film, 2D, 3D and artificial intelligence technology to break through the barriers between drama, music and live performance. The use of the latest technology allows the audience to fully appreciate the



Above: Singer-actor Zhang Yixing (front right) and main cast members of the theatrical production *The Summoning of Dunhuang* perform a song during the media event on Oct 30.

Clockwise from left: Young actors and actresses of the National Theatre of China, who will play major roles in *The Summoning of Dunhuang*, at the media event on Oct 30; Tian Qinxin, the president of the National Theatre of China, who is the scriptwriter and director of the production; Zhang Yixing at a rehearsal for the musical drama. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

richness and depth of Dunhuang art through the collision of tradition and modernity, as well as the interaction between content and technology.

"How to achieve the creative transformation and innovative development of traditional Chinese culture through art has been a long-term topic of exploration for theater, one we faced during the creative process," says Tian, adding that in May this year, the team traveled to Dunhuang for field research and discussions with the Dunhuang Academy.

"Walking in Dunhuang made us feel as if we had crossed a thousand years, and we experienced the power of Chinese cultural heritage. Our goal is to rejuvenate Dunhuang art, to allow more young people to witness the agelong transmission and vitality of Chinese civilization," she says.

"After more than six months of in-depth field research, script-writing and rehearsals, the production is about to meet the audience. We are striving to use the power of technology and the beauty of art to give new meaning to Dunhuang culture, in the hope of leading the audience through the ancient and modern, the domestic and the foreign, to experience the power and deep call of Chinese culture displayed in the brilliance of Dunhuang, and the warmth of personal emotions," adds Cheng Peng, vice-president of the National Theatre of China.

This new production brings together a lineup of young actors and actresses, led by singer-actor Zhang Yixing, who performed the musical drama's theme song during the media event on Oct 30 along with other cast members.

"I have been interested in Dunhuang for years, and being part of this process is a precious growth opportunity for us young actors, and we hope to contribute with our collective efforts," says Zhang, who will play the role of Chang Shuhong in 1935, as well as that of a young staff member at the Dunhuang Academy in 2035. The 33-year-old has a large fan base as a singer, and has over 50 million followers on social media platform Sina Weibo.

With songwriter Peter Kam as music director, the production includes 20 musical pieces, featuring Chinese styles and French influences, on a variety of themes ranging from heartbreak to grand expressions of history and tradition.

"I have been involved in lots of musicals and I enjoyed working with these young artists. Though it tells the story of Dunhuang, which is ancient, the music is contemporary, and appeals to a young audience," says Kam.

Contact the writer at chenan@chinadaily.com.cn

TV series sheds light on modern life in Lhasa

By XING WEN
xingwen@chinadaily.com

Lhasa, the capital of the Xizang autonomous region, which lies at an altitude of 3,650 meters above sea level, has long been known as the "city of sunlight" as it gets an average of more than 3,000 hours of sunshine a year.

For many outsiders, the city, with its rich history, ethnic culture, and the spectacular natural wonders of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, which is known as the "roof of the world", remains a mysterious, distant land.

A recent 21-episode TV series *The City of Sunlight* seeks to open a window on modern urban life in Lhasa for a wider group of viewers, through the stories of young people and their choices in life, career paths and emotional decisions.

The drama topped the ratings for eight consecutive days when it was broadcast on China Central Television's CCTV-1, according to CVB, a television show statistics collector affiliated with the National Radio and Television Administration. It also received a 9 out of 10 rating on the review site Douban.

The main storyline revolves around the family of Thubten, the leader of a Tibetan Opera troupe in



Left: Wangdron Tso plays Cho Dzong who runs a teahouse in the TV drama *The City of Sunlight*. **Right:** Zhou You plays a Tibetan who wishes to run a trading company to promote local specialties of the Xizang autonomous region in the recently aired series. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Lhasa, who is highly respected in the local community.

A strict father who follows tradition, Thubten's expectations are challenged by his daughter and two sons, who each pursue their own dreams and paths in life.

His daughter, Cho Dzong, falls in love with Xu Shaojie, a cadre member from Shandong province, leading to the dilemma about whether she should marry and move away from her hometown.

One of his sons, Sonam, is supposed to become a civil servant, a job

Thubten considers stable, but Sonam is determined to run a trading company to promote local specialties like chili peppers, honey and lamb.

His other son, Tashi, who is a medical student, is destined to become a doctor, but influenced by his father's love for Tibetan Opera, he wants to become a performer instead.

"Tibet's rich cultural heritage deserves attention beyond the symbolic level. Without relying on a dramatic storyline, the drama portrays contemporary life, using a

fresh narrative and genuine emotion, and delves into intergenerational dynamics. It offers a strong sense of realism and engagement, providing viewers a moment of relaxation, and also a chance to reflect on their relationship with parents," Xu Ruofeng, a Douban user, commented after watching the series.

The series also makes the most of the picturesque scenery of Xizang and the enduring beauty of its cultural heritage, including aspects such as *thangka* paintings, Tibetan

Opera, and Tibetan embroidery.

It took three years to create, and involved traveling over 4,100 kilometers to interview 132 individuals from various backgrounds, leading to reams of notes, according to scriptwriter Yu Xiaoqian.

"In the creative process, the first thing to discard is the perspective of a tourist or an outsider. We aim to tell the stories from the local perspective," says Yu.

In Lhasa, Yu met young people from varied walks of life, including teahouse workers, fashion

brand owners, art curators, rappers, stand-up comedians and heritage conservationists. Tashi, one of the characters in the series, is inspired by a nurse who is also a Tibetan rap singer Yu met during his travels.

The series focuses on the common challenges faced by young people, such as intergenerational differences, preserving traditional culture, dealing with long-distance relationships, and navigating the conflict between career and hobbies.

"Young people from different places may have cultural differences, but we also share many commonalities, and that commonality is what I want to present most," says Zhou You, who plays Sonam.

Liu Shuxin, a professor at the School of Journalism and Communication at the Minzu University of China, says that the series blends the cultural elements of Tibetan Opera, traditional Tibetan medicine, equestrian sports and Tibetan attire, offering a glimpse into contemporary urban life in Lhasa. The story combines practical wisdom with romanticism, reflecting the shared values of truth, kindness, beauty and bravery that transcend ethnic and regional boundaries, and resonating with people of diverse cultural backgrounds in China.

CULTURE

Breaking barriers

Korean visually impaired orchestra links lives through music, **Hou Chenchen** reports.

“Cause, ah-ah, I’m in the stars tonight. So watch me bring the fire and set the night alight.” These lines from *Dynamite*, a popular song of top K-pop band BTS, were accompanied by the rhythms of traditional Korean percussion drum beats and the soothing melodies of string instruments.

The mesmerizing mix subsequently converged seamlessly into the elegant Chinese folk favorite, *Mo Li Hua*, or *Jasmine Flower*. Loud cheers and thunderous applause from the audience filled the air as the musical performance gently faded into its finale. Listeners’ amazement grew when they learned that the beautiful renditions were performed by a group whose members were visually impaired.

In June, the Korean Traditional Music Orchestra of the Blind performed at the Korean Cultural Center in Beijing. Themed *600-year history of Blind Kwanhyun music echoes through Beijing*, the performance showcased captivating traditional Korean music such as *Arirang* folk songs, as well as a mix of K-pop and classic Chinese tunes.

“I planned this performance in China several years ago and put a lot of thought into it,” said Choi Dong-ic, the director of the orchestra.

“We presented six songs from our history and even attempted to sing Chinese songs. Additionally, we included more popular songs like *Dynamite*.”

Korean traditional music is Choi’s passion, but he never imagined it would one day serve as a bridge between the visually impaired community and people worldwide.

Born with healthy vision, Choi’s life took a drastic turn when he was 9 after an accident left him visually impaired for life. But his deep love for Korean traditional music helped him surmount the impairment and led him to dedicate himself to upholding and passing down the cherished musical legacy.

“I want to revive traditional Korean music played by blind musicians, and I want to develop more fame for our music in the world,” Choi said.

Visually impaired musicians have a unique place in Korean traditional music. During the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910), visually impaired people with exceptional auditory abilities were provided professional music education and training by the royal palace. Known as “Blind Kwanhyun”, they were designated as court musicians and performed during official engagements and royal festivals.

“Blind musicians can hear sounds even if they cannot see, so no one in this world should be abandoned,” according to the dynasty’s King Sejong (1397-1450). Historical records showed that he actively supported visually impaired musicians to overcome eye diseases and promoted their welfare.

But the Blind Kwanhyun tradition of court orchestras ended during the Japanese colonial period. In 2011, the Siloam Center for the Blind in Seoul launched the Korean Traditional Music Orchestra of the Blind with the support of the South Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. Choi was inaugurated as the first director.

The orchestra now consists of 13 members and eight of them are visually impaired musicians. The musicians perform with traditional Korean instruments like the *ajaeng*, a large Korean bowed zither with seven strings, and the *yanggeum*, a trapezoidal wooden instrument with strings stretched over it.

The orchestra plays a variety of music genres, including *Jeongguk*, which was performed during royal ceremonies of the Joseon Dynasty, folk music that reflects the lives of commoners, and fusion music where the past and present coexist.

On his 13-year tenure as the group’s director, Choi said: “Looking back, I have no regrets. If the brilliant artistic spirit of the visually impaired blossomed over those 600 years, the last decade has been dedicated to reviving that flower that was once broken and disappeared.”

Healing power

Being visually impaired, Choi also refers to himself as a “social worker for the blind”, with his goal being to strive for equal social status for the visually impaired and helping them to heal through Korean traditional music.

In addition to promoting Korean traditional music, another mission of the Korean Traditional Music Orchestra of the Blind is to provide healing to the visually impaired and demonstrate their potential to excel as music specialists.

“I want our orchestra to bring happiness to sighted people and healing to those in pain,” Choi said. “We aim to raise awareness about disabilities by showcasing the artistic spirit of visually impaired musicians.”

Lee Hyun-a, a visually impaired *Jeongguk* singer, is one of the orchestra’s members. *Jeongguk* is a traditional genre of Korean classical music known for its melodic beauty, emotional depth and poetic lyrics based on Confucian themes and values.

Lee first encountered *Jeongguk* in the third grade. “I heard *Jeongguk* playing on the radio,



The Korean Traditional Music Orchestra of the Blind, or KTMOB, performs at Western Academy of Beijing on June 5. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY



Performances by KTMOB such as this at the Jingxi Primary School Affiliated to Beijing No 8 High School on June 4 showcase traditional Korean music.



In its Beijing debut on June 4, KTMOB performs at the Korea International School.



Photos above: KTMOB performs its routine of *Arirang* folk songs, K-pop and classic Chinese tunes at the Korean Cultural Center in Beijing on June 6.



I planned this performance in China several years ago and put a lot of thought into it. We presented six songs from our history and even attempted to sing Chinese songs.”

Choi Dong-ic, director of the Korean Traditional Music Orchestra of the Blind

and its melodic and captivating sound caught my attention. That’s when I developed an interest in this Korean traditional music,” Lee said.

Her musical journey began when her piano teacher suggested that she explore the world of *Jeongguk*. But the path for Lee has been challenging.

“Because I can’t read music notes, I have to rely on recordings of melodies and instructions from my teacher, which I replay multiple times for practice,” she said.

In vocal training, Lee faces another challenge: she physically touches her instructor’s mouth to understand complex singing techniques and feels specific body movements to employ vocal methods effectively.

Also, to enhance her lung capacity for singing, Lee spends considerable time swimming. “Swimming poses a greater challenge for me compared to others, as I need a teacher by my side for real-time guidance instead of observing others,” she said.

Despite the numerous obstacles, Lee remains committed to her dream of performing traditional music.

“When I first heard *Jeongguk* on the radio, it felt like a friend who could accompany me,” she said.

“During moments of depression or when I feel like giving up, it provides spiritual comfort and support, serving as a profound source of healing.”

“But no matter how difficult it may be, it will always be by my side, empowering me,” Lee said of learning Korean traditional music. She said that beyond the music itself, being part of the orchestra also brings healing to her.

“The people around me give me motivation,” Lee said.

The orchestra’s artistic director also transcribes musical scores into Braille to help visually impaired musicians familiarize themselves with the music, she said.

At the same time, he offers detailed guidance on vocal technique and provides thorough recommendations to each visually impaired musician.

“He (the director) provides tremendous help and encouragement to me and my teammates,” Lee said. “I feel a sense of warmth within the orchestra.”

Connecting cultures

A Chinese student from Beijing Normal University surnamed Guo, 21, said she really enjoyed the orchestra’s latest show.

“I appreciate this style of performance because even though they may speak Korean, the music they create speaks to us all in a universal language. When they played *Jasmine Flower*, it easily resonated with us.”

Chang Xinyi, a barista in Beijing, 23, was excited to learn more about Korean traditional instruments.

“It’s so novel for me when I discover a brand new percussion piece which I cannot find in China. Everything in this place piques my curiosity and beckons me to explore further.”

“In my view, getting in touch with different cultures can influence me in a positive way. The more you explore, the more beauty you will encounter in your life,” Chang said.

The positive reaction from Chinese audiences was far beyond Choi’s expectations, he said. “It’s a surprise for me that many Chinese people cried during the performance, they could feel the emotions of the singer.”

The response was in line with one of Choi’s main aims in staging the performance in Beijing — to convey a “universal expression of humanity” through music, he said.

“Our cultural history is similar to Chinese history, so I want the Chinese audiences to feel our music.”

Looking ahead, Choi is planning for more performances in China and beyond. For that, he has two goals for the team’s performances: to show and exchange their Korean traditional music, and to help visually impaired people live a good life.

“People have different appearances and cultures. But from music, we can understand other cultures,” Choi said.

“We can contribute to world peace and harmony, we can be family.”

Hu Xinyue contributed to this story.

Contact the writer at houchenchen@chinadaily.com.cn.